Religious histories have always appropriated pre-existing symbol systems of religion into newer forms, often with the goal in mind to acculturate a population into a new cultural setting to reach a desired status quo of society. The problem with acculturation theory is that it is filled with teleological and quantitative assumptions of purity or authenticity which often fail to explain that the process of adapting to a dominant culture is seldom done in a consistent logical progression. While many people undergoing culture change are faced with problems of communication that force them to make sense out of new discursive formations that exhibit new systems of cultural management, deviations from the invariant aspects of traditions are dependent upon how subjects have interpreted and given meaning to changes which have occurred in their environment rather than upon a mechanical assignation of cultural traits.

This thesis seeks to better understand the nature and universal characteristics that embody ritual and religion through an ethnographic and historical investigation of two religious festivals that annually occur in a remote province located in the eastern valleys of Bolivia. Christian feast days in accordance with the Catholic calendar are predominant modes of ceremonial expression in the Latin American religious universe. In both the festivals that this thesis documents, ritual modes of exchange with divine figures/objects evidence forms of religious syncretism and the superimposition of Catholicism over Andean traditions. Using ethno-historical methods of documentation, this study shows the process of how meaning has been transformed from native Andean religious institutions and cultural practices to Spanish institutions largely influenced by Roman Catholicism. My research also confirms that while religious syncretism exists in both festivals, contrasting elements of orthodoxy against more idiosyncratic practices found in the festivals reveal two levels of
Catholicism and the development of a more localized form of religious celebration detached from the church universal, a trend which also parallels religious developments in 16th century Spain.
Anthropological Case Studies of Religious Syncretism in Bolivia

by
Jonathan Lord

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

_________________________________________________________________
Jonathan Lord, Author
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am thankful for my parents, who I love, who gave me this opportunity.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1- Introduction</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2-Methodology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropological Approaches to the study of Religion</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paradigm</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and Sampling</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3-Spanish and Andean Historical Contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-History</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Units of Andean Social Organization</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tiwantinsuyu</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Andean Development</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Institutions in the Americas</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cofradías</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4-Ethnography of Religious Practice in Larecaja</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and Geographical Aspects</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comunidad vs. Pueblo</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cofradía, Fraternidades, or Comparsas?</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Belonging</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Señor de la Columna</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocations</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fiesta of El Señor de Pascua</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mass for El Señor de Pascua</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huacas, Jurisdictions, and Water</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Magical Stone</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constructions of Reality</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Disciple Simon-Peter</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Feast of the Cross</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creolizing the Center</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics or Faith</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5-Conclusions</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A - Museum Credentials</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B - AAMS Document</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C – Spanish Abstract</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nineteenth century mapping of the Larecaja and Munecas provinces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nuestra Señora de María Magdelena, Sorata’s parish church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sixteenth Century Colonial Burecratic Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Department of La Paz with provinces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assortment of products sold at a makeshift stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Road to San Pedro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Morenada mask design utilized by comparsas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pilgrims lighting candles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Quena Quenas Food Offering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Quena Quena Comparsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Map of Inca Cacicazgos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Larecaja Colonial Resettlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Guaman Poma Drawing of Festival Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ritual Object of May 3rd Feast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS USED IN NOTES

Bolivian Archives:

(ALP)  Archivo de La Paz
(AAMS) Archivos de Alcaldía Municipal de Sorata
(ANB)  Archivo Nacional de Bolivia
“Recuerda que tienes una sola alma; que tienes una muerte que morir; que tienes una sola vida que vivir tú solo que es corta; y que hay sólo una gloria que es eterna. Si haces esto, habrá muchas cosas que no te importarán”

“Remember that you have only one soul; that you have only one death to die; that you have only one life to live which is short and has to be lived by you alone; and that there is only one glory, which is eternal. If you do this, there will be many things about which you care nothing at all”

-St. Teresa of Avila
Note on Translation and Name Changes

All of the words that are not English are italicized once, and their definition can be found in the glossary section. This thesis has sections from interviews that I conducted in Spanish which were translated to English by the author with the help of a native speaker. The original translation is located in footnotes at the bottom of the page. All names from interviews have been changed to protect the identity of my research subjects.
Fig. 1 Nineteenth century mapping of the Larecaja and Munecas provinces (ANB 1825: Ministry of Interior).
Chapter 1: Introduction

For the purpose of keeping my research transparent, which I owed to my research subjects, I also feel that I am obliged to my readers a brief statement about how I came to be involved with the country of Bolivia and consequently selecting the Larecaja province as a research site.

My interest in religion in the country of Bolivia began in 2004 when I attempted a series of mountaineering expeditions in the Royal Mountain Range of the Andes. Every year since 2004, I returned to Bolivia with the goal in mind to climb. If you have spent time amongst the people in Bolivia, you will experience dissimilarity of opposites. In the more remote mountain villages I visited, the people would tell me how Andean mythology is given form deep inside the mountains where one deity creates and another destroys with the same powerful force. Bolivia has the highest percentage of indigenous ethnicity in South America, a statistic that is clearly evident when one takes into consideration how far removed from modern civilization these indigenous groups subsist; many continue to live off the radar, without exchanges of currency, rather relying on trade and social relationships that are often maintained and renewed through ritual celebrations. Andean ritual celebrations captured my attention and became a particular area of academic interest to me. Devils, angels, and saints literally came to life in the countryside’s during ritual performances where various dance troupes, many who are members of confraternities, would dance and wear masks suggesting their interpretations of slavery, colonialism, folk theology, and social relationships. Each time I returned to Bolivia, I would pursue more and more knowledge and understanding of these ceremonies, eventually leading me into a research position with the Bolivian National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF).

The practice of town festivals has a long and unique history in Bolivia. Many locals will tell you that every pueblo is the proprietor of a festival. It became obvious to me that ritual elements of the ceremonies varied greatly and depended upon social characteristics such as race and ethnicity, social class, and economic prosperity. The
larger cities such as La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz have developed a modern cultural reality, very distinct from the rural countryside, illustrating contrasts that span centuries of development. Each time I left the cosmopolitan city of La Paz for a climbing trip or to travel to my research site in the Valleys of Larecaja, the surrounding walls that form the circular crater in which the capitol city is nestled into, with its large skyscrapers and metropolitan centers, increasingly gave way to the small red brick and adobe houses of El alto as the micro bus winded up the cobbled roads to reach the flat high plains of the altiplano. Once on the altiplano, the magnificent sight of Mount Illimani, Mururata, Hyana Potosi, Condoriri, and Illampu would reveal themselves.

As a source of inspiration and happiness in my life, the Andean mountains and in particular the Cordillera Real of Bolivia also influenced my selection of Sorata as a research site to better understand Andean religion. Sorata is situated at the foot of Illampu, a 20,932 foot peak considered as one the most difficult to climb in Bolivia and is respected by the locals as a *malku*. While the eastern valleys of Bolivia have been utilized by populations dating from the earliest human occupations before Christ, the first historical documentation from a western point of view reports that Sorata was founded in 1575 (ALP, 1575 Visita del Repartimiento de Larecaja).

Fig. 2 Nuestra Señora de Maria Magdelena, Sorata’s parish church. Photo by Jon Lord
Today, Sorata is the product of the Spanish viceroy Francisco Toledo’s reduction process, as evidenced by its colonial architecture, its Castilian style plaza with the town *cabildo*, the Catholic Church, and the *alcaldía*. Yet its colonial cobbled streets disappear into rugged dirt roads and small footpaths which lead to indigenous villages known as comunidades that lack the social and political organization of Spanish Colonial administration, relying on a form of traditional socio-political organization known as the Andean cargo system. These small roads and footpaths are used by members of these communities to reach Sorata’s central market where agricultural products and other natural resources are either traded for or sold off to buyers that transport the goods to the capital of La Paz. A local who grew quinoa described the importance of Sorata as a commercial, cultural, and religious center in the region. Below are his words from a recorded interview.

1**Villager:** Here is Larecaja, here above is higher altitude and here below is lower altitude. Here is Sorata (pointing with his fingers to show it is in the middle of the higher and lower parts), and the cultures that are either Quechuas or Aymaras who are established there have a commercial point, a meeting point for the religious, festive, ritual, and this is more or less the capital of the province or a population where more of the people go to make purchases of everything. So those living above they go down to Sorata to make commercial activity or religious activity, or festival activity. Those from below they do the same, they arrive to Sorata, and in this moment they make the most of exchange. For example, those who are from above, they are going to have potatoes, *chuño*, *tunta*, and those from below possibly are going to have corn, peas, *camote*, or whatever. So they both arrive with their products to exchange, both arrive with their music, with their culture and exchange, they participate and share.

---

1 Acá está Larecaja, aquí arriba está más altura y aquí abajo menos altura. Aquí está Sorata, las culturas ya sean quechuas o aímaras asentadas tienen un punto comercial, un punto de encuentro religioso, festivo, ritual, y eso es más o menos la capital de la provincia o una población donde la gente más acude a hacer compras a todo. Entonces, esto es los de arriba bajan a Sorata a hacer una actividad comercial o una actividad religiosa, o una actividad festiva. Los de abajo lo mismo, llegan a Sorata, y ese momento aprovechan para el intercambio. Por ejemplo, esto lo de arriba, en la altura, van a tener papa, chuño, tunta, y los de abajo posiblemente van a tener maíz, arveja, haba, camote, yo que sé. Entonces ambos llegan con sus productos e intercambian, ambos llegan con su música, con su cultura, e intercambian, participan, comparten.
After I became familiar with landscapes and cultures of Bolivia and read the scholarship on Bolivian history and religious developments, I noticed the powerful contradictions that exist within the country of Bolivia. In the physical world, contrasts in the landscapes between valley lowlands and altiplano highlands result in a patchwork of differing microclimates that produce a variety of agricultural products which complement what another geographic region might lack. This complementarity in the landscapes has undoubtedly influenced human patterns of social organization, how institutions are acted upon, how agricultural activities and trade networks are formed, and how social relationships have been created and sustained through ritual alliances. Yet human agents and groups, while constrained by their environments, are not necessarily determined by it. While a theoretical model that attempts to explain the systemic adaptations of humans to their environment such as those put forth by cultural ecologists (Steward 1990) might partially aid in understanding how cultural forms in the Andes have taken shape, it remains but a small contextualization of how cultural practices are actually carried out. Cultural ecologists base their arguments on a “limitation hypothesis” and the “optimal foraging theory”; these both stress utilitarian cost-benefit analyses to argue that cultural adaptation and movements through history are explained from limiting environmental factors. I argue that cultural relationships, such as how particular groups interact or form kinships ties, should not be studied in a category separate from interactions between people and the environment.

Rather than constraining my research to an environmental study which methodologically moves from the ground up to understand religious expression in the Andes, I have also incorporated a historical study of religious institutions, both pre-Columbian and Catholic, to add a deeper understanding of how ritual and religion has taken form in a Catholic community in Bolivia. Institutions become integrated into the landscapes and act as control points or mediums through which human agents act upon, communicate through, and manipulate to influence the degree of dissemination of foreign ideology into their territory (Christian 1971). This study follows in the tradition of the *L'Année Sociologique*, where Durkheim and Mauss stressed that movement and mobility are historical products of will and religious belief. Social relationships and
ritual value are just as much responsible for human movement through space and development of culture as humans adapting to environmental factors.

The cultural forms that are expressed in the two religious festivals that this thesis documents implicate relationships between pre-Columbian religious institutions and the long history of Spanish colonization which brought Catholicism into the Bolivian countryside. A strong connection to indigenous religion is still conveyed in the historical consciousness of the participants in the festivals. This is evidenced in ethnographic interviews I conducted which undeniably are relative to the social memories of pre-Columbians. The use of ayni, ritualized drinking bouts, and relics of devotion that resemble huacas suggest the survival of ancient practices that pre-Columbians utilized for religious ceremonialism and social organization. The religious syncretism that has taken place adds structure and form to local institutions, town councils, and the overall political landscape.

With religious syncretism evident in both festivals, I also demonstrate an intercultural understanding of religious celebration in the Andes through historical and archival sources describing religious institutions and ritual celebration from the earliest pre-Columbian and Colonial times, juxtaposing how both institutions prefigure the way ritual has taken shape in present day form in the Andes. While obvious differences exist between pre-Hispanic and Catholic religious institutions, and I highlight many of these differences, my intent is not to emphasize contrasting traditions as Andean vs. Spanish. Rather, I show that these disparities have commonalities and have even aided each other in the expansion of the politically empowered group and conversely subjugated populations to their conquerors regardless of ethnicity or religious differences.
Chapter 2: Methods

Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion

The methodological practices that make up our understanding of what constitutes cultural anthropological studies have undergone tremendous amounts of change within the last thirty years. Anthropology as a subfield in social science continues to redefine itself in a modern world that is often referred to as “globalized”. No longer are anthropological studies focused on bounded, isolated communities that have seen little to no contact with the modern world, as such populations rarely exist today. The location or “field” of an anthropological study as well has shifted away from an ideology that emphasized studying a foreign isolated culture to cultures that might be in our own backyard: businesses, corporations, or even motivations behind consumer choices (Gupta 1997).

This research was designed to account for cultural changes that have forced populations into more complex social relationships that are not necessarily bounded to a specific location, overarching structure, or racial identity. However, given the geographic isolation of my research site in a country that is the least developed of any other South American nation with an overwhelmingly population of indigenous people, many cultural traditions such as Andean religion and traditional social organization demonstrate a more encompassing class structure that certainly influences the reality of cultural process today. Given this context, it was appropriate to employ a more “traditional” methodological approach to anthropological inquiry, focusing on history and “thick” ethnographic descriptions in order to accurately understand how social processes come to form a system of shared patterns of symbols and meanings. Clifford Geertz (1973) described these shared meanings as ‘webs of significance’. Ethnography takes these patterned social themes, interconnected through “webs of significance,” and distinguishes their different meanings.

Given that this research is primarily concerned with anthropological theories of religion and ritual, ethno-historical methodology was best suited to separating cultural patterns and analyzing them for meaning. In his seminal work Religion and Ritual in
the Making of Humanity (1999), Rappaport has described ritual as something that almost always is composed of invariance. Ritual performance always involves deference to the canonical, and new rituals are largely composed of elements taken from previous rituals. Though the invariant aspect of ritual is largely dominant and symbolic (i.e. divorced from time and space), there is also the necessity for variation in ritual, such as where, when, and how the ritual is performed as cultures continuously change and adapt to new political circumstances. The ethno-historical task for this thesis was to document how the tradition of religious ceremonials in Bolivia has undergone change reflecting different social currents and historical developments throughout time. If Andean religious celebration represents important traditions of Bolivian communities throughout history, then documenting the changes that have occurred with ceremonial expression will illuminate how variant aspects of ritual are re-created in a modern day context. This hypothesis was guided by the work of Catherine Bell (1998), who claims that “small scale ritual activity can mirror the organization and values of the culture” and that ritual shows “strong links between daily domestic offerings and the construction of jural authority, lineage organization, residence, property inheritance rights, and regional-national politics” (214).

Research Paradigm

This research specifically examines the cultural processes in two religious festivals, the feast of El Señor de la Columna and the feast El Señor de Pascua. Both festivals influence how social relationships take form in the Larecaja province of Bolivia, and demonstrate the central argument of this thesis: that group identities form and are sustained by belief in certain religious objects and devotions, expressed outwardly through confraternal celebration.

Confraternities or religious brotherhoods from varied geographic locations converge in Sorata and its surrounding annexes to perform various ritual duties and performances in conjunction with the Catholic Liturgical calendar. Though a large percentage of the performers do not actually live in Sorata, the participants claim a relationship to the town and surrounding area witnessed through their pilgrimage to
worship the local saint on festival days. Two overarching questions for my research
were answered after this study: how does the ritual process occurring within
confraternities influence socio-political organization and group identities in the Larecaja
province? How have indigenous religious elements been preserved through the Catholic
Church in spite of acculturation to a dominating institution?

This thesis deconstructs the contradiction of Andean cultural forms combining with
those of the Spanish to demonstrate how religious expression articulated, producing
religious syncretism in the American colonies as a result of the Spanish grafting their
administration onto pre-existing Andean modes of social organization. This is an
important intellectual project given transformations of consciousness and changes in
Andean identity that have resulted from the process of establishing foreign colonial
institutions in the Americas that altered religious values and modes of production,
setting the stage for how societies function in the region today.

The other focus of this thesis is acculturation and how Andean identity changed as
workers entered a capitalist economy that was maintained through Catholic institutions.
Throughout the seventeenth century, many workers immigrated from their kin groups
known in the Aymara language as *ayllus*, where ritual exchanges between members
ensured the group’s social reproduction, access to land, and reciprocal community
support (Zulawski 1995). One situation that resulted from migration to work in mining
centers or on private estates during the colonial years was a process of hispanization and
the severing of ties with their traditional communities. Diversifying indigenous roles
and engaging colonial institutions would prove key to the collective survival of
indigenous people, and consequently they responded to the disruptions of colonialism
with pre-Hispanic strategies of collective survival. Acculturation proved to be a
convoluted process in the Andes that was expressed in unpredictable ways under
various types of circumstances. Indigenous groups improvised strategies to maintain
their ethnic networks, access to land, and ritual life, while simultaneously participating
in roles created by colonial institutions and the Catholic Church.


Research Design

My research is exploratory in nature. The main objective was to collect information that pertains to values associated with religion, identity, participation in confraternities, and the formation of social relationships in the Larecaja province. I used a qualitative approach since qualitative methods are suited to address questions concerning interpretations of meanings, concepts, symbols, metaphors, and analyzing ways in which humans make sense of their surroundings (Berg 2004). Besides Thomas Abercrombie’s (1998) study on ritual in a Bolivian community, little previous research on Andean ceremonialism has been conducted from an ethno-historical lens that could inform quantitative approaches (e.g., closed-ended survey questions) especially in the Larecaja province, and several aspects of my research (e.g., meanings, interpretations of religion) do not lend themselves easily to quantification.

I also used a case study approach to examine Bolivian perceptions of religious values. Case studies help in understanding complex, contemporary social “phenomenon within its real-life context when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin 1989: 23). This definition is an excellent description of what I encountered when analyzing the two festivals. Despite the fact that the festival of El Señor de Pascua was more local and indigenous than the Fiesta for El Señor de la Columna, the themes did not always fit into neatly divided categories of Indigenous vs. Spanish, and often participation in both ceremonies was undertaken by both populations. Given that religious symbolism contains a myriad of different values, the roles such symbols play in the lives of people also demonstrate points of congruence between differing group identities. Berg (2004) states that “when case studies are properly undertaken, they should not only fit the specific individual, group, or event studied but also generally provide understanding about similar individuals, groups, and events” because human behavior is rarely unique to one group (2004: 259). By untangling how social relationships are structured in relation to ritual ceremonialism in Sorata, the relationships of these humans to holy figures materialized signaling the demarcation of group identities with separate sources of shared religious values and symbolism, yet themes such as faith, migration, work
patterns, and Andean religious elements could be found across both ceremonies. Thus, both differences and similarities between Spanish and Andean religious practices are described in my ethnography to build a comparative account of religious practice in Sorata.

**Population & Sampling**

As well as finalizing my Master’s Thesis, the purpose of my research was to provide information to the Bolivian National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF), the institution which oversaw my research project spanning three months of time in Bolivia. The mission objectives for MUSEF, and therefore for this research project, include the documentation of local knowledge and cultural products to show the diversity and cultural survival present in Bolivia, and to create a space for the articulation of local knowledge to the general population.

My ethnography, which includes interviews, participant observation, and historical analysis, was conducted with the aid of a research assistant working for me through the museum. My assistant was a graduate student of Sociology studying at the Universidad Mayor de San Andres in La Paz, Bolivia. My assistant could be considered a local from the town of Sorata where his family also conducted business. With his help, we conducted numbers of interviews of two sample populations. The sample populations correspond to individuals participating in either the festival for El Señor de la Columna or the festival of El Señor de Pascua. Working together, we identified key informants for interviews based on individuals who we believed were experts on the topic of religious ceremonialism in Sorata such as Catholic priests and festival sponsors known as *prestes* and *pasantes* (individuals who organize and pay for festival expenses), members of confraternities participating in the festivals, and prominent political figures in the community such as the *alcalde*, *sub-prefectura* (a type of governor), and malkus (recognized indigenous authorities in the communities).

Interviewing is often employed in qualitative research because it can provide a rich understanding of other people, their experiences, and how they make meanings from those experiences. Initially I approached the study with a pre-determined set of research
questions in what is known in ethnography as semi-structured interviews. I found that these questions helped in identifying key concepts in the study which later I expanded upon with additional questions since semi-structured interviews allow for additional questions as opposed to structured interviews (Berg 2004). By not exercising complete control over my interview subjects, new topics also emerged that contributed to the construction of values related to religious ceremonialism.

**Triangulation**

My research was conducted using participant observation, literature review, and archival research as triangulation techniques. Bernard (2006) claims that there are five major reasons why participant observation should be used in social science research about cultural groups: it (a) allows collection of greater types of data; (b) minimizes reactivity; (c) helps ask reasonable and culturally-appropriate questions; (d) provides intuitive comprehension of a culture, which allows greater confidence in data meaning; and (e) addresses research questions that cannot be examined without participant observation. To conduct participant observation, I essentially participated in the behavior and daily lives of my informants, cooking, eating, participating in the sacraments, drinking, celebrating, developing friendships, and establishing rapport. I made use of informal interviews during this time in the field, talking with my informants and taking time to record field notes and descriptions of my experiences.

One of the advantages to working at the Museum in Bolivia was that I was provided with professional credentials which allowed me to access Bolivia’s libraries and National archives. Nearly half of my time conducting research in Bolivia was spent searching for relevant information in archives and libraries, particularly making efforts to obtain primary sources of information such as colonial documents pertaining to religion in Bolivia or the earliest recorded descriptions of Sorata and its inhabitants. Visual material and photographs also provided cultural historical insight into the colonial Andean past. Viewing cultural history can well serve the ethno-historian given that images portray variations in style, dress, architecture, art & aesthetics, all of which are primary functions of acculturation (Blackman 1986: 158). Secondary sources of
information were also highly valuable to my study given that many items are unavailable to our libraries and book stores in the United States.

Limitations in obtaining primary source documents and access to some archives presented themselves to me for various reasons, particularly political strife, uprisings, and violent revolutions. During 2006 and 2007, several protests shut transportation from La Paz to Sorata and closed the municipal buildings where archives and the town’s historical records were housed. The skirmish resulted from two people from opposing political parties, the Indigenous Pachakuti Movement (MIP), and the Movement for Socialism (MAS), vying for the position of alcalde. For nearly three months Sorata had two alcaldes since neither one of the individuals would leave office. One day, residents stormed the plaza and chained the alcaldía’s front doors. While eventually the situation was resolved without casualties, it left a tense atmosphere around the town cabildo. I was only given access towards the end of my research in 2009, and much information was deemed disorganized and inaccessible.

Lost or destroyed primary source documents also resulted in a violent uprising in 2003 during which several government offices in Sorata including the alcaldía were set on fire and partially destroyed. Other locals told me that during the uprising individuals looted public documents and archival material, and their new whereabouts were un-known. This uprising, which signaled the political rise of union leader Evo Morales and a massive political effort that would overthrow Sanchez de Lozada’s neo-liberal government, was not Sorata’s first encounter with revolutionary politics.

In 1780, Sorata was the site of an indigenous uprising lead by Miguel & Andres Tupac Amaru, and Diego Cristobal who represented the Quechua speaking Cusco faction of revolutionary movements sweeping through upper Peru\(^2\) during this time (Andrien 2001: 65). An army of over 7,000 men laid siege to Sorata by altering large dykes located above the town that served as irrigation channels. The town was flooded, destroying many of the public documents housed in administrative buildings. Father Juan Dios Zegarra, a priest from the Mercedarian order, was an eyewitness to Amaru’s assault in Sorata. Documents state that many houses were robbed and burnt to the

\(^2\) Before Bolivia gained independence from Spain in 1825, the Southern Andean region was known as Upper Peru.
ground, the rebels taking jewelry, gold, money, and destroying the municipalities’
documents (Siles 1990: 184). This break in the historical record is clearly evident as the
majority of archival material such as land sales and petitions to the government date
from after 1782. More destruction occurred in the late nineteenth century when the
Catholic Church in Sorata was destroyed in a fire. A parish priest I spoke with believed
that many of the historical documents relating to the church’s history were destroyed in
the fire along with Catholic images, icons, and relics that dated from the colonial era.

Despite these setbacks and the actual lack of archival material I collected, I
established important professional and academic relationships for future collaborations
and cross cultural communication between American and Bolivian institutions. Besides
the archival material located in MUSEF, I worked and established rapport with the
archives located in Sorata’s alcaldía, the Archivo Alcaldía Municipal Sorata (AAMS),
the Archivo Nacional de Bolivia (ANB), Archivo Historico del Congreso Nacional
(AHLP), Archivo de La Paz (ALP), Obispado de Bolivia, Archivo y Biblioteca
Arquidiocesanos Monseñor Miguel de los Santos Taborga, Centro Eclesial de
Documentacion, as well as several libraries such as the Biblioteca Etnologica de
Cochabamba, and the Centro de Investigacion y Promocion del Campesino (CIPCA).
After my time in Bolivia, I worked in Spain’s National Archives including the Archivo
Historico Nacional (AHN) located in Madrid, and the Archivo General de Indias (AGI)
in Seville, Spain.

Data Analysis

Digitally recorded interviews were taken from audio format and written down first
into Spanish, and then transcribed from Spanish into English with the help of a native
Spanish speaker who also spoke English. This later step allowed for Spanish phrases to
be put into a proper English context, such as whether or not a sentence was in
subjunctive tense and therefore making it a possibility, example, or even a made up
story. All of the interviews that I use in this thesis appear in English throughout the text.
The Spanish translation is located at the bottom of the pages in footnotes.
My interviews were analyzed using constructivist grounded theory. Constructivist grounded theory recognizes multiple social realities and the role both the participant and researcher play in creating knowledge (Bernard 2006). The researcher does not approach the data with presupposed theories, but rather closely examines the data to see what theories emerge. The steps for analysis are (a) concurrent collection and analysis of the data, (b) development of multi-step data coding process, (c) comparative methods, (d) memoing to aid with conceptual analysis and diagramming, and (e) illuminating theoretical ideas with rich quotes (Bernard 2006). I used Nvivo software to organize my coded data into thematic categories and for easy retrieval of relevant quotes.

Lastly, whenever possible throughout this thesis, I use historical dimensions to shed light on present day social processes.

Chapter 3: Spanish and Andean Historical contexts

Introduction

Discerning the origin of cultural logic that produced religious syncretism when Andean and colonial institutions came into contact with each other is convoluted. In order to understand how this religious development took place in the new world, it is necessary to examine the changing relations of religion, labor, and attitudes towards property in both Spain and the Andean region before the first conquistadors arrived in the Americas. This comparison contrasts the differences in social organization and cultural traditions between the two societies, yet it also demonstrates how both societies shared similar patterns of development, most notably the Andean aspects of socio-religious organization possessing characteristics of rural settlement patterns in Spanish society (Zuluwaski: 1995). Another similarity occurring between the old world and the pre-Columbian is the increasing levels of social stratification. The prohibition of serfdom in Spain during the fifteenth century and the challenge to the old aristocratic land holdings by proto liberals gave populations more maneuverability as they began to enter a capitalist mode of production. Likewise, the expansion of the Incan empire
throughout the collasuyu region during the fifteenth century accelerated social stratification and stimulated peasant mobility among the Aymara kingdoms surrounding Lake Titicaca. As the Incan imperial structures partially disbanded the ethnic groups in the area, they also solidified a bureaucratic structure that the Spanish could easily manipulate into a capitalist system.

Many pre-Columbian societies such as the Incan Tiwantinsuyu and Tiwanaku civilizations successfully sustained themselves by raising revenues to support centralized institutions with imperial elites, courts, armies, and bureaucrats of the priesthood. The process in which revenues are raised to support the state and ethnic authorities differs from one civilization to another, yet in the Andes, this system can best be understood through the continuous physical mobility of households and populations to exploit productivity across scores of differing microclimates. The Andean system of hierarchical control, John V. Murra’s theory of verticality (1980), involves the movement of laborers to exploit products on different ecological floors to complement what one region might be lacking in terms of agriculture. Ritual exchanges involving gift giving and ceremonialism to ancestral leaders to renew these long distance relationships was a defining characteristic of this practice. While the ritual process is difficult to understand from pre-historic archeological remains, relationships between highland and lowland dwellers can be traced to the earliest human occupation on the high plains surrounding Lake Titicaca. Verticality later advanced to a higher level of political organization during the Tiwanaku civilization and further extended its reaches under the Incan expansion of macro regional states. The movement of goods between different regions in pre-Columbian societies occurred with the absence of commerce familiar to institutions and services in contemporary western civilizations. Gradually, this system succumbed to Spanish modifications, replacing the overarching institutions of the Inca with domestic units for control functions and a mercantile economy.
**Prehistory**

From the earliest testimonies and documentations of sixteenth-century Spanish chroniclers in the Andes and oral testimonies of indigenous populations, we know that Lake Titicaca assumed a central or referential position for the transmission of human consciousness. Lake Titicaca was the scene of foundational myths that narrate a link between material and spiritual culture for Andeans, separating structure and organization from formlessness in spatial and temporal terms. This fixed point, separated from its wider geographic context, is sacred in that it provides a rationale through which cultures organize themselves. The Aymara word *taypi*, which literally means “center of the world” designates the lake as the most sacred of places, evidenced not only through shrines and temples built on various locations surrounding the lake, but also in the re-contextualization of the original Aymara mythological creation story by the Inca and later by Spanish conquerors to legitimize their political domination. Due to the lakes central position in the Andean region, its abundant source of fishing, agriculture, wildlife, and as the site of advanced pre-Columbian civilizations, those who controlled this divine space could exercise political power throughout the Andean region. According to the concept of *taypi*, social order is established by individuals of political power who fuse material space with divine justifications: uniting two opposing half’s: right/left, high/low, man/women (Salles-Reese 1997: 15). All of these dualistic representations also correspond to spatial and qualitative designations in all directions surrounding the lake and to the dualist notion of *Urcosuyu* vs. *Umusuyu* or highland people vs. lowland people.

The fragile alpine environment of Lake Titicaca was the site in which populations originally characterized as semi-nomadic hunting and gathering groups evolved into complex societies. After roughly 6,000 years of experimentation, the domestication of agriculture involving root crops (particularly potatoes and a variety of subspecies) and cameloid herding (llama, alpaca, vicuña, guanaco) became the primary sources of subsistence for altiplano dwellers (Klein 2003: 9). Yet given the high altitude of the altiplano (13,000 ft.), the populations residing here were, and are still to this day, limited by the utilities of this region. As altiplano populations developed into more
complex societies including bureaucratic institutions and a state religion like that of Tiwanaku, a significant characteristic to this process of social organization around Lake Titicaca is evidenced in the dualistically perceived Andean ideology of agricultural complementary.

From the earliest archeological records existing in Bolivia, a common feature of Andean social organization involved ethnic authorities sending colonists into geographically dispersed ecological tiers at lower elevations to exploit a range of agricultural products for the support of denser populations living above. Populations were likely moved between colonies at different ecological floors including the southern Peruvian and Chilean coast, towards the eastern valleys and the edges of the Amazon, and parts of northern Argentina. Moving west towards the coastal valleys of Moquegua Peru, settlers cultivated corn, peppers, cotton, squashes, in contrast to potatoes, quinoa, and the pastoral llama herding activities of the altiplano. The eastern valleys were a source of corn, cereals, and a variety of vegetables and fruits from the lower elevations. Networks of trade existed in all directions from the altiplano, moved by caravans of llama drivers. According to Murra’s (1980) theory of vertical integration, the original populations of the altiplano were “never outsiders to costal-oasis lands; they were always bound up in the same historical project” (Lumbreras 1999: 524).

From 100 A.D. onward, a major cultural and religious center known as Tiwanaku developed just thirty miles south of Lake Titicaca and marks an important era in Bolivian history. At its peak, it is estimated that the Tiwanaku ruled over a population of several million people (Villamarin 1999: 630). The empire connected to the state numerous different ethnic colonies in an area over several hundred thousand square kilometers with varying degrees of hierarchical administrative duties. Tiwanaku civilization is associated with a distinctive artistic and religious style whose designs have been discovered in pottery and other religious objects throughout the highlands, coastal areas, and eastern valleys from 600 A.D. onward, suggesting their sphere of influence spread after the aforementioned date.

Towards 1200 A.D., the Tiwanaku civilization rapidly declined and was subsequently abandoned, possibly due to environmental factors such as drought. Over
the next three centuries, the lake region saw the development of Aymara speaking kingdoms and a clear departure from the Tiwanaku period. The oral traditions recorded by Spanish and mestizo chroniclers who created the first written records of Bolivian history, have identified that there were at least twelve Aymara speaking social groups clearly demarcated and ruled by regional kings and nobility, numbering in the hundreds of thousands and possibly millions (Rowe 1947: 205). Like their predecessors, the Aymara adapted to the varied geography by cultivating lands throughout differing altitudes and ecological tiers to ensure a variety of food stuff for consumption. Basic social and economic organization in the Andes was constituted by multifaceted definitions of endogamy, kinship, and extended family, allocated through the distribution of social units known as ayllus. Ayllus and their members occupied lands across different ecological regions and were worked by agricultural colonists known by the term mitimaes to supply goods from temperate and tropical environments to highland dwelling communities.

**Social Units of Andean Organization**

Generally, members of ayllus were also considered to be part of the same kin since they could trace their origins to one spiritual ancestor that symbolically presided over a territorial jurisdiction in which communal land holdings known by the term llacta in Quechua and marka in Aymara, were guaranteed for descendents. The spiritual ancestors evolved from warrior groups, local patterns of descent, and common ancestry into positions of hereditary leadership (Wightman 1990). These leaders, known by the term kuraka or malku, and then later by the Spanish as cacique, were in charge of managing the ayni system, a practice characterized by populations engaging in ritual forms of reciprocity, owing certain things such as labor, agricultural products, or generalized social support to community leaders and members in their ayllu. In return, those in debt received benefits such as access to community land, labor assistance, and possibly a share of political power (Zulawski 1995: 16). Labor service was provided by mitamaes, individuals who periodically relocated to different ecological zones to exploit commodities that complemented a limited source of foodstuffs found among their ayllus
original locus. The work of these agricultural colonists was a necessary obligation among ayllu members and a shared responsibility that contributed to the greater good of the community. Some colonists spent considerable time in the lowlands away from their home ayllu or even left permanently. Despite their temporary relocations, mitamaes retained membership to their home ayllu, linking themselves to their home communities through exchanges of agricultural products and complicated kinship networks sustained by the ayllu’s huaca or ancestral deity that was worshiped on festive occasions to symbolically guarantee members a share of food production and future land use (Godoy 1986: 730).

In ancient times before societies developed in the Andes, god like beings known as huacas inhabited the land. They moved entire landforms, created irrigation and agricultural systems, and organized the world so that it could be understood by ordinary men and women. They were the Andean Olympians. Huacas privileged certain humans, the demigod malkus who accomplished deeds nearly as great as they did. When this occurred, huacas turned themselves into stone, making their power everlasting to their children who recognized their knowledge on a daily basis. This usually occurred at a site where someone had outdone them for the better (Mills 1997: 46).

Through the worship of huacas, malkus channeled the submission and service of their people in reciprocal relations organized through an asymmetrical hierarchy of ranked individuals. Frank Salomon describes the llacta or Andean settlement as a union of the huaca, the territory that the descendent group occupies, and the residents who invoke and pay homage to the ancestral deity (as cited in Mills 1999: 47). The word huaca when used in Quechua/Aymara contains a range of semantic meaning, though generally huacas can be referred to as something representative of a sacred place, a shrine, or places of pilgrimage where devotees give offerings in accordance with the Andean belief that they descended from a particular place in the landscape. Often huacas took physical form in natural stone idols, unusual boulders and rock outcroppings, or even mountain peaks. These locations might be the resting place of a mummified ancestor, also known in Aymara as the malku. Thus, the malkus were the physical embodiment of spiritual ancestry originating from a particular location or
natural feature. This title validated their leadership role as protectors and providers to their people.

Pre-Hispanic society was organized through a series of levels, each level containing a certain degree of authority. The system of collecting tribute was based on multiples of 100, having officials at every 100, 1000, and 10,000 numbers of heads to collect tribute from (Carter 1964: 43). A cacique or malku official might represent a cantonal center, then another official at the level of the moiety division, and ultimately the high officials and priests of the empire. Consequently, malkus asked for the goods and labor that they needed to sustain their populations from their subalterns, who then went to their subordinates to request services all the way down to the level of the commoner and the household, the level furthest removed from political power (Abercrombie 1998: 162). Peasants were not required to pay taxes to ethnic or state authorities from their own household harvests or earnings. Rather, state tribute was achieved through labor conscriptions and personal work on the ayllus lands, building roads, weaving, coca harvesting in the lowlands, or guano gathering in locations far removed from their home. Even when a crop failed on the ayllu’s lands, their leaders were responsible for the loss. In return, these mitmaes were guaranteed access to highland goods and institutions including religious shrines and possibly the direct participation within political offices (Murra 1995: 58). The social contract was always realized through gift giving, ceremonialism, and ritual drinking. This type of social organization is still practiced throughout Bolivia today in the rural comunidades and is known as the Andean cargo system.

**The Tawantinsuyu**

Around the year 1440, the Inca successfully incorporated areas of Ecuador, Argentina, and the southern Andean region of modern day Bolivia, building roads that linked regional institutions back to the empire’s center in Cuzco. Given the pre-existing foundation in which Andean society was organized for tribute goods and services, Tawantinsuyu was able to successfully graft labor demands onto recently colonized ethnic groups with considerable ease. In this process, the Inca would balance state
demands of labor with economic and cultural autonomy, respecting the rights and
traditions of those they incorporated into their empire through forms of symbolic
generosity. This strategy allowed the Inca lords to accumulate considerable amounts of
stored wealth and energy by adapting to local systems (Larson 1995: 5).

Given that the Aymara kingdoms were unable to fully unite in the Lake region
and often found themselves in confrontation with each other, some of these populations
succumbed to Incan rule. Yet the Inca’s incorporation of the Aymara kingdoms was
done in a way that largely maintained pre-existing patterns of social, economic, and
political organization. Part of the Inca’s success was their tolerance of local cults and
religions. The Inca expanded and adapted to local culture and their institutions, leaving
the administrative leadership under the control of regional leaders rather than imposing
homogeneity (Silverblatt 1988). As a new mythological sub cycle was enacted to
reinforce a shared history, autonomous kin groups became administrative units of the
Inca state. A portion of the community’s efforts would be directed to the Incan state,
increasing the degree of social differentiation and inequality as new burdens and
demands that benefited individual Incan rulers passed through a hierarchy from newly
conquered regional leaders to commoners.

Colonial Andean Development

When the Europeans arrived to the Americas, they were inclined to foster
elements of Incan social organization, envisioning that local populations would best be
controlled through familiar institutions. The structure of Incan institutions however was
to be substantially altered by the Spaniards to meet the demands of a new globalized
market. The ayllu would be redefined under Spanish control by delineating groups
based on territoruality rather than emphasizing kinship, and by incorporating the
kuraka/malkus into the system of colonial administration to allow for the direct
manipulation of the indigenous peasant population, altering the expression of
reciprocity and destroying the original balance achieved through allyu social
organization (Wightman 1990). The employment of the yanacona for personal services
would be redirected from the Incan state to the new colonial administers and hacienda owners under the title of the yanacona sector.

However, Viceroy Francisco de Toledo was not concerned with patterns of social change within indigenous society; his anxiety was directed towards indigenous leaders and private settlers who challenged the authority of the Spanish crown, and the disorganized circumstances under which indigenous populations subsisted. His goal was to regularize Indian labor and tribute obligations by concentrating indigenous groups into settlements known as reductions to offset abuses by the first Spanish settlers operating from the encomienda, to establish a court system that protected indigenous populations from exploitation, and to destroy huacas and other forms of indigenous religion (Wightman 1990). In spite of Toledo’s good intentions, new forms of labor exploitation resulted from policies that ignored traditional land use systems based on ancestry; local court systems and administrative officials proved as corrupt as their predecessors, and indigenous religion was actually strengthened by contact with Catholic institutions. In his effort to avoid multifaceted forms of labor and tribute exploitations under the encomienda system, Toledo’s reducciones policy aggravated the dispersal and migration of Indian populations from their original settlements to seek protection under Spanish settlers and encomenderos originally targeted by Toledo’s reforms for violating the Crown’s policies and evading tribute (Wightman 1990). The emergence of Indian migrants and their descendants produced a new social group known as the forasteros who would redefine community structures, social ties, and economic relations as arrangements between local leaders, traditional authorities, and colonial administrators were complicated.

As new lines of authority were drawn, a syncretic colonial Andean culture developed in response to the imposition of new political institutions that mixed European and Andean values. Similar to pre-Hispanic land use patterns regulated by the malkus, the Spaniards also had legal definitions for cooperative social groups that were linked to an ancient local dominion through inheritable rank, otherwise known as the fuero (special legal privileges granted by Spanish monarchs). Large Spanish land holdings controlled the majority of workable land at the turn of the fifteenth century. Many of these lands, previously controlled by the Moors, passed to the jurisdiction of
the clergy, nobility, military, and settlers at fortified frontiers during the reconquest of Spain. These noblemen claimed special rights that were granted to them by virtue of the *fueros*, allowing them to engage in tax-collecting activities from inhabitants of their domains (Barnadas 1984: 511).

When the Spaniards came to the Americas, the indigenous land use system was re-legalized by creating ad hoc military alliances with Europeans who in turn recognized the caciques leadership of small sovereignties. Caciques sought to make use of the new imperial structures by acting as external mediators between their local communities and the colonial state (Saignes 1999). As the Spanish colonial administration took root in the Americas, caciques were forced to respond to the opposing demands of their community’s reproduction while also fulfilling the Spaniards' tribute and *mita* obligations.

The encomienda was the first Castilian economic system implemented in the Americas. Operating in a somewhat interim period before the complete establishment of a Colonial administration, the encomienda performed an important economic and political function for the channeling of goods into a new international mercantile system. The encomienda was an economic grant to a particular individual of political authority, who was allowed to maintain implicit territorial jurisdiction of a recently subdued area. In the Americas, the encomienda entailed the rights to the tribute and labor of the subjects of certain chiefs (caciques), not to Indians who lived in a certain territory, a policy which subordinated the cacique to the encomendero, yet still allowed for the ethnic leaders to maintain a degree of autonomy and control of their ayllu (Keith 1971: 36).

Over a short period of fifty years however, the encomienda in Peru had become abusive towards Indians who were over worked and burdened with excessive demands, resulting in the sharp decline of indigenous populations from which laborers were drawn from. Given the encomendero’s rapid accumulation of wealth, their aristocratic origins, and their power over local populations, the Crown increasingly came to view the encomenderos as potential adversaries to their political legitimacy (Zuluwaski 1995). This was a similar process to that which had occurred during the re-conquest of Spain when the Crown challenged the landholdings of local lords with their officials,
the corregidores. Juan de Matienzo, a reforming administrator, while acknowledging that the foundation of the colony rested upon the encomienda successfully co-existing with Andean patterns of social organization, also favored a more directly administered system that would be managed judicially by government employees (Zulawski 1995). This would later come to be the *repartimiento*.

The implementation of the encomienda was to some degree facilitated by the pre-existing hierarchies of the Inca and Aymara tribute system. Early colonists in the area realized the efficient extraction of material goods could best be accomplished by leaving the indigenous system of reciprocity and redistribution intact, though modifying the hierarchy to enable the Spanish to receive goods extracted from local populations by the kurakas and malkus. The Spanish essentially replaced the Inca, inviting the local malkus and kurakas into their homes, gifting them with lavish goods or granting them lands with herds and animals (Abercrombie 1998). Commoners might be required to supply the encomendero with silver from the nearby Potosí mines or with agricultural products such as coca and maize which he could then re-sell on the market. Commoners might also be required to provide goods and services to various members in their ayllu, possibly to the local priest, and various services to the malkus.

In 1560, the encomienda system began to unravel as the balance of reciprocity between the cacique and the encomendero heavily favored the latter and their increasing unattainable demands for tribute. The intermediary position of the cacique working between the ayllu and the Crown became even more apparent in the eyes of his people, jeopardizing his relations and legitimacy as a traditional leader. The number of rebellions among Indian laborers escalated to new heights, evidencing that workers had been pushed beyond their limits having to fulfill duties to both encomenderos and caciques. Increasing mortality rates prompted the Crown to take control over a portion of encomiendas; by 1570, twenty three out of sixty seven encomienda grants had been reduced to the Crown’s authority (Zulawski 1995: 46). The crown determined the encomienda was not in the best interest of the colonial government, and in response to serve the needs of an economy that progressively became more complex, a new system emerged known as repartimiento labor, which entailed the direct intervention of state representatives to allocate labor for the colonies’ most lucrative enterprises.
The organization of repartimiento labor in the Andes was undertaken by Francisco Toledo who was faced with the challenge of resettling large populations into compact villages known as reducciones where evangelization, collecting tribute, and the mobilization of labor could be achieved more effectively than the encomienda. This proved a difficult task given that the native population resided in dispersed settlements adapted to the Andean environment and vertical ecological floors. Toledo considered two options for organizing a new colonial government in Peru. One option was for indirect rule where an indigenous republic and a Christian republic were separate, preserving the traditional organization of Indian tribute to their ethnic lords. The other choice was for Indians to be taxed individually, removing their obligations to their lords and eliminating restraints on where they could freely go. Toledo compromised on a solution; the leadership position of the caciques was retained while an additional currency tax was fixed individually (Saignes 1995: 169). This tax was to be collectively paid at the level of the new settlement town. Andeans would be inserted into church and state. Native dynasties would be recognized as dependencies of the crown and their royal patronage established through the Catholic Church.

Local populations were then regrouped into reducciones under the authority of the cablido, the priest, and the corregidor. This involved dismantling the pre-Inca and Inca mitmaq colonies that supplied goods from diverse ecological regions within a kinship network, a progression that rivaled the political leadership of caciques and disbanded ethnic networks in favor of domestic units. The reducciones channeled goods and labor to European society or forced Andeans to offer their goods and their labor to the European market. Caciques would also be responsible for supplying regular rotating groups of laborers for the mines in Potosi.

Once populations were reduced into settlements, the new social units became known as repartimientos and were identified by name, age, sex, and civil status on an official pardon or census list. Given their intermediary positions between the colonial government and indigenous populations, the cacique and his assistants, entitled to special privileges such as exemption from tribute obligations, evolved into powerful political forces within these new communities, exploiting both residents of their jurisdictions and migrants who sought sanctuary from their reduction settlement. Yet
the reducción process led to ambiguous compromises between the crown and Andean chiefdoms, aggravating old ethnic and dynastic rivalries in the competition for prestigious offices such as the *mita de captaincies* and the position of the alcalde.

Fig. 3 Sixteenth Century Colonial Burecratic Institutions. Drawing by Jon Lord.

As the settlements began to take shape, the corregidor acting on behalf of the crown and the colonial government would administer to the local native populations. As mentioned above, the corregidor originally functioned in Castile as an urban official to counterbalance the political and financial powers of nobility and their town settlements, though in Peru, the *corregimiento* acted on a provincial basis throughout the countryside to administer the local populations, collecting taxes and overseeing mita labor obligations (Wightman 1990).

The cabildo was modeled after the town councils in Spain and conceived in the Americas as an alternative to traditional indigenous authorities. From the reducciones, government authorities could allocate labor pools to work in the mines or grant citizenship to those working on an encomendero’s hacienda. With the government now administering the system, decisions about how many natives could be allocated for labor would now be carefully regulated to avoid previous abuses and over extractions that lead to the decline of populations under the encomienda system. A major difference between the colonial model from the previous ones (indigenous and later the encomienda systems) was that labor would not be considered a means through which
tribute could be collected. Rather, workers would be paid wages in order to pay tribute in the form of currency from their earnings, though still forced to work in the mines (Zulawski 1995: 46).

**Church Institutions in the Americas**

The institutional church in the Americas came to revolve around the diocese. Dioceses became the territorial units of military conquest and to regions in which economic development was expanding. In addition to evangelizing efforts, the training of seminary priests, and presiding over spiritual ministries, the church maintained a strong relationship with civil authorities at every level of the administrative structure, carrying out the laws of the viceroy, audiencia, and the crown (Banardas 1984: 518). Church institutions first developed in Lima and Cuzco with their ecclesiastical activities spreading eastward by the missionary activities of the four major mendicant orders; the Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians, and Mercedarians. In 1532, ecclesiastical authority shifted from Lima and Cuzco to Chuquisaca where the first bishopric was formed. Four years later, the royal audiencia was also established in Chuquisaca, forming a new autonomous administrative center in Upper Peru apart from Lima.

In 1582, the Bishop of La Plata officially recognized an indigenous brotherhood created by Aymara caciques under the authority of the Augustinians in the Lake Titicaca region. Their devotion was directed towards the Virgin Mary and the establishment of a sanctuary for their worship. The symbol of the dark skinned Virgin of Copacabana, which later developed into Bolivia’s national religious icon, signaled the syncretic nature of the evangelization process in the Andean region (Klein 2003: 45). With the development of regional and economic growth of altiplano populations surrounding the city of La Paz, the Crown and Papacy created the Bishopric of La Paz in 1605 and elevated the Bishopric of Chuquisaca to an Archdiocese. Another Bishopric in Santa Cruz was created in the lowland regions. La Paz, Chuquisaca, Potosi, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, and Tarija developed into the six most important ecological and economic zones in Upper Peru.
The Bishopric of La Paz administered to six provinces: Sicasica, Pacaxes, Omasuyus, Larecaja, Paucarollo, and Chucuito (Cordova 1991: 8). The early penetration into more remote provinces outside of the Spanish’s main cities was embarked upon by the mendicants who were often accompanied by military enterprises. Some of the earliest sources on missionary activity in the Larecaja province reference an expedition in 1560 headed by Father Vaez de Urrea of the Carmelite order accompanied by military captain Manuel de Escobar. One document references small scale battles between the expedition and natives (Saignes 1972). This expedition lead the way for the creation of six encomiendas in the Larecaja province; Charazani, Mocomoco, Calixana and Umanata, Ambana, Ayata, Larecaja and Usatca, Songo Challana and Chacapa and Camata. These repartimientos were formed around pre-existing communities and local mitmae populations placed in the valleys since the time of the Inca and Aymara kingdoms, altering ayllu networks that were governed by highland administrative centers and authorities.

Fifteen years later, Toledo’s efforts to reform the mismanaged encomienda system resulted in the creation of eight colonial towns in the Larecaja province with Sorata as the principle administrative center that would monitor abuses in the area. Juan Alvarez Maldonado, a resident of Cuzco who was well known and respected for having made over fifty exploratory expeditions into the interior of upper Peru, was named corregidor of the province (Saignes 1972). In addition to Sorata, Hilabaya, Italaque, Carijana, Charazani, Mocomoco, Ambana, and Ayata were the first populations to become colonial resettlements in the Laraecaja province, while several more were added in the following years (ALP 1575: Visita del Repartimiento de Larecaja).

Changes in population demographics caused native society to reconstitute itself around reduction villages. Toledo envisioned these new administrative centers as a means through which state interests could be channeled from a local, concentrated territorial center. This new center was modeled after the Castilian style grid pattern that was designed for a main plaza area where the parish church, the town council, and the native lord’s residence was located. Like the cult of the huaca, the town patron or saint’s image located in the parish church or in the main plaza represented the conquest of a region and symbolized the identities of those living in the reduction town. The
saint, just like the huaca, was a repository of *camaquen* or sacred power that protected its residents and those who venerated it (Saignes 1999: 119).

Toledo envisioned that native populations organized into redducciones would reproduce themselves under stabilized conditions, raising the overall population to meet labor and mita demands, and gradually phasing out the authority of caciques. In reality, the attempt to concentrate indigenous communities intensified European demands for goods and services at an unsustainable pace. Many natives were overworked in mines resulting in their deaths, sporadic epidemics in the concentrated settlements decimated populations, and many natives fled their redducciones to avoid the burdens of paying dual tributes to caciques and correigadores, often hiring themselves out for personal services and thus defining themselves as yanacona (Wightman 1990).

Increasingly, the power base and authority of the cacique was eroded. Their ability to meet all the financial demands of the crown proved an impossible task that resulted in excessive burdens on their subjects and continued population decline in the face of growing economic pressures and epidemics in the early seventeenth century. Avoiding taxes and altering census records to hide native tribute payers became a less effective tactic given the loss of populations on tax rolls, and the loss of subjects that the cacique was able to physically control through ethnic authority.

An example of this process can be seen in a court petition dating from August of 1649. Gonzalo Troncoso Sotomayor, corregidor of Larecaja, successfully had the principal cacique of Sorata Juan Cussipuru thrown in jail for failing to collect taxes and tribute from his ayllu population of Lupacas that had been relocated into the eastern valleys from the Lake Titicaca region. The corregidor charged the cacique was in debt of 273 pesos, 3 *tominos*, 6 *granos*, and 140 *fanegas de maiz*. Juan Cussipuru petitioned and appealed these accusations. He claimed his ayllu population had been decimated by frequent deaths and further diminished by those who fled his authority. He stressed his innocence, and his cooperation to do everything possible to pay the debt. He sent his *jilacatas* to locate those who owed tribute, but they never returned with any form of duty that was owed to him. He also stated: “estoy tan pobre” (ALP Cajas Reales: 1650).
The power of caciques waned; populations increasingly aligned themselves with the rising non-noble elite operating in colonial offices at the expense of the older dynasties recognized through the huacas. The political administration of the colonial state wavered between indirect rule and direct intervention of local populations, a strategy that failed to consistently support the cacique, yet served the hegemonic claims of parish priests and corregidores. Old blood lines gave way to new forms of mediation between autochthonous and Christian sources of power.

**Cofradías**

The cofradías introduced by the colonial administration in the Americas proved to be an institution in which native populations could manipulate in order to crosscut the administrative framework of the nation state. The structures of political religious hierarchies within the cofradías closely resembled those employed by native society through the Andean fiesta cargo system. Thus, cofradías became the means through which native populations preserved elements of their indigenous religion. Cofradías involve a variety of conditions and serve different purposes. It is difficult to concisely define this social organization, so they often invoke an assortment of images and assumptions by those who are unfamiliar with the term. Tracing their roots back to medieval Europe, cofradías involved men, women, children, juveniles, peasants, nobles, merchants, guild apprentices, and often licensed beggars. Some were racially or socially exclusive, though they could also be a combination of people from different backgrounds (Germeten 2006). The idea of a confraternity or the Spanish cofradía therefore embraces a range of societies and associations, and their complexities grow exponentially when described through traditions of particular cultures that have accommodated different forms of religious influences throughout historical eras in a given locality. According to Black (2003), a simple definition of a confraternity is a group of people who voluntary join together to form associations, often with rules that guide the promotion of a religious life held in common.

The development of cofradías in Spain during the early modern period, their rules, ideology, and purpose, reveals how they would later evolve when taken to the
Americas by the first Spanish explorers. Dating from the re-conquest of Spain and the ousting of the Moors, planted within the early modern period of Spanish institutions, confraternities have religious, political, and militaristic characteristics. This complex institutional ideology in Spain carried over to the new cofradía institutions planted by the Europeans in the Americas (Foster 1953: 20). Christians founded confraternities throughout Spain during the *reconquista* era, especially in towns that were considered part of the new Spanish frontier, in an attempt to strengthen the Christianity of these new settlements.

Cofradía laws in New Spain reflected the Spanish vision of a colonial state and the mutually dependent relationship of church and crown as absolute authority. Such were the decrees of the Third Provincial Council of bishops and provincials in New Spain (1585) and other legal commentaries that conferred upon the responsibilities of priests and royal governors in cofradía business affairs (Taylor 1999). Cofradías by law were under the dual supervision of royal officials and church leaders such as the corregidores and parish priest who were required to be present for all formal proceedings. Cofradía members were elected to office only in accordance with by-laws agreed upon by royal officials and church leaders, and according to a 1600 royal cedula, cofradías required a license from the king, authorization by the bishop, and their by-laws reviewed by the Council of the Indies (Taylor 1999: 302). Cofradías were required to have an Episcopal license for all church property expenditures, and bishops were encouraged to solicit support from various congregations, politicians, and others with wealth to increase the property of pious funds by means of the cofradías. Priests actively sought to create cofradías, envisioning that they were the means through which the liturgy and devotion could be promoted, the salary of the priest would be secured through masses and fiestas, and common lands could be worked to the benefit of the community.

Every image, fiesta, or advocation in the parish church usually had a cofradía or brotherhood dedicated to it for proper religious continuance. Images and relics can be considered specialized sodalities, each one serving multiple purposes. Often a particular cofradía consisted of a group of people from a particular barrio or extended family network that was devoted to a particular religious image, saint, or relic in the parish.
church and donated money, labor, or property to elevate a particular devotion. An officer or *mayordomo* might be elected for each group or image in the church. Their responsibilities included supplying candles daily in the parish church and providing lavish food and drink for the entire community on the day of the parish’s feast associated with the patron saint (Christian 1989).

While expressions of faith were guiding principles for the foundation of cofradías, they also served other purposes such as a means of social organization for community members by structuring their efforts, whether labor or economic activity, around a particular religious image housed in the parish church. To support themselves economically, some cofradías relied upon community owned livestock and land. Often cofradías were created by a group of parishioners or pious donors who gave a number of livestock and created common land for the animals to graze on. Mayordomos and caretakers were then elected to rent out the lands and livestock to ensure that their activities would be successful and to oversee the entire project. Another common source of wealth for cofradías occurred when a member died. Wills were written to bequeath a capital sum to a certain cofradía with instructions of how the money would be used: possibly as spiritual services for members in their religious house including funerals and weddings, or as dowries for unmarried daughters (Banardas 1984: 531). Sometimes a bequest took the form of property in which the inheritor would lease the land to a third party to accumulate investment earnings. This often was how haciendas and mines were owned and managed. Celestino (1982) argues cofradías enabled the expansion of haciendas throughout the Andean region in the seventeenth century given that haciendas in many cases were declared properties of a cofradía, suggesting that a triangular configuration between cofradía-hacienda-community widely structured seventeenth century rural Andean society (149).

Cofradías evolved into powerful economic bases of capital, organized almost as small banks to lend money to start agricultural activities which were worked to the benefit of the community and church. The agricultural products that were produced for subsistence and for commercialization served for the maintenance of cofradías. During their feast days and festivals, money and tributes collected by leaders were symbolically returned by throwing elaborate feasts and banquets for their members. Stores selling
products produced on cofradia land became tied into the system; they added in the
development and maintenance of cofradías because they gave access to the market place
and created an economic relationship between regional communities and the Catholic
Church (Celestino 1982: 150).

When cofradías took root in the Americas, a competitive process ensued in
which individuals who sponsored or paid for extravagant ceremonies were granted full
civic status in the community and an increasing share of political power. People who
sponsored festivals (pasantes or prestes) reflected their dependence on their community
given that they were required to draw from a large network of help to pay for and
organize a festival, often incurring new debts that functioned as a redistributive
mechanism for future obligations to community members. Like the patterns of
reciprocity that existed in the relationships between spiritual ancestors mediated through
the kuraks, malkus, and caciques who counted on labor prestations and tributes from
commoners, to support or give material items to individuals or families designated as a
festival sponsor within a cofradía was to invest in the individual’s future; mutual bonds
were created through gift giving that would come to ensure reciprocal support when
needed. Religious validation through festival sponsorship legitimized the candidacy of a
municipal officer. Gradually ritual roles evolved into direct relationships with civil
offices that made up the town council, generating the development of new syncretic
religious cargo system that ranked political authority according to ritual and council
hierarchies.

As traditional Andean social organization began to mutate under new colonial
rules, kurakas, malkus, and caciques realized that their participation within colonial
offices was necessary to enter into the political game and obtain greater amounts of
power. The political game the indigenous caciques engaged in with the Spanish would
develop inside this context with great force and success, utilizing and manipulating
numerous opportunities to elevate their class position in society through the cofradías.
In spite of the official design of the cofradía which functioned symbolically around the
cult of a settlement’s patron saint, the ayllu, led by their caciques, partially converted
the Spanish cofradia and re-interpreted their religious images into symbols that
communicated indigenous social values and religion (Varon 1982: 140). In some
instances ayllus had their own cofradía and inherited land corresponding to pre-Hispanic lines of jurisdiction. Cofradías in the Andean context should not be understood as an alternative to the ayllu organization, but as a means through which migrant populations were managed and incorporated into a locally controlled community and given access to land in exchange for responsibilities and roles in the round of cargos (Saïgnes 1999). As indigenous populations eventually moved into the colonial bureaucracies that housed political and religious offices created by the reducciones, they successfully preserved elements of indigenous religions.

Familiar modes of paying tribute were channeled through the cofradía by indigenous populations, as can be seen in the bricolage of ritual ceremonialism containing Andean and Catholic elements that gradually developed after the seventeenth century and would evolve into a unique form of cultural expression still seen today in the southern Andes. The interstitial position of the cacique, who could manipulate both colonial politicians and indigenous populations, used parallel practices of ancestral worship and Catholicism to consolidate power within communities. The sanctioning of ancestral huacas could be evoked by a cacique permitting local cults to flourish in an attempt to strengthen power and loyalty to his leadership within the community while simultaneously participating in colonial offices and cofradías (Wightman 1990: 30).

Yet as Saïgnes (1999) has argued, the continuous integration of native populations into cofradías swayed power into colonial office holdings, fragmenting political units and contributing to the decline of old dynastic lines of the ayllu’s reach in the later part of the seventeenth century (85). Inherited hierarchies and the blood lines of old cacique dynasties were downplayed within the new colonial Andean culture that emphasized achievement and the acquisition of commercial wealth as markers of status. The cargo system effectively channeled routes of respectability for new elites, whose ascension depended on community solidarity and the re-creation of local identities, transforming a caste society into a class society (Wightman 1990).
Chapter 4: Ethnography of Religious Practice in Larecaja

Political and Geographical Aspects

Today, the country of Bolivia is politically divided into nine geographical departments: Beni, Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, La Paz, Oruro, Pando, Potosí, Santa Cruz, and Tarija. The La Paz Department comprises 133,985 square kilometers (51,732 sq mi) and a population of 2,349,885 (INE 2009). Each department is politically headed by the prefectura (department governor). Bolivia’s nine departments are also divided into provinces; each province is headed by a sub-prefecture that reports directly to the department level prefectura. Provinces are further sub-divided into municipalities, and on the fourth level divided into cantons. The Larecaja province corresponds to eight sections of municipalities, Sorata being the first section/municipality and capitol of the province with the office of the sub-prefecture. The word Sorata is a hispanicized version of the Aymara word Shuruanta meaning brilliant peak.

The church in Sorata, Nuestra Señora de Maria Magdelena, is under the leadership of the Archdiocese of La Paz, and was made official as the Diocese of Coroico in

Fig. 4 Department of La Paz with Provinces.
November of 1958 by Pope John XXIII. The Diocese of Coroico conforms to four provinces in the department of La Paz; North Yungas and the capitol of Coroico, Larecaja, Saavedra, and Tamayo.

The Larecaja valley has steep walls that form into the shape of an amphitheater, spanning from the highland punas down to a narrowing bottom floor fed by the glacier run off of Mt. Illampu. Continuing down through the valley, the waters from Mt. Illampu gradually turn from small tickling creeks into a torrent of whitewater were the Lilica, Copani, Camata, Mapiri, and Guanay rivers converge into the Amazon basin and the Beni river. The differing orthography translates into a variety of microclimates that produce a vast amount of natural resources and wealth from agricultural floors that produce corn, quinua, wheat, peas, beans, tubers (such as potatoes, oca, ulluco, and sweet potato), to various fruits such as oranges, limes, lemons, mandarins, cherimoyas, bananas, pacayes, pear, peaches, and apples. Vegetables such as locotos, peppers, lettuces, cabbages, and tomatoes are also grown. In addition to agricultural products, the Larecaja province is still a source for mining activities, in particular the lucrative Tiupani gold mines. Walking on foot, it is possible to descend from the highland punas (14,000 ft.) to the semi-tropical yungas (3,000 ft.) in several hours, or conversely, walk up the entire watershed with in the span of a long day (Saignes 1986).

It is about a 3 hour bus ride from La Paz to Sorata along a paved highway that passes through the towns of Huarina and Achacachi on the eastern shores of Lake Titicaca before wrapping around the shoulder of Ancohuma and Mt. Illampu, descending east into the Valleys. The main road descending into the valleys was recently paved in 2005 (some portions of the road are still dirt however), and is the only non-four wheel drive road leading into the municipality of Sorata. Buses regularly leave the main square of Sorata, the Plaza General Enrique Peñaranda (a Bolivian president from 1940 to 1943) for La Paz on a daily basis. All paved roads end in Sorata however. Rugged four-wheel drive roads branch out of Sorata connecting rural communities to the municipalities capitol. Despite the evident poverty in Sorata, many of the residents own four wheel drive vehicles that are utilized to navigate these back roads. Populations from the rural comunidades surrounding Sorata make use of them as taxis to reach the main plaza where they access markets, schools, and buses leaving for La Paz.
The larger structures surrounding Plaza General Enrique Peñeranda are the church, the alcadiá, and the office of the sub-prefectura. Hotels, hostels, and restaurants are also located in the plaza, as well as an internet café, all of which mostly cater to tourists that are drawn to Sorata for the well known trekking circuits that traverse Mt. Illampu and Anchohuma. Many of the buildings and houses outside of the main plaza are vacant, and several of the larger hotels only seem to be occupied during festivals and special events in the town. Sorata’s population of 2,400 vecinos rises and falls throughout different times in the year, climaxing during the town fiesta on September 14th. Some residents only return to Sorata on the weekends, while others might only reside for a few days out of the month depending on their work patterns and their connections to the town. Each time the population rises there is a diversification of business. A large population of miners who have business with gold in the area contributes more to the ebb and flow of the local economy than other economic activity. Many of the miners have their families in Sorata because Sorata is very close to the surrounding gold mines. The families of miners often own small stores or run the makeshift stands in Sorata. Their children attend school in town. Depending on how a mine cooperative is run, miners might spend a month at a time working on site in the mine, returning to Sorata to rest for a month, and then starting the process again.

Small stores and makeshift stands cater to residents in Sorata and populations from the comunidades who frequently enter into town to purchase basic necessities like dry pasta, bread, batteries, and matches. The products sold in the makeshift stands flood the streets: everything from candy to clothing, to batteries and kitchenware are sold. Since transactions occur outside the formal economy and tax obligations, the merchandise is sold at a lower price. These vendors use a small amount of money as startup capital to purchase a box of candies or cigarettes for example. Maybe they will earn about three to five dollars a day from this. In Bolivia, the informal sector accounts for 63% of the economically active population, as documented by International Labor Organization studies (ILO 2008). Working age women constitute seventy four percent of the informal sector, while men average slightly less at fifty five percent. Poverty and the lack of formal employment force many people to start business ventures that deal new and used products; many of it is illegally obtained contraband.
An enclosed market area is always occupied by Aymara speaking women selling products from the surrounding area and food items from the altiplano that are traded for or bought on the weekends during which the market is transformed into a fair. Within the realm of food consumption, currency as a symbol for the value of an agricultural product remains absent in particular situations of exchange, along with the motive for profit. This type of trading occurs as a specific need rather than as a merchant activity to live by. Most of this trading occurs during the weekend fair. Aymara populations from the altiplano and Lake Titicaca region frequently travel down to Sorata to trade fish and potatoes for goods such as corn or fruits that are grown by populations in the lower elevations of the valley, many of whom are Quechua speaking peoples.

**Comunidad vs. Pueblo**

Demographically, eight cantons subdivide the municipality of Sorata. Cantons are further subdivided into comunidades. Thirty five comunidades are recognized in the canton of Laripata where the comunidad of San Pedro is located. It takes about twenty minutes driving on a dirt road that winds around the side of a valley mountain to reach the comunidad of San Pedro from Sorata, and would it not be for the popular cave
designated by an obvious sign informing tourists they have arrived, the small community would most likely go unnoticed. San Pedro’s population is around 80 people.

Since San Pedro lacks a Castilian style plaza, the central area of the village consists of a soccer field that is surrounded by small wooden houses and adobe structures; one of the structures sticks out and is designated as the main social gathering site for any type of administrative or exchange activity. Scattered outside of the football field are small plots of fields mostly cultivated with corn. Following a patchwork of small farm parcels down the slope of the mountainside towards the Rio de San Cristobal (which turns into the rio Llica), a flat area next to the river bed opens up into a large field and chapel housing El Señor de Pascua. In 2005, pope Benedicto XVI, under the decree # 1-07, declared the temple an official sanctuary of the diocese of Coroico (AAMS).

![Fig. 6 Road to San Pedro from Sorata with the Rio San Cristobal (Rio Llika) on the left. Photo by Jonathan Lord.](image)

Often when I asked people about ayllu organization in the valleys, respondents would say the word for the most part did not exist; rather, they used the word comunidades to refer to indigenous populations concentrated in small farming
settlements outside of the pueblo Sorata. In 1994, the division between pueblo and comunidad became even more apparent with the ratification of the *Ley de participación Popular* (LPP) (Sammells 2009). This nationwide neoliberal reform decentralized the central government by directing authority and greater financial shares to 300 newly created municipal governments represented by the alcalde (Centellas 2009: 4). The LPP politically differentiated pueblos from comunidades with the mapping of OTBs or *Organizaciones Territoriales de Base* given that monetary sources were channeled to a municipalité’s capitol rather than to comunidades, legally reinforcing the pre-existing class and ethnic divisions between rural and urban, indigenous and non-indigenous (Sammells 2009).

Distinctions between class and ethnic identity tended to form around whether an individual was a resident of the pueblo or a comunidad. Populations that live in the pueblo of Sorata, where foreign elements such as the chuch, the cabildo, the school, and stores selling products from the city are located, referred to themselves as residents and vecinos. Vecinos invoked a mestizo and non-rural class distinction. Priests, government workers, doctors and nurses working in Sorata’s hospital, restaurant owners who catered to tourists, and hotel owners were considered vecinos. Traditionally, to hold a district office, speaking Spanish was a necessary requirement and therefore something that only vecinos could participate in.

Several anthropologists doing field work in Andean regions have also documented these class distinctions. Sammells (2009) reports that vecinos in the municipality of Tiwanaku stated that “*hay que lavar la cara*” (one has to wash one’s face) in reference to the pueblo deserving more funds for maintence because it was a touristic space. Isbell (1978) found that in Chuschi Peru, rural Quechua speakers used a derogatory term, *qala*, meaning naked, peeled, or skinned (as having peeled off their identity), to refer to those who had taken up residence in the pueblo and no longer participated in ayni and obligatory communal rituals.

Campesinos have generally viewed anyone who participates in national government or the Catholic Church as outsiders, and their own participation in these foreign institutions occurs with skepticism and considerable degrees of autonomy. These ideals were clearly expressed in Sorata during 2006 and 2007 when a group of
campesinos backed a contender from the Movimento Indigneous Pachakuti (MIP) to overthrow the alcalde, which was a position being held by a member of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), the political party headed by Evo Morales on the national level. Despite having a large base of indigenous political supporters, the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) has been the target of condemnation from the political right, and a large percentage of Bolivia’s indigenous left. The leader of the (MIP) movement, Felipe Quispe (in late 2009 his political party was called GENTE), has openly challenged the authority of Evo Morales’s government and accused the president and vice president, Alvaro Garcia Linera, of selling out the indigenous people. Perhaps the biggest difference between the two political leaders is that Quispe is an authentic indigenous politician who addresses his supporters using the Aymara language, a language in which Evo Morales is less comfortable. Felipe Quispe and Alvaro Garcia Linera were one time political collaboraters in the Ejército Guerrillero Túpac Katari (EGTK). The Katarista movement kept alive the trajectory of Andean guerilla uprisings dating from the eighteenth century though has recently distanced themselves from Evo Morales’s political party (MAS) since 2005.

This attests to a political schism still present between populations residing in the comunidades and those in the pueblos, and to the values indigenous communities manifest; rural campesinos live and work differently than vecinos who earn cash in the pueblos. There is also a political difference between those who are educated in Marxist ideology and see themselves as part of an upper class leftist elite as opposed to those who reject a homogenous Bolivian national identity. From the comunidades point of view, Marxist scholars and leftist politicians on the national level have little in common with the Aymara language or agricultural/herding activities in the comunidades. One trend towards more indigenous participation in the national government is evidenced in Evo Morales’s changes to the voting procedures in the December 2009 elections. For example, seven seats in the lower house were reserved for indigenous heads, and voters in seven departments had the option to choose for either indigenous candidates or uninominal ones (Centellas 2009).

Comunidades are politically organized around the traditional Andean cargo system which has its own political/religious structure that is devoid of Christian and cofradia
influence. Through the heirarchical ladder within the cargo system, the malku represents the absolute authority at the provincial level. The malku is also the head of the Central Agraria, a political body made up of indigenous authorities in the municipality that holds office inside the alcaldía in Sorata and coordinates with the town cabildo. Below the malku is the kuraka cantonal, representing the highest level of authority at the canton level. Further down in the hierarchy, of the families that own land in comunidades, a male is chosen to represent their community in all political activity under the title of sulk’a kuraka. Other authority figures are the jilakatas or secretary generals.

Below is a passage from an interview I conducted with a malku who retains his land near Sorata. It reflects the relationships still present between the authorities of traditional communities and authority figures created by the reduction settlements:

3 Jon: What does it mean when you say the traditional authorities are responsible to the prefectura? What is the relationship between the traditional authorities and the prefectura? Can you give me an example?
4 Malku: The prefectura or the sub-prefecturas is a body of authorities that are recognized on the national level. So it is not a social organization that is traditional, but

3 Qué significa cuando usted dice que las autoridades originales son reconocidos por la prefectura? ¿Qué relación hay entre las autoridades tradicionales y la prefectura? ¿Me puede dar un ejemplo?
4 La prefectura o las subprefecturas, es un órgano de autoridades reconocida a nivel nacional. O sea no es una organización social tradicional sino es algo que vino de afuera, el corregidor, las prefecturas, las alcaldías, el gobierno, los gobiernos departamentales, son estructuras de poder no autenticas sino se han implantado durante la época colonial y que siguen hasta ahora. Entonces la prefectura es un gobierno que tiene el mando a nivel departamental, es decir la prefectura de La Paz tiene autorización a todo lo que es el departamento de La Paz. Ahora, dentro de Sorata, dentro de la provincia de Larecaja, hay una subprefectura que depende directament de la prefectura. Entonces como en Sorata tenemos todavía la estructura social auténtica, por ejemplo el secretario general, los kurakas, el malku, es una forma de organización tradicional. Estas autoridades son precoloniales, o sea antes de la llegada de los españoles siempre han estado organizados de esa forma. Probablemente hoy en día haya cambiado mucho pero siguen todavía ejerciendo su función con esos nombres. Entonces como estas poblaciones tienen esa forma de organización de autoridades tradicionales autenticas llega la prefectura a través de la subprefectura y tiene que coordinar sí o no con estos autoridades comunales. Es decir la prefectura de La Paz, a través de la subprefectura de Larecaja, tiene que reconocer al malku. En algún momento tiene que reunirse con el malku para programar actividades, trabajos, o de pronto el malku puede reclamar a lo
rather something that came from outside (of Bolivia), the corregidor, the prefecturas, the alcaldias, the government, the government of departments, they are structures of power that are not authentic, rather they were implanted in the colonial times and they continue until now. So the prefectura is a government that gives the orders to the departmental level, so it’s to say, the prefectura of La Paz has authorization over all of the department of La Paz. Now, inside Sorata, inside the province of Larecaja, there is a sub-prefectura that is directly dependent on the prefectura. So as in Sorata we still have the authentic social structures, for example the secretary general, the kurakas, the malkus, this is traditional form of social organization, these positions are a form of traditional organization. These authorities are pre-colonial, before the arrival of the Spanish they always had this form of organization. Probably for the moment today they might have changed a lot, but they still continue operating their functions with these names. So, as these populations that have the organization of traditional and authentic authorities, they reach the prefectura through the sub-prefectura and they have to coordinate yes or no with these communal authorities. It’s to say the prefectura of La Paz, through the sub-prefectura of Larecaja, they have to recognize the malku. In some moments they have to meet with the malku to program activities, work, or suddenly the malku has to claim what is the towns or what pertains to the town. What I am referring to is that there is coordination between the prefecturas and the sub prefecturas and the traditional authorities not only in Sorata but also in its surrounding populations.

From this passage it is evident that malkus still maintain an intermediary position between indigenous populations and officials representing the national government (the prefectura, the alcaldia, and the cabildo). The malkus, representing campesinos and their ties to the land, have the ability to affect the national government by moving through its administration from the sub-prefectura upwards to the national level. As this thesis will come to demonstrate, this is aided by the Catholic Church and their festival system which allows a new emergent class to waver between the comunidades and the pueblo, lead by their malkus. Below, our conversation continues about the differences between the two systems of social organization, the responsibilities of the malku, and traditional social contracts that determine leadership roles and territorial units:

5Jon: The traditional authorities and their populations, they have to pay taxes to the sub-prefectura of Sorata or no?

que es de su pueblo o pertenece a su pueblo. Yo me refiero con eso que hay una coordinación entre la prefectura o las subprefecturas y las autoridades tradicionales no solo de Sorata sino también de las poblaciones alrededores.

5 ¿Las autoridades tradicionales y sus poblaciones, tienen que pagar impuestos a la subprefectura de Sorata o no?
6**Malku**: No they don’t pay taxes. There is a law that enforces that a person has to pay land taxes, but these lords, the malkus, their lands they are categorized as communal lands. So inside these communal lands, each person or each family has their plots of land. So they don’t pay taxes.

7**Jon**: But the people have a responsibility to the malku or some authority? The people that have land or farms, they have to pay or give something?

8**Malku**: No they don’t pay the malku or the sub-prefectura in cash, no. But yes there is another type of tribute that is authentic and traditional. I, Francisco Choque have a piece of land and my obligation, for example, is to pass through the authority position of the malku. I am obliged when the people choose me, I am obligated to accept this position. I can’t turn it down. Another form of obligation, there are always fiestas and in the fiestas there are prestes and pasantes. In a given moment I am going to handle the preste position. There are different positions, fiestas that occur. This is a form of paying tribute.

9**Jon**: Ayni?

10**Malku**: Yes it could be Ayni, but as well it could be a type of paying tribute in ceremonialism in the fiestas or being in charge of a certain position, whichever one of the positions. For example the Malku is the ultimate authority and during the year that the position lasts, he has to dispense almost 100% of his time. So this is a form of working for the community and in this way paying tribute.

Another distinction between the comunidades and the pueblos is how tribute and taxes are paid in order to exist within a community or town. Because comunidades lack basic necessities, they are not responsible to pay for municipal taxes. The municipality
of Sorata for example pays two taxes: one for the Ley Participacion Poular (LPP) that is directed towards the town cabildo, and the second is for internal resources such as water, light, and housing. Money sent from the government in combination with the first tax collected forms the fund of the LPP and is used for bigger projects in the town such as improving the roads, hospitals, and schools. Residents of comunidades by contrast keep their rights to a community through the fiesta cargo system, composed of the obligatory positions of the festival sponsors, and the reciprocal community support characterized by ayni.

Comunidades may or may not be influenced by Christianity. San Pedro is an interesting example because it is a comunidad that is religiously connected to the parish church in Sorata. In addition to the chapel below the town, protestant evangelicals are very active in this small population. I was told that nearly half the population was evangelical protestant. A Catholic priest also told me that some individuals are both evangelical and Catholic, moving between denominations at will. There is no regular mass held in the chapel of San Pedro like the masses that are held in the parish church in Sorata perhaps because of its remote location. Even from the comunidad of San Pedro, reaching the chapel requires a steep 30 minute walk towards the river bed. Ritual activity is limited to special events such as private wedding, funerals, or when individuals pay for the service of the priests from Sorata to perform. The chapel’s main function is a pilgrimage site for devotions related to Holy week. During this time, one of the priests from Sorata travels to give three Thursday masses leading up to the main mass that celebrates the resurrection of Christ a week after Maundy Thursday.

Feast days demonstrate that many individuals manipulate both systems to ensure social survival and to increase sources of wealth. Many if not most of the vecinos in Sorata can speak Aymara and Spanish, and some vecinos are themselves recent migrants from comunidades and still maintain land rights through complicated kinship networks in the countryside. Migration out of the comunidades is also common among campesinos looking to integrate themselves into the national culture, principally to become educated in order to leave behind a life of harsh physical and agricultural labor. A means through which this is made possible is the Catholic Church and participation in Andean cofradías. Social and extended kin networks between rural populations and
residents in the town center are aided and sustained by Catholic chapels and shrines located in the countryside which enable rural populations to participate in sponsoring feast days that are officially recognized by the parish center in Sorata, as was the case for those participating in the feast for El Señor de Pascua.

To sponsor a feast such as the feast for El Señor de Pascua means to depend on a large network of support. The more successful feasts are economic displays of power; to the indigenous comunidades, money is a foreign entity that is utilized in the pueblo by vecinos, and is the medium of exchange for citizens participating in the national economy. Therefore to some degree, those who are participating in the feast for El Señor de Pascua have partially abandoned the rules that govern the comunidades in order to enter into the national economic system (besides religious views or faith in god). However, many newly arrived migrants to the pueblos find themselves in hostile environments, spaces in which historically they have been banned from occupying (such as schools, government offices, certain zones), motivating many to maintain strong connections to their place of origin for support and in worst case scenarios something to fall back on.

Today, the process of migrants from rural areas integrating themselves into the administrative framework of the nation state occurs through cofradías as it once did during the colonial reducciones when natives were first paid cash wages, yet the growth of the church over the last five hundred years has meant that it’s reach has been extended from the reduction settlement into comunidades by way of chapels, shrines, and localized religion. In addition to the vecinos from the pueblo and the campesinos from the comunidades, a mobile class emerges that participates in both the campesino culture and the national culture, though is not entirely assimilated into either one culture completely.

*Cofradía, Fraternidades, or Comparsa?*

Cyclical annual rituals are the central means through which populations collectively reaffirm their membership in a community. This occurs in the pueblo where the Spanish cofradía has been subverted by indigenous religious practice, in the chapels
and shrines that draw rural campesinos into the Catholic fiesta system, and in the comunidades where religious practices have seen little influence by Christianity. This is expressed outwardly by membership in groups or confraternities that symbolize the nature of citizenship in Bolivia in many distinctive ways. Most, though not all of these fraternities have distinguishing Andean characteristics that are expressed on feast days in the form of ritual attire and group dancing, traditions that stretch back into a pre-Columbian past, while other fraternities appear more European and orthodox in their ritual expressions. Similar to the activities of cofradías in Spain, each devotional group contains levels of hierarchies among members by being subordinated to mayordomos or prestes. Collecting forms of tribute from their group, institutional re-distribution of goods, and dedicating their work to a sacred day or object are also very reminiscent of cofradía activity in Spain. Besides ritual dress and costume, the use of alcohol as a gift and for festival activity is perhaps the most noticeable of the Andean traits utilized by nearly all of the devotional groups including the more mestizo groups.

Attempting to elicit general descriptions about confraternities in Bolivia, I initially approached my interview subjects using the word cofradía, which only gave me inconsistent responses as to what a cofradía actually was. This is similar to Black’s (2006) ideas: confraternities lack a concise definition and elicit a range of images and meanings that depends on several social factors. Many people felt that a cofradía was a word used to refer to the traditional fraternities of southern Spain, while the dance groups in Bolivia were considered fraternidades and comparsas. My interview with a priest in Sorata reflects these ideas:

11 Jon: Is there a difference between a cofradía and a fraternity in Bolivia?
12 Priest: Cofradías are almost non-operational in Bolivia. Cofradías are concentrated in Spain, more in the south, in Seville. Here we have the word “fraternities.” The fraternity members are those people that participate in a group of dancers, groups that dance in honor of the patron, the comparsas.

11 ¿Hay una diferencia entre las cofradías y fraternidades en Bolivia?
12 Cofradías generalmente aquí casi casi no se manejan en Bolivia. Cofradías están concentradas en España, más que todo en el sur de España, en Sevilla. Aquí existe esta palabra fraternidad. Los fraternos son aquellas personas que participan en un grupo de bailarines, grupos que bailan en honor al patrono, las comparsas.
13 Jon: Are the fraternities are from Sorata or La Paz?
14 Priest: The fraternities are composed of a group of volunteers. If they want to participate in this fraternity, if they want to share a little and dance in honor of the patron, well they can do it. They come from different places, they can be paceños, sorateños, miners, business people, merchants, and these people get involved in the dance to form a fraternity. Each fraternity has an organizer. The organizer is a person that animates them, he invites them to dance, he has to contract the band, the food, and the location.

The comparsa as practiced within the Catholic context, while unique to Bolivia, is the result of syncretism between Andean practices with foreign culture. Some comparsas are more authentic, using traditional instruments such as the pinquillo flute and dressing for feast days in pre-Columbian outfits utilized by the Inca. Groups known as Quena Quenas, who participate today in Sorata's feast days, were first documented in the sixteenth century by Goman Poma de Ayala, a native of Peru who accompanied the Spanish during their visitas of the rural countryside to document indigenous religion and cultural practices. Other comparsas are certainly post colonial creations. Groups such as the Morenadas wear black masks over their face to symbolize African slaves that were brought to Bolivia during the colonial period and are always accompanied by brass bands playing melodies that sound like European military marches. Morenadas are less likely to be present in the more authentic fiestas occurring in the comunidades where Christitanity is absent.

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13 ¿Las fraternidades son de Sorata o de La Paz?
14 Las fraternidades componen un grupo de personas voluntarias. Si quieren participar en esta fraternidad, si quieren un poco compartir y bailar en honor al patrono, pues lo hacen. Vienen de diferentes lugares, pueden ser paceños, sorateños, mineros, comerciantes, negociantes y estas personas se involucran en el baile para formar una fraternidad. Cada fraternidad tiene su organizador. El organizador es la persona que anima, que les invita a bailar, tiene que contratar banda, comida, local.
Other religious devotions and fraternal organizations are formed of mestizo and upper class groups. From what I witnessed in Sorata, several mestizo groups formed devotions around feasts that could be considered more orthodox Christian in that they did not participate in ritual dancing or attire such as masks and elaborate costumes. Such was the case for the feast of the Cross on May 3rd where there was much less alcohol consumption and no comparsa dancing, yet the hierarchies of group leaders such as prestes and feast organizers was still present. One of the participants whose family members occupied the position of preste even referred to the feast as one that was only for Christians.

Depending on the feast day and religious observance, and in spite of the ones associated with the Catholicism, certain rules about how the ritual would be performed such as whether or not there would be comparsas dancing or large quantities of alcohol being consumed prescribed a standard behavior for devotees which was not always consistent with behavior on other feast days. Several of the participants in the festival for the Cross on May 3rd including the prestes and their family members also took part in the town festival of El Señor de la Columna which could be considered a more “pagan” feast given the element of comparsa dancing and alcohol consumption.
Collective Belonging

Collective belonging to the community of Sorata can be described in three sets of social relationships: relationships with the zone, relationships that implicate a sense of collective belonging and commonality with other vecinos, and relationships that demarcate hierarchies within the collectivity of the community (Lazar 2008: 118). All of these social ties represent the relationships that one has to the community as whole, strengthened and held together by their patronage to a supernatural force (Lazar 2008). El Señor de la Columna, the Christ image and town patron which is venerated during Sorata’s town festival on September 14th, represents one of the supernatural forces that brings populations of migrant workers, families, and vecinos together to annually reaffirm their connections to the community out of faith and devotion. The religious element becomes the medium through which populations pay their respect and obligations to Sorata in the form of dancing in their comparsas in honor of their town patron, the Christ of the Cross. A comparsa consists of authority figures known as pasantes (sponsors) who organize all of the fraternities’ activities including coordinating one of several types of dances that symbolize the group as a whole. On the feast day, a comparsa parades through the central plaza on a designated dance route accompanied by a brass band following the group from behind. The group of dancers usually consists of having mascots at the head of the group, either a couple, a leader, or children who dress in the costume worn by the rest of the dancers yet are distinguished by a special decoration or object the identifies them as leading the others. The movements of the dances (as well as the music) differ depending on the comparsa, yet most are characterized by several steps forwards and backwards, spinning, and jumping. Identity is experienced as collective by moving in unison with other members of the group. The collective identity is also connected to a sense of place when their performance occurs in the most important area of public space, the main plaza, symbolizing a relationship between people and town.

By joining a fraternity and participating in the fiesta, individuals are able to insert themselves into binding, ritual relationships among kin, social, and business networks that operate in Sorata and its surrounding areas. A comparsa is usually formed out of
kinship and friendship networks, or they are composed of guild like associations such as a group of mechanics, a particular zone within the village, or the women who work in the market for example. Locals used the word *rubro* to describe these guild like associations. For migrant populations passing through Sorata, joining a comparsa can be a beneficial way to assimilate into the community. Throughout the year leading up to the fiesta, efforts are made by group members to better their dance skills during rehearsals, parties, and social gatherings, giving members an experience of bonding and group identification. It also offers an individual the opportunity to associate with professionals in a given occupation and possibly new job opportunities (Guss 2006). Below my conversation with one of the parish priests continues on the theme of social relationships structured around this feast.

*Jon:* Why are there so many people coming for the fiesta? What type of relationships do they have with Sorata?

*Priest:* Well they have been children of the Sorateño’s children. That tradition like the Sorateño blood they carry inside themselves. That is why it is possible for them to come from where they live. A lot of them reside in Europe, in the USA, outside Bolivia, others in Bolivia but in different regions. But they make possible this day to arrive, to celebrate, but overall it’s to feel that they are Sorateños, that it is our feast, my feast, my feast my land. Because we are attracted, because we identify with Sorata as Andean, it is a paradise.

*Jon:* Maybe they have business with people in Sorata?

*Priest:* Here in Sorata is a mining area, and Sorata is the capital of Larecaja and Larecaja stands out for its mines, they produce a lot of gold and so there is migration, in
Tipuani or Yanacoma. So the people from here are miners and agriculturists, and more than anything they are merchants, they try to generate money to have a good fiesta, they save a lot so they can have a good time. They save so they can have good time in the fiestas.

Several of the festival participants I would speak with during the feast for El Señor de la Columna spoke of their pilgrimage to Sorata from foreign places as an activity that reunited family and friends to a place in which they could trace their ancestry. Many festival goers did not live in Sorata, yet this day was always dedicated to ritual activities associated with forming comparsas, many of them in La Paz and other areas, out of devotion to the town patron.

Another element involved with families that had social and business networks based out of Sorata was the fiscal activity of gold mining. Mining has historically functioned as the backbone of the Bolivian economy; from the Spanish conquest onwards, Bolivia was integrated into the international economy through its mines. The development of Bolivia’s infrastructure including governments, railroads, roads, schools, and markets was centered on the mining companies as a source of income that sustained these sectors (Nash 1992). The most famous of all Bolivian mines was Potosi, which produced more silver than any other silver mine in the world. One metaphor used to describe the amount of silver removed from Bolivia is that it could form a bridge spanning the Atlantic connecting the Old World to the New.

The Spaniards preoccupation with silver extraction in Bolivia was the driving force that altered the traditional migratory obligations of colonists working multiple ecological tiers in support of their allyu community. Once the Spanish placed the caciques in the office of the mita de captaincies to access peasant labor, Andean populations became obliged to the mandatory work periods in the Potosi mines. To avoid mita obligations, many seemed to favor migration to the eastern valleys of Larecaja. Given that the eastern valleys were far removed from the main trade routes between La Paz and the mines in Potosi, reduction settlements and ayllu populations on the altiplano that caciques targeted for recruitment in the silver mines of Potosi were often abandoned by those seeking autonomy in the remote eastern valleys.

Since the time of the Inca, the slopes of Mt. Illampu and the lower elevations in the eastern valleys of Larecaja had always been sources of wealth from mining
activities. The Incan kings however were not after silver. Gold mines in the eastern valleys clearly distinguished this region from the silver and copper mines found on the altiplano. The Incan imperial elites had mitmae colonists sent from as far away as Cuzco to extract gold in Larecaja, while the local native yungas groups were quickly organized into ayllus for tribute payments to the city. An average of sixty pounds of gold was extracted every four months, and Sorata was the principal administrative control zone for the area (Loayza-Bejarano 2000: 20).

While the Inca had modest success with mining gold in Larecaja, their expansionist empire building activities extending from Cuzco, much like the Spaniards who followed in their wake, were thwarted by the inaccessible terrain in the eastern valleys; both empires concentrated their economic activities on the altiplano highlands. Because of this deficiency in development, the eastern valleys were never the sites of large cities, cathedrals, or dense populations. Perhaps out of the remoteness of the eastern valleys, when the colonial reduction settlements materialized in the region, they developed with considerable degrees of political autonomy from the empires located at higher elevations and were always seen as an alternative to the harsh realities of the altiplano whose populations were subject to the mita.

Fleeing the mita, many migrants attempted to insert themselves into a new community by pledging allegiance to a cofradía which channeled their labor and economic activity towards the reduction settlement and parish church. The clergy, who wanted to stabilize migrant populations and concentrate economic activity within their dioceses, would often protect migrants from caciques who were searching for their missing tributaries by altering or misplacing census records (Sainges 1986: 329). Christians deemed Indians unqualified for the priesthood, though parish clergy, who often insinuated open opposition to caciques, allowed native populations to participate in the interstices of clergy and laity. A process was initiated by the clergy and natives to establish new forms of religious validation through devotional groups such as cofradías, whose responsibilities involved sponsoring communal feast days and mass, caring for the dead, and sometimes providing credit for community members. Cofradías received strong support from the clergy and municipal authorities who recognized that the caciques’ monopoly of ritual power in the village center could be diminished by
incorporating non-noble leaders into a rotating system of civic and religious responsibilities. As a result of the coordinating efforts between the natives, clergy, and the municipality, cofradías increasingly incorporated many of the ritual elements of the Andean fiesta cargo system such as ritualized drinking and dancing, while other Andean elements shared similar structures with the cofradía; both systems required adults to pass through a series of interlaced civil and ceremonial offices to accrue civic and religious prestige in the community. As a result, a new system emerged with populations competing for local, civil, and ecclesiastical office holding.

This new system developed in a way that incorporated a political hierarchy among different feast days in a particular settlement. Sorata’s town feast held on September 14th perhaps represents all the levels and structures of a political hierarchy, reinforcing class distinctions that have ethnic implications such as indigenous or non-indigenous, or rural and non-rural, by incorporating political leaders, religious practice, and general participants from all classes of Andean society and levels of government. This is evidenced not only by the participation of comparsas from La Paz, Sorata, and smaller indigenous comunidades, but also in the attendance of civic and political leaders invited to the feast. Some of these leaders are given the responsibility to judge comparsas as best organized. In 2008, the judging group was made up of the Junta Vecinal, a democratically elected governing board of the town. Its members serve two year terms. The Junta is involved with organizing collective and political events; one example is the town fiesta. Their responsibilities included designing the program of fiesta activities, where and when they will take place, contacting and inviting comparsas to dance in Sorata, and inviting more prominent political figures to the event such as the prefectura and deputies from the government to help judge the dancing. Many of these duties are also fulfilled by the pasantes and prestes.

The preste is an annual position elected within the fiesta system. The preste represents a well respected person in the community. Prestes often are a married couple, as was the case in 2008. The pasante, while a dignified position to hold for a fiesta, is subordinated to the preste. Generally, the pasantes are the leaders of the individual comparsas, yet they also help with the overall organization of the fiesta such as bringing food and drinks to guests and coordinating with other officials. The preste is responsible
for the entire feast day and is the one who gives the most amount of money to ensure a good fiesta. In 2008 there were several live bands that played on a stage with lights and professional sound systems. All of this was paid for by the preste.

The preste is also bound up in the Andean reciprocity system or ayni, which characterized the relationships that pre-Columbian malkus had with their ayllus. Zulawski (1995) explains how the root word of ayni can be traced in Quechua as aynicapunacuni meaning to take revenge on, suggesting one is always in debt to another (1995: 19). Given the survival of pre-Columbians depended on the ability of the malkus to organize labor, it was in the interest of the malkus to maintain good relationships with their people. It was only through the labor of others that vital necessities could be acquired in the absence of any type of money or market system. A malku’s wealth and power derived from their ability to increase productivity by cultivating new land and sending colonist to new regions. The more relationships and obligatory ties one had with ayllu members, the more labor could be counted on that was essential to a group’s social reproduction. The Aymara word haymatha used to describe this process can be understood as “to go and work in the fields which are planted communally” and to “to dance in the ancient way particularly when they go to the fields of their leaders” (Murra 1968: 134).

The Spanish term preste has been inserted into indigenous communities with the introduction of cofradías and the Catholic festival structures, yet their roles as leaders who motivate populations to create reciprocal social relationships that are celebrated with religious ceremonials are qualities taken from the leadership position of the pre-Columbian malkus. Depending on the degree of Spanish influence in a comunidad, malkus fulfill both the role of the malku and the preste of a particular feast day. Below is a passage from an interview with a preste explaining his responsibilities and how the ayni system currently works in his own words.

19 Jon: Are there people who give you something for the ayni?
20 Preste: Yes, we for example… for the preste, one year before one receives as a preste, and from this moment he goes voluntarily to the different parties, weddings, baptisms,
to other prestes as well, from other saints that they receive, other parties. So we go to them as we make the ayni. So that the day of my party, all those aynis come voluntarily to return. Others return the same thing that I have taken, others return a little more, others they return double. In this sense, the day that I make my party I will not be empty. Because if you don’t do the ayni you are sitting only as the husband and wife. But when you do the ayni one year before, all of those invited accompany you…. or the party is prettier. That’s the ayni we do.

21 Jon: Is there a type of relation between you as preste and the fraternities?
22 Preste: Yes, we as preste mayor, for example, all the comparsas they visit the preste, to the father. A comparsa comes and voluntarily brings. They bring 10 or 20 boxes of beer. They visit you, they are with their band for a moment, and after they leave. Then another comparsa comes, visits you at the place and you also have to reciprocate.

The prestes spend tremendous amounts of time throughout the year attending important community events such as parties, weddings, and funerals, encouraging others in the community to do so as well. In fulfilling his obligations to these community events, products such as beer, food, and even cash are directed to the preste so his feast day will be all the more better. All of these exchanges, whether social or product oriented, are expected to be reciprocated given that the exchanges are recognized as fulfillments in the Andean cargo system. The system binds participants together, aids in creating social relationships, and strengthens the overall support of community members. The feast day is the symbolic culmination of this activity throughout the year.

Social dimensions of festival sponsorship include the ability to harness social prestige in the eyes of the community: “Being a fiesta sponsor can open the door for a

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20 Sí, nosotros por ejemplo…. para un preste, faltando un año uno recibe como preste, desde ese momento va voluntariamente a diferentes fiestas, matrimonios, bautizos, prestes también de otros santos que reciben, otras fiestas. Entonces nosotros vamos a ellos como hacernos el ayni. Cosa que el día que llega mi fiesta, todos estos aynis, ellos voluntariamente vienen a devolver. Otros devuelven lo mismo que he llevado, otros un poquito más, otros devuelven el doble. Con que sentido de que el día que haga mi fiesta que no estoy vacio. Porque si no haces el ayni estás sentado solamente marido y mujer. Pero cuando haces ayni faltando un año, todos los invitados te acompañan...o sea la fiesta es mas bonita. Eso es el ayni que hacemos.
21 Hay algún tipo de relación entre ustedes como preste y las fraternidades?
22 Sí, nosotros somos como preste mayor, por ejemplo, todos las comparsas visitan al preste, como al papa. Una comparsa viene y trae su voluntad. Traen diez o veinte cajas de cerveza. Te visitan, están un momento con su banda y luego se retiran. Luego viene otra comparsa te visita en el local, y tú también tienes que corresponderles.
man to other elected offices in the community, for in sponsoring the fiesta he demonstrates his commitment to and willingness to serve the barrio” (Goldstein 2004: 160). Typically the best sponsors hold several offices within the community such as union membership, heads of different education committees, heads of athletic clubs; someone who is capable of motivating the entire community for the better. An understanding of cultural norms and etiquette is required and the ability to have diplomatic relationships between members of the community and occupational associates (Lazar 2008: 133). However, this interest to better their community often translates into animosity and an overly competitive spirit towards members of other dance troupes, fraternities, and prestes dedicated to other feast days and patron saints. These themes of competition are reflected below in my interview with a pasante in 2008:

23 Jon: Do you think there is a political hierarchy in the feast days held in Sorata? 
24 Pasante: Yes, there is a hierarchy. There is a hierarchy in the organization because there is a preste. He is the maximum authority, he provides, he is spending his money therefore there is a hierarchy. If a person has a lot of money he is going to make a better fiesta. A person that has less money, it will not be as good. For one side is this. The other side, the residents of Sorata who live in La Paz these days they go, they organize their dance, their band, they contract the band and everyone gives and they go and there, well here it is playing with economic power, who demonstrates who has more money, and probably those groups that go from La Paz with all of their economic power, their band, their costumes, their food, their transportation, everything is well organized, it’s a little, it is a way to demonstrate that they are more economically powerful in front of the
traditional groups, for example, or in front of the groups there that are not as organized. So there is a competition economically, there is as well a hierarchy of authorities, because always there is someone that directs. This is someone who directs, the head, and there is the base, the town that is behind them.

25 **Jon:** The cabeza?

26 **Pasante:** The cabeza, the organizers, the prestes, the authorities, for example the subprefecto, the corregidores, whatever. So there is a hierarchy.

The more time I spent in Sorata, the more feast days I would participate in and observe how each one could invoke group identities and therefore political divisions within the community.

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**El Señor de la Columna**

In 2008, I spent a good deal of time with a comparsa participating in the patronal feast of El Señor de la Columna. Shortly before the festivities began I found myself walking around the plaza, taking notes of my experiences. I was befriended by a mestizo man from La Paz who offered me a ride in his sport utility vehicle to the top of a mirador\(^\text{27}\) named *Ulluntija*, a hill that overlooks Sorata by exactly 1,181 feet where a large statue of Jesus outstretching his arms can be found. The only road leading to Sorata passes by the shrine first before descending into town. The statue functions as a gathering place for comparsas approaching the feast for El Señor de la Columna. Large groups that make up the dancers and their brass band arrive in large buses to the hill where they spend an hour or so dancing, drinking, lighting dynamite, and praying to the shrine. I waited with my friend and his wife to re-unite with their comparsa coming  

\(^{25}\) ¿La cabeza?\n
\(^{26}\) La cabeza los organizadores, los prestes, las autoridades, por ejemplo el subprefecto, corregidores, yo que sé. Sí, hay jerarquías.\n
\(^{27}\) Mirador means lookout point in Spanish. In Aymara, the term is *Apachetas*. Usually these sites were demarcated for pre-Columbian ritual activity. During the Colonial “Expatriation of Idolatry” throughout the countryside, shrines and cross were built on these spaces. However, traditional ritual activity in these places still occurs in many situations.
from La Paz. Their comparsa known as the Hijos de Illampu, consisted of an extended network of family and friends that danced the Caporales. While we watched the dance groups and brass bands begin their festivities atop the hill, I began asking about their relationship to the town of Sorata. The husband and wife only made one trip a year on the feast day, and their connection was that their ancestors were from the area. Therefore, he told me, that even though he lives at a distance from the town, it was in his patronage to the town and was in his blood.

Soon a large bus arrived to the hill, unloading the members of the Hijos de Illampu. As a group, they approached the shrine, and holding hands said the lord’s prayer which was followed by several individual offerings of gratitude to El Señor de la Columna. They began to chant slogans about the Hijos de Illampu, jumping up and dancing and showing their camaraderie by passing alcoholic drinks around, each member drinking from the same cup making sure to spill a little on the ground before taking a drink almost as a sacrifice to the invisible drinker.

Their comparsa was lead by a pasante who was also president of the fraternity. He held a silver wand and stood at the front of the group, blowing a whistle to direct the group’s movements. As a whole, the group was split between women and men parallel to each other, dancing in lines. A year later while I was conducting a second round to my research, I bumped into this same man on a bus leaving from La Paz to Sorata and made a brief interview with him. I discovered he worked as a mine laborer in the valley of Larecaja, specifically in gold mines surrounding Sorata. He often would stay with friends in Sorata in between his work cycles, traveling back to his family in La Paz when his work had been completed. Below is a passage from the interview:

28 Jon: Can you tell me something about Caporales? What are Caporales?
29 Tito: It’s a fraternity that was organized in 1975 by Miguel Bonilla, he wanted to dance Caporales in Sorata. In the beginning there were few Sorateños, so to complete he
invited a fraternity from La Paz, Urus de Gran Poder, in the first year. I approached to congratulate them because there were a lot of Sorateño boys. They were in a low spirit. Because the Caporales, Urus de Gran Poder, they held them down. So the boys took the decision to organize us for the following year and they invited me so I would organize them and like that they made me president 33 years ago. And the Caporales have on the 14th of September celebrated 34 years of dance for the lord, for devotion, for the Señor de la Columna. I have been active president for many years but they have already named me vitalicio after twenty years of Caporales. We organize, sometimes with the director, and some years there are people who help like pasantes who are responsible for the service, the location, location and food, and also with the drinks, and when we don’t have this money… for thirty three years they have invited us to a lot of entradas. The university entraida, after they invited us to some other location like Pucarani, and since three years ago we were invited to dance for the Copacabana Virgin. So with the permission of the Señor de la Columna we went. Throughout the years a lot of young people have been involved and some met in the fraternity and they got married, a lot of professionals, others are abroad. And we continue, we organize each year with the only purpose of going for devotion to realize the festival of the Señor de la Columna.

30 Jon: What costumes do you use to dance? What do they symbolize?
31 Tito: Well it symbolizes the captains of the years of the Spanish domination, because they used the whip and they made the negros work.

The origins of this particular caporales comparsa lies in a man who wanted a group of people, dressed and dancing the Caporales, to perform in Sorata. While my informant

Entonces los muchachos determinaron organizarnos al año siguiente y me invitaron para que los organizara y así me hicieron presidente hace treintaytres años. Y los Caporales tienen en el 14 de septiembre treintaycuatro años de bailar para el señor, por devoción, para el Señor de la Columna. Y he sido presidente ejecutivo muchos años pero me han nombrado ya presidente vitalicio a los veinte años de Caporales. Nos organizamos, hay veces con la directiva, y unos años que hay gente que nos colabora como pasantes que corre con la responsabilidad de la atención, local y alimentación, y también con la bebida, y cuando no tenemos eso solamente con las gotas que tenemos cada año los 33 años de vida nos han invitado a muchas entradas. A la entrada a la universidad, luego nos invitaron a alguna localidad como Pucarani, y hace 3 años fuimos invitados bailar a Copacabana para la virgen de Copacabana. Entonces con el permiso del Señor de la Columna fuimos. A través de los años han pasado muchos jóvenes de los que hay veces que se conocieron en la fraternidad y han salido matrimonios, muchos profesionales, otros están en el exterior. Y seguimos organizándonos cada año porque el único objetivo ir por devoción para realizar la festividad del Señor de la Columna.

30 ¿Qué tipo de trajes se utilizan para bailar? Qué simbolizan?
31 Bueno, simbolizan a los capitanes de los años del dominio español que manejaban el chicote y hacían trabajar a los negros.
did not care to comment on who this man was in relation to the festival, it would seem that he might have been a festival preste at some point or a dignitary that wished to show his organizing capabilities by having this group perform. While dance groups like the Morenada, Diablada, or Waka Thakori’s have been around for at least a hundred years, the Caporales is a relatively new group from the 1970’s. Their costumes consist of members dressed in cowboy boots and spikes with bells around their ankles, lashing out with whips imitating the Spanish colonizers and slave drivers. Dances like the Caporales and the Morenada can be found in festivals all throughout most parts of Bolivia and are not unique to Sorata. Some have regional origins, like the Diablada dancers from Oruro representing the devil that lives inside the mines, or the Tinku dances that symbolize the ritual fighters of Potosi. As Lazar (2008) notes, dancing can enact an ethnic identity from one of the regions (2008: 141). When an individual mimics one of these groups, they are creating a sense of Bolivianness while simultaneously drawing attention to regional group differences (Lazar 2008). My informant also mentions that the group has been invited to perform in other festivals such as the devotion occurring in Copacabana, attesting again to the generalized use of this comparsa throughout Bolivia.

My interview with the caporales leader demonstrates the compositional make up and evolution of a comparsa. Formed of migrants from Sorata living in La Paz, from its inception, the group has grown between extended kinship networks and friends of those involved. Many now return from international destinations to perform with the group on the feast of El Señor de la Columna. The non-local elements present in the devotion to this day contrast with what is found in a more local festival occurring just outside of the town of Sorata, where the attendance and participation indicate an all together different political landscape and ethnic landscape:

32 Priest: In this area there are a lot of feasts that we celebrate in different places, in each little town and community. But the major festivals here in Sorata are precisely

32En esta zona hay variedad de fiestas las que celebramos en diferentes lugares, en cada pueblito, en cada comunidad. Pero las fiestas mayores aquí en el pueblo de Sorata son precisamente el 14 de septiembre que recordamos la fiesta del Señor de la Columna y también se llama la fiesta de la Exaltacion.
September 14th that we celebrate the feast of the Señor de la Columna and also it is called the Exaltación.

33Jon: Since when do you celebrate this feast?

34Priest: This has a tradition more or less already one and a half century or maybe 200 years that we are living this fiesta and before surely they say that the feast wasn’t as it is now but rather that it was more religious, more familiar. Now it’s a big feast, maybe we can mention… it is a shame to mention that we are passing to an extreme that can be felt as a pagan feast. It doesn’t have religious coherence any more, but rather a lot of people come to celebrate the feast and pass their time, to enjoy, and more than anything there is a lot of alcohol? They ingest too much alcohol and they spend too much money, there is a total squander of money. And this is the principal feast in town. Then there is another feast which is almost local, that is el Señor de San Pedro, it is celebrated in San Pedro in the cave, it’s the 8th of holy week, Easter.

35Jon: The feast in San Pedro is for people in Sorata?

36Priest: Precisely, this feast is local. The Sorateños celebrate this feast meanwhile the 14th of September is for residents generally. They come from different places, Santa Cruz, including countries abroad.

The priest confirms several non-local features evident in the feast for El Señor de la Columna. He demarcated an even more local feast occurring during Easter in the comunidad of San Pedro, and he also stated that the feast for El Señor de la Columna is for residents, a term with political consequence applied to distinguish individuals that are more urban than rural, and who therefore engage in more urban economic activity. Sorata experiences an unusual influx in the population for the September 14th celebration of the exultation of the cross. The feast moves beyond the local by drawing hundreds if not a thousand of festival goers from diverse cities in Bolivia and foreign

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33¿Desde cuándo se celebra esta fiesta?

34Esa tiene una tradición más o menos ya de siglo y medio o quizá 200 años que ya vamos viviendo esta fiesta y antes seguramente dicen que la fiesta no era así como ahora sino que era más religioso, más familiar. Y ahora es una fiesta con pompas, quizá podemos mencionar…. es lamentable también mencionar que más o menos que estamos pasando un extremismo que puede sentirse como una fiesta pagana. Ya no tienes coherencia religiosa sino muchos vienen a celebrar la fiesta a pasar su tiempo, divertirse, y más que todo hay mucho alcohol. Ingieren mucho alcohol y gastan demasiado, hay un derroche de dinero total. Y este es la fiesta principal del pueblo. Y luego hay otra fiesta casi local, la fiesta Señor de San Pedro, se celebra en la gruta de San Pedro, es la octava de la semana santa, la pasqua.

35¿La fiesta de San Pedro es para la gente en Sorata?

36Esa fiesta es local, precisamente. Los sorateños festejan esa fiesta mientras el 14 de septiembre es una fiesta de los residentes generalmente. Ellos vienen de diferentes lugares, Santa Cruz, incluso de los países exteriores.
countries. There are more comparsas that perform in Sorata on this date than any other feast day. The priest also refers to it as a feast that has evolved from a more orthodox celebration into festivities regarded as pagan, evidencing how the feast might have resembled more of the Spanish cofradía early on before the Andean elements he refers to as pagan were incorporated in the nineteenth century. To the priest, pagan elements seemed to be characteristic of feast days where dancing groups were involved, the comparsas, something that is nearly always accompanied by large quantities of alcohol consumption. Interestingly, a document from the municipalities archives references a Catholic priest by the name of Fr. Mackay who initially allowed the comparsas to dance for the town patron in front of the church some two hundred years ago (AAMS, unclassified document).

Advocations

In order to comprehend how church institutions and their devotions reinforce group identities and the political landscapes, it is necessary to understand how Catholic institutions in the Americas are a product of the post reformation process occurring in sixteenth century Spain. Sorata’s municipality recognizes eighteen annual feast days, thirteen of these feasts are acknowledged by the parish church, and five feasts have little to no religious significance (AASM, unclassified documents). Religious ceremonialism and group participation in these feast days differs in terms of the degree of orthodoxy evident in the liturgy and rituals, the influence of either nation-wide or municipal politics, and in terms of race and class differentiation. Of the thirteen Catholic feast days in Sorata, the celebration of each revolves around a biblical teaching, character or saint, sometimes represented as an image or statue either in the parish church or the surrounding landscapes in the form of a shrine or inside a chapel. A group of religious devotees might be responsible for festival activities and devotions to the object. Several of the devotional cult objects of worship are located outside of the church in different
geographical locations surrounding Sorata and come to represent a “territory of grace” where the power of the devotion is particularly manifest (Christian 1972). The distinction of devotional objects located outside of the parish church is a theme that Christian (1972) highlights with the division between “generalized devotions” and “shrine images” (1972: 47). He goes on to suggest that this difference also corresponds to the universal church vs. the local church.

The History of the Catholic Church documents a constant process in which the communion strives to create commonality across boundaries; the influence of the church is not bounded by a nation or place but rather transverses borders by agents of devotions represented in Orthodox liturgy and the overarching structure of the church universal. The church universal is symbolized most potently by the Pope and his constituents in Rome. Another significant factor in the maintenance and function of the Catholic Church is the continuous cooptation of these devotions by local cultures for their own purposes while simultaneously being shaped by the forces of Orthodoxy penetrating the local from quite distant places.

Two levels of Catholicism can be described that contrast elements of orthodoxy against idiosyncratic practices. The orthodox level as prescribed by the church universal follows the Roman calendar according to Catholic liturgy and centers on the experience of the sacraments. The local level of Catholicism parallels this orthodoxy by organizing a religious calendar around a particular settlement’s regional history, and represents sacredness in local places such as shrines and chapels, or through images, relics, and unique ceremonialism (Christian 1981).

The universal church is symbolized through generalized devotions that are mostly located inside the parish church and are related to and worshiped by individuals. Their location is irrelevant, thus lacking a territory of grace. They represent the non-located institutions of the Catholic Church, the agents that correspond to the growth of the Papacy and the Vatican across the nation over a more localized Bishopric, or the centralized monarchy over the local lord. Shrine images function much differently. In addition to the religious, they are also social in that they attract collectivities and reaffirm group identity and solidarity during pilgrimages or the formation of cofradías devoted to them. Often shrines are represented as statues, images, and objects, and take
the form of an *advocation*, a specialized word that refers to a variant form of a divine figure (Christian 1972: 47).

The practice of worshiping advocations can be seen even as far back as Greek religion. Many of the gods, though keeping the same name, might be represented by different characteristics such as dress or style. Such characteristics would differ given the location of where they were worshiped. Similarly, this practice occurs in Roman Catholicism. Taking the two most “generalized devotions” within the Roman Catholic religion, Jesus of Nazareth and the Virgin Mary, their characteristics and style change according to location and culture. The orthodoxy of the church emphasizes that there can only be one Jesus and Mary, and that all advocations are interchangeable substitutes that ultimately refer to their exclusiveness (Christian 1972). Yet local devotions crystallize around different representations, cultural patterns and models, impregnating the advocation with local meaning, emotion, and ritually encoded rules that are extrinsically linked to natural objects in the environment. Geertz states that, “culture patterns have an intrinsic double aspect, they give meaning, that is objective conceptual form, to social and psychological reality both by shaping themselves to it, and by shaping it to themselves” (as cited in Asad 1993: 32).

The Virgin Mary perhaps has more advocations than any world-wide religious cult. The Cathedral of Our Lady of Copacabana on the shores of Lake Titicaca houses the Virgin of Copacabana, recognized as Bolivia’s national patron saint. Given that the Virgin’s uniqueness attests to a tradition of worship upon a sacred location, it can be considered a “national shrine” following Christian’s distinctions (1971: 42). The location of the Virgin of Copacabana coincides with the spiritual and devotional center of pre-Columbians who worshiped their gods in temples and shrines scattered throughout the lake region. The circumstances that lead to the origin of the Virgin and it’s insertion into the regions culture was a process which sought to eliminate psychological and cultural gaps of meaning between the indigenous and Christian religions for a smoother transition between the two. The Virgin’s devotions were inspired by Ramos Galivan in the sixteenth century. Galivan compiled 132 miracles attributed to the image which he intertwined with narratives of the apostles as part of an evangelizing strategy (Salles-Reese 1997: 160). The miracles originate in the local
culture, many of which the natives play the role of protagonist. Several of the Virgins attributes are shared with the indigenous cult to Pachamama and Copacati; the first miracle attributed to the Virgin of Copacabana tells of her ability to produce rain to nourish crops, a power that was originally sought from Copacati (Salles-Reese 1997: 171). Evangelization was tailored to the local culture in order to move forward between the two religions. The apostles were more easily identified with by the local populations as opposed to a foreign dogma represented in a generalized devotion perhaps emanating from Rome.

Another Marian advocation in Bolivia exists on a further removed level than the national; the regional level. Pertaining to the department of La Paz and Oruro, July 16th marks the dates of for the feast of the Virgin of Carmen. Far removed from the generalized orthodox devotion that refers to the biblical Mt. Carmel, the Bolivian date is set aside to honor the police and military forces. In July of 1809, Pedro Domingo Murillo declared an independent state in Upper Peru from the Spanish. His revolt was lead by armies of criollos and mestizos from La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Potosi, marking the beginnings of the Bolivian revolution. Shortly after declaring that the Bolivian revolution was igniting a lamp that nobody would be able to turn off, Murillo was hung in the Plaza de los Españoles on July 16th. The date coincides with the Catholic feast day for the Virgin of Mt. Carmel. As a regional shrine three times removed from the Orthodoxy of Roman Catholicism, the generalized devotion of the Virgin of Carmen is transformed into the patroness of the police and military and a symbol of the Bolivian revolution. In Sorata, the statue of the Virgin of Carmen is enshrined in a window located in the leftward wing of the parish church. She is dressed in military attire and wears a military service cap upon her head. Below the statue is a plaque dedicated to her devotion by a military family from Sorata who own extensive tracts of land in the area. Their extended family members return every year on this date to honor the Virgin, and are responsible for organizing this fiesta.

_The Fiesta of El Señor de Pascua_
Holy week services in Sorata transgress quite normally as would any other Orthodox holy week. Maunday Thursday, Good Friday, an evening service on Saturday which included the washing of the feet ritual emphasized by St. Benedict, and an early morning sunrise service on Easter Sunday that featured a Christ statue being paraded around the main plaza at approximately five in the morning accompanied by loud fireworks. After the morning celebration, the town was quiet and the atmosphere normal, business as usual. The following Wednesday brought a drastic change with the appearance of the comparsas in Sorata’s plaza. There were three Morenadas and one Quena Quena group, representing an overall much smaller number of comparsa dancers than the September 14th feast day. Dancing and drinking commenced for hours into the night. The Morenadas each had their own brass band, playing one repetitive march as they circled around the main plaza in Sorata throughout the early morning hours. The Quena Quena group contrasted in style to the Morenadas. They had a more traditional sound, using flutes and handmade drums. They did not circle the entire plaza like the Morenada groups, but rather confined themselves to one of the four corners of the plaza, zig zaging back and forth in a circle while playing their flutes.

One side of the plaza was lined with board games for children and other carnival types of entertainments such as raffles and prizes. Street vendors selling everything from food and alcoholic beverages to clothing sprawled out into the backstreets surrounding the main plaza. A large firework stand that looked to be handmade of several pieces of thin tubing with individual fireworks attached to it was set off around eleven in the evening. Once one firework was lit, a chain reaction occurred that set off all the others attached to the structure until the entire arrangement was engulfed in flames. After the fireworks went off, the comparsas ceased with their dancing and grouped around drinking stalls that surrounded the plaza near the church. Cases of beer continued to be unloaded throughout the night by festival sponsors.

The drinking process seemed to follow a general pattern and customary set of rules; one person would “invite” an individual or group of others to drink with them. The person who extended the drinking invitation was seen as superior to the receiver, and would pour a small plastic cup for the recipient full of beer. The recipient would acknowledge the gesture offered to him by nodding their heads or shaking hands, then
the drinker would spill a portion of the beverage on the ground and finish the cup in one full gulp. The person inciting the drinking bout would then take the cup and pour himself one, spilling a portion, and downing the rest. This process would continue until the bottle was finished. Sometimes this might entail several bottles and even a whole case of beer! The product of my own middle class American autodidact, to me, the drinking seemed excessive; the goal was to become highly inebriated.

Ayni and reciprocity that had taken place throughout the year between these comparsas reached a climax at this time. The drinking patterns followed the system of reciprocity and cliental relationships, re-constituting hierarchical relationships and alliances between drinkers. Drinking promoted social exchanges between individuals and facilitated in bringing groups closer together who throughout the year might be less likely to socialize with each other. As a guest, I was invited several times into these drinking bouts. I learned that to show respect to the person inviting you to drink, consuming the beverage at a faster pace signaled that their gift to you was accepted and highly regarded, that you appreciated their gesture. After quickly downing several bottles (maybe a case) with a comparsa, I began to lose my sense of balance and place. The speed at which we consumed the alcohol had put me into a highly inebriated state. I could no longer accept invitations which seemed to offend individuals in a way that I could not understand.

Throughout the night during the continuous rounds of drinking, often I would inquire about the manner in which alcohol was being consumed, the rules that seemed to structure the behavior of those who chose to drink together. In spite of my questioning, festival participants never gave me an answer that implicated historical traditions or something that had deeper meanings beyond their commands of what I was expected to do. Ritualized drinking, much like other Andean religious elements that I would encounter during my research such as magical stones that were undeniably reminiscent of the huacas, were not social histories and customs that had been written down. Rather, their meanings and origins could be recognized in the current states and actions of participants and their celebrations that connected them to their land, in their dances that communicated symbolically a community’s foundational moment, and through the use of alcohol that was poured onto the ground as an offering to fertility. It
was not necessary for festival participants to articulate in words the meanings of their actions in order to understand their behavior. The actions are a product of a canonical force transmitted from generation to generation, existing as archetypical messages associated with pre-Columbians. Referring back to Rappaport’s theory of rituals (1999), of the two classes of information translated by ritual, the indexical (1) or current state of ritual actions and behavior is correlated to the invariant aspect (2) that is represented symbolically by the icon and the enduring aspects of nature, society, and the cosmos (58). Without the pre-Columbian traditions involving the use of alcohol and dancing, dancing and drinking in the festivals today would appear to be non-sensical or just drunken behavior. Though put into cultural and historical contexts as rituals, which is evidenced by the performance of this particular type ceremonialism in accordance with the Catholic liturgical calendar that has superimposed itself over the Andean calendar, the actions become “a complex form in which the two classes of messages are dependent on each other” (Rappaport 1999: 58).

Unlike western forms of recording history, pre-Columbians relied on an altogether different system for keeping track of events, administrative records, and important demarcated eras. This occurred through the use of the khipus37, and through oral narratives such as the dance takis. Often, when the first Spanish chroniclers attempted to understand the Andean past, it was for pragmatic purposes such as how land was owned and managed so that it could be directed into the colonial system, or how Andean religion functioned so that it could be destroyed.

Many of these chronicling endeavors focused on the use of alcohol consumption which was a central component to Andean ritual and religion. Before the arrival of the Spanish, Andeans believed that alcohol contained metaphysical properties that allowed humans to communicate with the gods. Pre-Columbians consumed excessive amounts of alcohol in order to bypass their own consciousness and become animated by the spirits of the universe who also enjoyed alcohol as much as humans did (Butler 2006: 5). Importance was placed on maintaining reciprocity with the living and also with their dead ancestors. Large quantities of alcohol were not only consumed by the people who

continued to work on the lands of their ancestors, but also by the mummies and huacas during libation offerings and the physical pouring of fermented corn alcohol onto the earth. A malku’s cadaver, the huaca, was believed to be the embodiment of an oracle that possessed therapeutic properties which could be accessed by priests dedicated to its cult. These priests were called \textit{huacapvillackuna} in Aymara (Salazar-Soler 1993: 27). Priests consumed and spilled chicha, a fermented corn alcohol, over the huacas to guarantee fertility of their land and to predict the future.

As the valued merchandise in which generosity was shown to group members, alcohol played an essential function for the political elite who were able to garner the support of subordinates with its use. The Spanish chronicler Juan de Betanzos noted in the sixteenth century that when the Inca Yupanqui orchestrated large scale public work contracts, he would assemble with all of the local malkus and caciques involved to drink large quantities of chicha to finalize a social contract (Saignes 1993: 46). Alcohol was used as “social credit”, economically valued, and charged with symbolic meaning. When it was consumed communally, the prestige of the person providing the drink was elevated by the receiver’s gratitude who acknowledged that a shared moral responsibility would be certain (Heath 1993: 175).

Not everyone was invited to drink however. Ayllu members had to adhere to a respected hierarchy of individuals whose social status was determined through drinking invitations. Garcilaso de la Vega evidences a hierarchy within Incan ceremonies that was recognized by an established drinking order; first was the head Inca who invited his oldest son to drink and inaugurate the ceremonies in his name. With his right hand, a symbolic offering to the sun was invoked, then immediately the Inca invited his family, then the local lords followed by their subordinates, demonstrating a grand pecking order of superior to inferior. As a general custom, the one who invites someone to drink assumes a superior position, the consumer acknowledging this grateful gesture. After the inferior receives and drinks, he invites the superior to drink in recognition of submission and servitude (Salazar-Soler 1993: 26). Alcohol contributed to reciprocal obligations within members of the same ayllu, though the nature of these obligations was determined by an individual’s social position within the group, a status that was established according to consanguinity. Reciprocity might occur among equals, but it
also involved diverse relationships that might be distant and between people of unequal status such as the relationship between the malku and commoners (Stern 1995: 73).

During the festival of El Señor de Pascua, the hierarchical ranking of participants was distinguished with alcohol; the pasantes or festival sponsors who wore colorful sashes across suits to symbolize their status as people who had helped with funding the feast distributed alcohol to the masses and invited individuals into drinking bouts. Below, my interview with the preste references how he distributes alcohol to the pasantes who then in turn distribute to the masses:

38 Jon: Being a preste, what do you pay for?
39 Preste: Being a preste we have uses and customs. As the head preste, who I have been, I have to respond as a gesture of affection to all the groups. For example there has been three groups and I as the older father, as if they were my sons, I have to take them, to say to them: “you take ten boxes of beer and you too”, and they distribute and we all dance in harmony!

This process of distribution and drinking throughout the night and early morning hours was accompanied by popular Bolivian rock groups, salsa bands, and several other genres that occupied two mobile stages erected in front of the church maybe thirty feet apart from each other. Given that the stages were fairly close to each other with the music being played at high decimal levels, sounds from each staged seeped into the other. Taking a step back from the two stages, the sound as a whole that engulfed the plaza, of a rock band playing on one stage while a salsa band played on the second, of brass marching bands and military waltzes, of traditional flutes and drums, all echoing off of the plaza’s main buildings, was one of the most chaotic and disorienting sounds I had ever witnessed. In that moment, the ritual in process bracketed off from normal time, demarcated historical eras opened to allow for the experience of two opposite worlds, their realities colliding together.

38 Siendo preste que es lo que pagas?
39 Estando preste tenemos usos y costumbres. El preste mayor que he sido yo, tengo que responder como un gesto de cariño a todas las comparsas. Por ejemplo han sido tres comparsas y yo como padre mayor, como si fueran mis hijos, tengo que cogerlos, decírselos: "toma Usted 10 cajas de cerveza y Usted también", se reparte y todos bailaremos en armonía!
The Mass for El Señor de Pascua

The next day, the first Thursday after Easter Sunday, was a change of pace. Participants moved from Sorata to the campo and to the chapel of El Señor de Pascua. Many arrived on foot, others in cars that lined the small dirt road reaching down from the comunidad of San Pedro to the river bed chapel. The comparsas from the previous night, three Morenadas and the Quena Quena group with their respective bands congregated on the hillside above the chapel. Many individuals crowded into the chapel, bringing with them white candles that they lit at the foot of the altar.
As I stepped inside the small chapel, the temperature raised considerably, the air thick with the smoke of copal incense. The source of a miracle and devotional object in the chapel is a stone measuring around three feet by four feet that resides behind the altar. Depicted on the stone is a painted figure of Christ with his body and arms outstretched and pinned to the rock, blood trickling from his hands and forehead, rays of light emanating from his head. His lower torso is covered by a white satin cloth decorated with several embroidered patterns from which his legs emerge. Below his feet is a serpent, a Christ icon literally stepping on a snake, the Señor de Pascua. Priests and other residents of San Pedro tell that the artificial painting of Christ was recently added to the stone within the last fifty years to visibly accentuate the natural impression of a crucifix adorned with a person stepping on a snake in the stone.

Soon the mass began outside the chapel doors, officiated by three Catholic priests from the parish Church in Sorata. Standing next to the priests was the preste with his wife, a group of three musicians that would sing the mass’s hymns, and a statue of Jesus mounted onto a platform. A lengthy mass ensued for well over an hour complete with communion provided to all that wished to partake including myself. The mass
concluded by the officiates in the ceremony (preste and his wife, priests, various people hoisting the statue of Jesus, and incense bearers) walking to all four corners of the field in front of the chapel, pausing at each corner where they would receive a prayer from the priests. This same movement is also done in Sorata’s plaza for the feast of El Señor de la Columna, though in the rural context of San Pedro the movement becomes symbolic of the connection rural communities have to the parish center in Sorata.

After the mass, the brass bands started up once again, accompanied by comparsas dancing in front of the chapel. A large feast ensued in which food was offered to everyone in attendance by the various pasantes. The majority people ate up on the hill above the chapel, or were scattered around the open field in front of the chapel. The Quena Quena comparsa stood out by occupying a central area in the field in front of the chapel.

The group consumed their food in a circle, and presided over a symbolic offering of food that was placed on the ground in front of them consisting of choclo (local variety of corn), fried bananas, potatoes, and chuño (a freeze dried potato). These foods also made up what everyone in the entire feast was consuming. The sharing of food between different groups expresses the bodily unification of the people who are eating together, while at the same time eating different foods distances individuals from a family unit. Thus, those who eat together can be thought of as families unified biologically in their commensality (Muxel 1996).
The Quena Quena group in 2009 was made up of indigenous authorities from several of the surrounding comunidades. They were all older males. Inquiring about this age characteristic, I was told that they were the ones that originally encountered the magical stone and had lifted the stone trying to take it to Sorata some 65 years ago. When suddenly it became too heavy to carry, they returned to take it to its place of origin where it became light as a feather. Because they had lifted the miracle and formed the devotion, members of the brotherhood are given preference in the festival. They are also responsible for taking care of the stone, holding the sanctuary keys, providing the chapel with flowers and candles when masses are held, and keeping track of alms directed towards repairing damaged parts of the chapel.

The Quena Quena is perhaps one of the oldest general comparsas in Bolivia that is symbolic of pre-Columbian Incan rituals and traditional music. Guaman Poma’s sixteenth century manuscript references *capac apoconas* or powerful men dancing the Quena Quena. The standard attire consists of participants adorning bulging breastplates covered with puma skins and geometrical patterns that bear the shape of human and puma heads. A unique attribute is the multicolored parrot feathers, taken from parrots.
that several members in the group had raised themselves, which are attached to the back of the breastplate to show the abundance of parrots in the area and also to mimic the colors of the rainbow. These designs are also present on wooden vessels made by the Inca known as kerus, where rainbows emanate from the mouths of pumas, a motif that reference Incan mythology (Mcfarren 1986: 19). The Quena Quena’s devoted to El Señor de Pascua perform a unique dance known as the *Chujña Q'epjaru*, or “green cargo” after the green parrot feathers and is executed with the use of the pinquillo flute. Feathers are arranged to show the greatest range of color tones as possible, also symbolizing the greater recognition of their community.

Fig. 10 Quena Quena comparsa attach hanging rows of parrot feathers to their puma colored breast plates during the Feast of El Señor de Pascua. Photo by Jon Lord.

After several hours, groups moved back up the road to the small village of San Pedro, where heavy rounds of drinking and dancing ensued in the football field late into the night to conclude the feast of El Señor de la Pascua.
Huacas, Jurisdictions, and Water

Because the object of devotion in the feast for El Señor de la Pascua is represented as a stone, and that stones were often the objects of worship in pre-Columbian Andean religious ceremonies, it suggests that the stone in the chapel could be a symbol or an actual huaca pertaining to a comunidade’s membership, territory, and object of ancestor devotional worship. But to designate the altar piece in the chapel as an actual huaca would be misleading, reducing a complex phenomenon to a simple object or entity. Because Quechua and Aymara languages express different and often wider semantic meanings than English, what constitutes a huaca from an Andean perspective is not always something that necessarily would refer to a single stone or idol. The concept of the huaca was something that the first Spanish chroniclers failed to understand correctly, as do many contemporary individuals foreign to indigenous Andean culture.

Fervently seeking to wipe out the pagan religion in the Andes, the sixteenth century extirpation movement classified huacas as things which could be confiscated and destroyed; José de Acosta, like many Spanish extirpators, became obsessed with discovering ritual objects, stones, and idols that were buried next to mummified ancestors. Huacas were largely interpreted by the Spanish from their own Judeo-Christian perspective which taught of the false idols and objects housed in Greek and Roman temples (Mills 1997). For many involved in extirpation, subjective fears surfaced when the discourse and physicality of huacas proved to be elusive. While many huacas were made by hand and thus could be destroyed, many huacas were not made by hand; they were also mountain peaks, rivers, or springs (MacCormack 2006: 646). They also had the ability to revive into new formations. When ritual objects were destroyed by the Spanish, their worship was simply directed back into nature, to streams and mountains. The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega struggled to help the Spanish understand that their concept of the huaca as an idol was limited; he offered nine possible meanings, eventually arriving to define a huaca as something that has both beauty and excellence but also the capacity to inspire horror and alarm (Mills 1997: 42).
During the Incan rule, use of huacas evidences that a large percentage were associated with water. One third of the 329 huacas related to Cuzco were sources of water (Weismantle 1988: 204). Many examples evidence a relationship between mythological systems and hydrology; huacas were sometimes referred to as *unoyoc* for the lord of the water that is a source of fertility for the land, and as markers of the convergence of rivers where bridges are found (Gonzalez-Martinez 1985: 766).

One obvious feature in the location of the chapel that houses the stone Pascua is its close proximity to the river, rather than in the comunidad of San Pedro some twenty minutes walk uphill towards the road. More specifically, it is built at the confluence of two rivers, the rio Llica and a smaller river coming from the settlement of Combaya. We know that the Inca expansion into the eastern valleys occurred under the leadership of the Inca ruler Yupanqui and his men who passed through the Larecaja province dividing the region into three zones: Callawayas, Ambana, and Larecaja (Loayza-Bejarano 2000: 20). Each zone was known as a Cacicazgo or territorial division that was ruled by an Incan political leader. The territorial division between the cacicazgo of Ambana and Laracaja follows the river system coming from Combaya to the convergence of the rio Llica as seen in figure 7. This convergence of bodies of water also marks the location of the Chapel that houses the stone Pascua.

Fig. 11 Cacicazgos and mitmaq colonists of the Inca in the eastern valleys (Saignes 1986).
The Spanish presence in the eastern valleys contributed to an even more diverse multiethnic population. In the sixteenth century, corregidor Juan Maldonado made a distinction between native populations known as yunga who originated in the valleys from mitimaes who had been transplanted from the highland atliplano groups for work rotations. Saignes (1986) suggests that the term yungas referred to a population of “nomadic outsiders” to the altiplano people, possibly originating from the Amazon forests and Arawak populations (1986: 314). Other archeological sites in the area such as Muchha Cruz and Tambo Kusi evidences the early penetration of the valleys by the descendents of Chiripas (a population found on lake Titicaca that pre-dates Tiawanaku civilization) who were perhaps the first colonizers to cultivate land throughout Larecaja and produce goods destined for the altiplano (Jaldin 1990: p.80). The Inca largely populated ecological floors to the northwest of rio Llica which can be seen in figure 12 below.

![Fig. 12 Valley of Larecaja showing ethnic groups and later colonial resettlements (Saignes 1986).](image)

Aymara groups mostly established residence on the other side. This ethnic distinction of jurisdictions would later separate regions towards the northwest side of the Rio Llica
from the Larecaja province to create the Munecas province when Bolivia became a Republican state.

What are the motivations behind this choice to build the chapel at this confluence of bodies of water? Unfortunately my research has not probed this question enough to offer a valid answer, only a suggestion for future research directions. Often when I asked about the stone inside the church as being a representation of a huaca I was given insubstantial responses such as a smile or an individual saying “podría ser” meaning it could be. Only one recorded interview referenced the stone in the church as a huaca:

40 Jon: I have never seen a rock like that is associated with the Catholic Church like this. Rocks are an Andean custom? A huaca? Is it for this?
41 Villager: Exactly. What is the symbol of the Catholic Church?
42 Jon: The cross.
43 Villager: The cross. And for this we put the cross. The symbol of Catholic religion is the cross, it is the only one, there are no other gods, nothing more. On the other hand, inside what is the Andean religion, we have various gods, for example, this rock is a huaca. And this huaca for us is a, or for the traditional religion, for the Andean religion, is a symbol of this religion, as well the symbol of this Andean religion could be a mountain, a lake, a lagoon, a spring. So for this, I tell you that in a fiesta, possibly inside the church, these two elements, the cross and the huaca they coexist together.

Given the history of violent extirpation in the Andes, many sources of indigenous religion have continued to flourish underground, even secretly, something that Abercrombie (1998) has documented and written about extensively. I would experience this secretiveness as well. During my time working with my Bolivian assistant, we would often stay at his family’s place of residence in Sorata. They were
from a middle class mestizo background, and only participated as pasantes or prestes in feast days that were considered more orthodox without the ritual dancing of the comparsas. These included the Feast of the cross on May 3rd, and the Feast of Mercy which was essentially a fundraiser for the small medical facilities in Sorata.

Yet I found that the more I participated in the daily activities of this family’s life, the more I was exposed to their practice of Andean rituals and dedications to pachamama. One instance occurred during the construction of a swimming pool at their residence. A bruja was sought out to prepare a “muxsa misa”, a ritual table/plate composed of herbs, candies, llama fat, and various other entities. Four of these plates were purchased from the bruja and buried in the four corners of the earthed trench that would later be cemented over and turned into a swimming pool. This task was an offering to pachamama to ward off all evil spirits and to ask that the building of the pool bring more clients and economic wealth to their residence. This type of behavior existed in a separate realm far removed from Catholic mass and festival activities that they participated in the presence of clergy.

The worship of huacas however was not to be found in this family. Perhaps out of lack of knowledge of Andean history, like the majority of the festival participants in Sorata, this family had no idea what a huaca was. Huaca was a word that no longer seemed to exist, much like the Andean ayllu. Whether or not the stone inside the chapel is an actual representation of an ethnic bloodline or not seems beside the point. To suggest otherwise would be contrived. The chapel and the stone as symbols of group identity, as markers of boundaries and territories of grace, and as entities that offer divine protection, are all very reminiscent of the meanings of huacas.

Looking to the scholarly work done on the cult of the huaca, it is clear that the worship of huacas was not only spiritual but material. Its worship implicated agricultural harvests, access to land, and water rights that were recognized as the territory of an ethnic ayllu, symbolized through the huaca. Murra’s (1968) work on Aymara Kingdoms references oral testimonies recorded by sixteenth century chroniclers of Andean religion, in particular the writings of Garci Diez de San Miguel, one of the first westerners who described how certain aspects of re-distribution functioned during ritual ceremonialism; certain plots of land were designated to be
worked by community members and harvests were to be extracted by their leaders for the benefit of the community as a whole (1968: 134). The designation of land for individual families occurred with religious ceremonialism; there was a festive atmosphere, the malku would supply food and drink, and ritual ceremonies included music and dance to celebrate plentiful and future harvests. Songs and dances were performed in devotion to the huacas, known as takis in Aymara. Takis (or dance paths) reenacted the mythological foundational moment for a particular ayllu. Dance rituals were the means to achieve a bracketing off of normal time to experience communitas and anti-structure (Turner, 1969).

Fig. 13 Guaman Poma 16th century drawing of festival participants performing takis. Digital image by Royal Library, Copenhagen.

An epic for their group was invoked, brought to life, and connected to the “still living memories” of their past (Abercrombie 1998: 179). These early foundational moments were captured in drawings by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, a native of Peru.
who accompanied the Spanish during their visitas of the rural countryside to document indigenous religion and cultural practices during the sixteenth century. Poma mentions native flutes being used called pingollos in ceremonies accompanied by the Quena Quena dance performing takis, as seen in figure 13 (Poma de Ayala 1615: 328).

A Magical Stone

As with most localized shrines and chapels in the countryside, the foundation of the chapel was inspired by a divine sign and miraculous historical event, represented artistically in a sacred rock that is the vanguard object and central altarpiece in the chapel. Because a miraculous sign connotes symbolic power, the rock image is a deeply imprinted metaphor and highly charged expression of self definition, of ethnicity, and of personal relationships to those who are devoted to it in the community and the pilgrims who are drawn from the surrounding hillsides seeking powers.

The image of the serpent accompanied with Christ sources meanings taken from dreams, from actual events in the community, and also theological implications. Through the oral testimonies of the villagers, and a document given to me in the municipality’s archives, I was able to partially reconstruct the history surrounding the miracle in San Pedro. Some two hundred years ago, scores of people including women and children in the area were the victims of lethal snake bites. Snakes were not only blamed for the deaths of humans, but also for the killing off of their livestock. In one season, sheep, cows, and mules were decimated by poisonous snakes and contributed to a huge emotional and economic burden on the community.

Asking about the purpose of the snake on the stone, several locals would say that their ancestors told them how the reoccurring snake attacks was seen as a sign that devotion was not accorded were it was due. Berger (1967) states that “every nomos is an edifice erected in the face of the potent and alien forces of chaos. This chaos must be kept at bay at all cost. To ensure this, every society develops procedures that assist its members to remain reality oriented” (24). For villagers living in San Pedro, many believed that God had been angered, and their spiritual task was to recognize their faults
which had brought divine wrath to the community. In pursuit of this spiritual task, miraculous events and dreams presented themselves to individuals in the community, prompting them to create a devotional vow and religious observance to a saint that could intervene between god and human affairs to ward off disasters. By observing certain acts of piety, cessation of their misfortune transpired, and future protection was bestowed upon their community. Below is the short story surrounding these events, as evidenced by those involved with building the Chapel of El Señor de Pascua. The document was given to me by a government official working in the municipality’s archives.

One day something happened that was very rare, like all the days, the kids that live in the country would head down below the small pueblo of San Pedro to graze sheep and while some of these kids were playing in a group, a rock falls above one of the kids. They looked all over the place but they didn’t see or find anything. A little while later, the same thing happened and they looked but did not find anything. Some days passed until one day again a rock fell and injured one of the kids very badly, he was bleeding profusely. The kids went to notify their father what had happened and their father went down below the town of San Pedro to ascertain where the rock had come from. He was hiding himself to see who had thrown the rock. Soon, the father saw a small rock that came out of a larger rock nearby, and he looked over the rock to see if someone was hiding nearby, but after looking at it he saw in the rock a small cross with the figure of Jesus Christ crucified. He then became enraged, and with a large hammer he began to strike the rock, smashing it to small pieces. He found among the small pieces the figure of the cross again that had popped off with the other pieces of the stone. He decided to take it to an authority in the village. They examined the rock and decided to hand over the rock to a priest in Sorata. That is to say that they were to take it to the church in Sorata. On a good day, the “Jilkata” an authority figure in the village made an order to have the image taken to Sorata, and one of the workers received the orders to take it. On an early morning, he went down below to the house where the rock was to bundle it up and carry it to the town. He hitched it and tied it to his back and set forth for Sorata, and halfway down the road in a place known as “Pallall Kala”, a population that is located between Mt. Thaqui Kala and Corini, he decided to take a break from his travels and chew some coca leaf. After his rest, he decided to continue with his walk but no longer could he raise the bundle, it continued to become heavier and what the history tells is that the bundle was the size of a sardine can approximately 20 x 15 cm similar to a bulging football. Upon seeing that he could not raise his bundle, he decided to wait for someone to appear to help him lift it, and a little while later

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44 The story that was given to me in Spanish is located in Appendix B. This being a translation from Aymara, there are frequent nonstandard usages which I have tried my best to translate into Standard English.
someone appeared and he begged him to help and between the two of them they could not lift the bundle and both decided to wait for more help. A little while passed and two more persons appeared: between the four of them they could not lift the bundle, and another time they decided to wait until two more people arrived and neither of the six of them could lift the bundle. The six of them were very astonished and examined the rock many times and finally they arrived to the conclusion to return the bundle to the community of San Pedro. When they intended to lift the rock, it only took one person to achieve this, and it was returned towards the house of the leader who turned it into them and they remained in the place where actually now they have constructed a football field. A lot of time passed, and one night while the leader was sleeping, the rock announced in his dream that it wants to be placed where they have lifted it from, today this actual place is where they erected a cross. But the leader ignoring the dream, kept the stone in his house, until in the middle of another dream, it threatened saying “Q’ichjaraka’ maw Jilir Wawamaru” which means: “if you don’t take me to my place of origin, I will put an end on your first son”, but the leader ignored it.

One day the threat became true with his first son, but he did not make the connection, then eight days later his second son died, but he did not do anything, after another eight days his third son died. This time the leader made the connection and realized the disgrace that had happened for not listening to his dreams that he had, therefore he sent the rock to its place of origin, but he forgot about it. After some time, the rock revealed itself to the authorities of the village in dreams saying I am cold, but once again nobody payed attention, and therefore the rock made a new threat to put an end to their animals with the bite of a rattlesnake and because they did not pay attention, the animals began to die in this way; sheep, cows, and mules among others and finally the authorities thought of the dreams they had and decided to inform the Patron about this. Immediately between the patrons they were in agreement to begin a construction of a chapel for the crucified rock. Participating in this construction were various Patrons of different haciendas from Ilabaya, Laripata, Combaya, Chichilaya, Quiabaya, Tintilaya, among others. The people that constructed the church were very large and strong people, because the adobe they used in the construction was double the size of what they usually are. When they built the house, the authorities did not know when to celebrate for it. Soon one night the rock revealed in a dream to the Patron of Tutuacaja and revealed that in honor of his birthday, he drink to some of the calves of mules. In each one of his dreams the Patron mentioned that the rock was his friend, the “pascualito”. Within in a pair of weeks after approached Easter and the resurrection, and he decided to celebrate the miracle after Easter for the coincidence in the name of San Pedro. The Patron by the name of Ruiz, decided on this date because it was revealed to him in a dream. Another part of the story tells of how on the day of the fiesta the crucifix was converted into a white dove that went to the front of a tall hill to enjoy the fiesta. Each year to start the celebration of the fiesta, the Patron Ruiz organizes a dance group of Waca Wacas and at the same time a lot of other Patrones organized other types of dances and groups. The festival currently is a sample of the diversity of typical dances of the region and other regions. Miners assist from Tipuani, Yani, and residents of the interior of the country, the ones in which testify that in their heart they have a lot of faith for the festival and in general their business actually triples.
much more. Because of this, a lot of the parishioners prefer to arrive by foot and not by other means of transportation, assuring to the testified miracles.

Several themes can be extracted from this mythological event. Metaphor and the investment of meaning attributed to the rock as symbol, is understood only because it is both symbol and sign, derived from its positional context in relation to other phenomena in the natural world and how it fits into the annual calendar and the devotional history of the village. The underlying structures of this story can be understood by analyzing how semiotic systems of index, sign, and symbol form dialogic discourses and trajectories of historical processes.

Social Constructions of Reality

The Swiss linguist Ferdinand Saussure, founder of structural linguistics stated that meaning is not found within words that come to represent objects themselves, but rather in intervals and contrasts between terms. Intervals in the semiotic system constitute our understanding of signs. Signs do not express meaning in and of themselves but rather express markers of divergence of meaning between itself and other signs. It is not to say that one must know an entire language in order to speak it, but that language has a web like nature. This web or whole system is present in the structures of each sentence or word that is used according to grammatical rules established by a culture. What comes to have meaning only occurs as “collective representations that filter our knowledge of concrete objects” (Weistmantel 1998: 15). Language expressed through culture reduces reality to its own system of rules. It is to say that when we use language to name an object, the word itself that represents an object is dependent upon context and culture. Meaning is a result of social constructions that are place dependent and limited to the language and reality created by a given culture. This process comes to form symbols that communicate meaning.45

45 Here I am referring to the dialectical process of reality maintenance that forms society as described by sociologist Peter Berger (1967). The process is usually grouped into three movements as cited 1) Externalization: the ongoing outpouring of human being into the world, both in the physical and the mental activity of men. 2) Objectivation: the attainment by the
In San Pedro, the generalized image of Christ for example becomes more than the historical figure of Christ who died in Jerusalem. It is a symbol of the miraculous for residents in San Pedro only because it is place dependent, where the Christ’s powers are adapted into a more local context and in which an entire community’s history is bound up in. By allowing place, language, and cultural context to be inserted into the original Passion story, a cultural reality is understood that is farther removed not only from Jerusalem, but from regions and dioceses, parish churches and bishops, and ultimately to chapels and shrines where the community’s needs must be answered.

The construction of social reality in combination with language and signs can further be broken down according to indices. Rappaport (1999) makes use of two types of indices, true/natural indices, and constructed indices. A true Index is “a sign that is either an effect of, or an aspect of, or a part of its object” (Rappaport 1999: 63). The true index represents the direct correspondence between a sign and an object, an effect-cause relationship that prompts humans to name and demarcate its significance with a sign. True indices or natural indices refer to phenomena in nature such as rays of light or dark clouds, in the case of San Pedro’s mythological story poisonous snakes. The true index indicates that the phenomena or the presence of something has a dynamical relationship with other aspects of the same phenomena, yet its meaning remains ambiguous and doubtful until it is put into context; that a poisonous snake might bite and kill is uncertain, it is simply a snake. A second level of index, the constructed index, differs from natural indices in that they are created by humans to indicate and demarcate that a phenomena has an effect. For example, poisonous snakes, as natural indices, do not necessarily signify that they will bite, yet the snake can serve as a sign of an attack or something dangerous, and therefore becomes a constructed index. Constructed indices are a part of true indices, yet the former are semiotic in that they are specific about a sign and its relationship to an object or phenomena, though not specifically representing the object or phenomena in question, but referring to it with a set of ideas.
through language. Constructed indices are parts or aspects of their objects, and the way they are connected to other phenomena in the natural world comes to express why they are significant.

Lethal snake bites in the story become associated with the divine that is represented in a magical stone that first enters into the realm of miraculous by way of children. A theme has emerged here that is bounded up in the dialogism of Roman Catholic discourse surrounding local and popular forms of religious practice and miracles occurring at shrines and chapels. Similar stories as the one in San Pedro can be traced to Spain and the reformation process, a time in which differing forms of religious practice evidenced a continuum between orthodoxy and popular rural Christianity. William Christian Jr.’s (1981) archival work on the documentation of religious belief in New Castile during the years 1575-1580 is largely drawn from a questionnaire created by Phillip II’s chroniclers, issued to towns and villages throughout the Spanish region. Given the high proportion of responses originating from rural settlements, the accounts described in the questionnaire are a rich source for understanding local forms of religiosity. Communities interacted with their saints somewhat outside of the institutional church, invoking their help as a collective during critical times in their environment.

The results of the survey sent to Phillip II charts differing tribulations that were the major reasons for collective vows made by villagers to the saints. These vows usually led to the founding of a chapel, shrine, cofradía, or group of devotees that was responsible for ensuring that penance was paid to the Saint. The most common reason for a vow to be made was plague or disease, followed by vine pests decimating crops, grasshoppers, hail, and drought. Other misfortunes seen as punishment and as a sign for the calling of public vows were fires, floods, earthquakes, lighting, and pestilence (Christian 1981: 35). Villagers believed that the saints were angry and needed placation, or sought devotion. The local form of “popular religion” practiced is apparent given that Saints intervene during a negative misfortune of the community, serving as a kind of

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46 I use the term vows to indicate that a devotion or spiritual task was undertaken by a community in response to a disaster.
nexus in which blame is placed on a disastrous event. This goes against orthodox Christianity which teaches that Saints intercede for humans, not against them.

Phillip II’s survey also shows that the choice of which saint or biblical figure to create vows and devotion to was chosen either by way of sign or lotteries. Signs and unexplainable coincidences such as a disaster occurring on a particular saint’s festival day were motives for selecting a biblical character to worship or possibly form as the focus of a devotional cofradía. If no sign was apparent, providence was established by holding lotteries among different saints. One method by lot was burning twelve candles of equal size and weight, each candle placed in front of a saint to represent it. The candle that was last burning singled the Saint to be worshiped (Chrisitian 1981).

**The Disciple Simon-Peter**

The devotion to El Señor de Pascua was chosen by sign and several coincidences for the community. Because the stone depicts a natural image of Christ stepping on a serpent, these two images, the Christ and Serpent, are coincidental in that the disciple Peter was first to discover Jesus’ tomb empty after his crucifixion, and therefore out of sheer coincidence with the town’s name, the resurrection of Christ is celebrated four days after Easter in San Pedro. The second coincidence is that the magical stone has a naturally occurring image of a serpent, relating to the deaths from snake bites in the area. The symbol of the snake takes on dual meanings, one in the material world of lethal bites, and the second as Jesus’ triumph over evil as evidenced by the Christ image stepping on the serpent.

A closer inspection of the story also reveals several more coincidences in relation to the disciple Peter. The word Peter is Greek for “Petros” meaning rock. The historical Peter dates from 1-64 A.D., and is considered to be the first Pope of the Christian church. He is a symbol of stability, “the rock” upon which Christ built his first church. Bible historians believe Peter’s real name was Simon; Peter seemed to be only used as a nickname until Jesus addresses Simon as Peter after a divine revelation (Perkins 1994: 40). This story is captured in Mathew 16:18 in which a dialogue between Jesus and his disciples ensues. Jesus asks “Who do you say that I am?” Simon-Peter answers, “You
are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus declares Peter as blessed for recognizing his true identity and attributes this recognition to a divine revelation. Jesus then addresses Simon specifically as Peter saying “I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of death will not overcome it.”

The patron in the story, who the stone communicates to in dreams, seems to take on the biblical role of Peter in other passages of the story. Let us remember that for three years Peter was a courageous spokesman for Jesus, stating that he would go to prison and die for him in Acts 22:33. Yet within the scope of three hours he denies having any relationship to Jesus on three occasions. This was foretold by Jesus during the last supper leading up to his crucifixion and resurrection.

The gospel stories coincide with the Patron receiving messages from the stone in dreams. In one dream, the stone speaks saying that it wants to be returned to its original location, threatening that it will kill his first son if it is not returned. The Patron denies any significance to the dream, even after his first son was killed. After some time, his second son dies, and yet again he denies any connection to the prophecy revealed by the stone. After his third son dies, the Patron realizes his disgrace for not believing in the threats of the stone and decides to move the stone back to its place of origin, but he forgets to do this. A third denial occurs when the stone communicates again in a dream that it is cold and wants to be moved to its place of origin. The stone then threatens that it will kill off livestock with the bite of a rattlesnake if the task is not completed, and again the Paton denies that the dream has any worth until one day all of their livestock was decimated by rattlesnake bites. After this, the leaders of the community decide to not only move the stone back to its place of origin, but also to construct a chapel, to officially declare a feast day, and to form brotherhoods that were devoted to the image.

The biblical morals of steadfast faith to god are clearly expressed in a local style throughout San Pedro’s miracle. The San Pedro narrative modifies the concept of divine revelation from the bibles original story, and thus subsequently redefines the social context and natural orders. Yet the modified narrative is not divorced from the original as a result of this process. Rather, the original version of Peter’s denial of Christ becomes the context in which a modified narrative implants itself in, and in doing so, a more specific, individual narrative cycle emerges from the general revealing a common
structure. Continuity is maintained in several forms and is necessary to validate the temporal limits of a more local version of the Passion. The mythological discourse attempts to eliminate psychological and cultural gaps that could potentially expose or diminish the value and divine rationale for the miracle and the founding of a Feast day. As a result, the Passion of Jesus and the disciple Peter’s sacredness is maintained in both narratives though modified to fit a new cultural context.

Another element in the narrative, a stone of extraordinary nature, carries on a continual dialogue with miracles and origin legends of popular religion practiced in sixteenth century Spain. Referring back to Christian’s (1981) work on Phillip II’s survey of rural Spanish religion, the reports show that devotional images had a desire to be worshiped in a specific place. Proof of extraordinary experiences and activity confirmed the legitimacy and presence of divine powers in a given place, chapel, or shrine. Often these extraordinary events occurred in the form of images or relics that were discovered in a said place, or oral testimonies of divine apparitions; the combination of event’s that were unexplainable. When these instances did occur, it was an important incentive for a community to build a chapel or shrine at the determined site of an apparition or finding. The responses of Phillip II’s survey show that one of the most common signs reported was the movement of statues from the parish church, from which they had been taken too, to the sacred location in which they were found (Christian 1981: 75). The emphasis was on locality; holy images and shrines legitimized the divine in specific localities through mythological stories that fused the material and spiritual world in order for value and local autonomy to be respectable in the eyes of individual communities. The legend motif of the returning image or statue to the country side away from the parish church represents a form of resistance to the overarching claims of the parish church. These sites attracted visitors, and were sources of not only local pride but wealth.

This theme is further confirmed in my interview with the 2009 preste of El Señor de Pascua. Below, the passage from this interview has the preste speaking about one of the original fraternities that was created in San Pedro to the devotion of the Stone Pascua, a comparsa of Quena Quena’s:
They are very jealous. They don’t want it to be moved anywhere. Because it is a sanctuary and through this there is income from tourism. A lot of people go, worship, they light their candles. They place their beliefs there and it makes them a reality.

Physically, the magical stone stands for a territory of grace, highlighting a rural area’s importance and autonomy apart from the greater municipality. The miracle is a source of power that has the ability to make their beliefs a reality. Because of this, devotees are drawn to it and offer alms, it is a source of wealth in the area, and therefore it is desired by many, making the Quena’s who are closest to the object enhanced individuals. The Quena Quena comparsa who annually organize the feast embody the complex intersection of place/ethnicity/class/and ritual elements that are not always shared in the same meaningful way with other devotional groups and feast days in Sorata, attesting to the political consequences evident between feast days.

The Feast of the Cross

Continuing with the theme of a political hierarchy among feast days in Sorata, this next section supports the existence of class distinctions and group identities forming around another feast day in Sorata that is held on May 3\textsuperscript{rd} known as the Feast of the Cross. In a conversation with the preste from El Señor de Pascua, a clear political division emerged between his feast and those devoted to the feast occurring on May 3\textsuperscript{rd} who are of mostly mestizo, middle class people (a class position that he is at odds with) from La Paz that travel to Sorata usually only for the feast day, staying in hotels or buildings that remain unoccupied for the majority of the year:

\textbf{Jon}: They say that the feast of Señor de la Cruz in May is the feast for the alcalde?
\textbf{Preste}: The feast of May 3 is similar to the San Pedro lord. They are the same. For me both are powerful. May third is a big feast too. Each one adores. But as a town we do

\begin{quote}
Bien celosos son. No quieren que eso se mueva a ningún lado. Porque es un santuario y además a través de eso hay un ingreso en aspecto turístico. Mucha gente va, adora, prende su velita, las creencias que pone y se hace realidad.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Ellos dicen que la fiesta de El Señor de la Cruz en Mayo es la fiesta para el Alcalde?
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
La fiesta del 3 de mayo es similar a lo que es el Señor de San Pedro. Son parecidos los dos. Para mi los dos son poderosos. El 3 de mayo es una fiesta grande también. Cada
Despite the differences in class positions between the feast days, the preste of El Señor de Pascua stresses the unity that they share as people of faith and as people who are all considered Sorateños. The division between rural/non-rural, mestizo/indigenous, middle class/campesino is most blatantly obvious during the feast day held on May 3rd. While this feast’s mass is held outside of the parish church at a nearby shrine, it still occurs very close to the main square in Sorata, unlike the mass held for El Señor de Pascua which takes place in the rural countryside. The feast of the Cross on May 3rd was widely known to be the feast for the Alcalde in Sorata who was responsible for transforming this feast from a celebration that was once more indigenous into a more Christian orthodox ceremony.

The location for this feast takes place on a small hill that can be reached in ten minutes by foot from Sorata. On the top of the hill is an enclosed area with several small benches. In the middle of this area is a large white cross mounted to a base of stone. The cross as well as it’s base was made of stone taken from the river. This construction occurred in 1936 under the guidance of Don Mollinedo, a resident of Sorata. Fanning out below from the main cross on the hill are thirteen smaller white crosses corresponding to stations of the cross, each cross symbolically invoking a series of scenes that lead to Jesus’ crucifixion. They are placed maybe 10 feet apart from each other leading up the hill to the main cross. One white cross exists just before exiting Sorata on the main dirt road that leads to the stations. This cross is separated from the crosses of the stations by a river and quite some distance, though it is clearly related to...
them given that it is of the exact same size and make as the others, and that it’s trajectory from Sorata connects a straight line to the crosses on the hill.

Like many hills that have a clear view of the town or the surrounding countryside, these places more often than not are the sites of Christian shrines like the area which is used for the May 3rd feast day. They have also been the sites of ritual activity and ceremonialism utilized by indigenous populations who refer to these look out points as *apachetas*. This particular location that was used for the May 3rd festival is also referred to by the indigenous populations as an apacheta by the name *Kinku Circa* in Aymara. I was told by the preste of the May 3rd feast day that before the cross was placed on the hill, the indigenous populations would use the site as a place to make sacrifices and offerings to the earth or to cure people in the traditional ways. Since the cross was built in 1936, the ritual activity occurring in this location underwent a process of syncretization to the point where now there is little to nothing left of indigenous ritual activity occurring on this site.

With the building of the cross, the area became the site of a new feast day occurring on May 3rd. In the beginning, the feast was formed for all of the people in the market who sell their agricultural products; most of them were and still are indigenous women. The feast was accompanied by the traditional dancing and drinking ceremonialism, in particular a comparsa called the *pincilleras*. In 1985, a group of women formed a devotion to the cross that was more Orthodox in comparison to the large amounts of alcohol and dancing that was taking place. Since this devotion was formed, a mass is held annually on May 3rd and officiated by the priests coming from Sorata.

Like the devotion to El Señor de Pascua, the May 3rd feast was inspired by a miraculous event. While my research has not probed this miracle fully enough to report on it, it is represented by a ritual object or altar piece that is displayed only on this day. The object is a stone around 2 feet by 1 foot with three impressions of a cross. The stone is encapsulated in a wooden box with a glass door that is opened for the mass and closed tight with a lock when the ceremonies are over. In the same manner as the Quena Quena that takes care of the stone Pascua, this object resides with an indigenous family that closely guards the stone in their house, only taking it out for the feast day. The
keeping of the stone by an indigenous man was uncharacteristic and out of place in the crowd of mestizo and middle to upper class festival participants.

![Ritual object utilized for the feast of the Cross on May 3rd. Photo by Jon Lord](image)

Fig. 14 Ritual object utilized for the feast of the Cross on May 3rd. Photo by Jon Lord

Similar to the town feast for El Señor de la Columna but on a much smaller scale, the participants for the May 3rd feast are residents of La Paz that arrive just for the feast, maybe staying only a day or two to be with friends and family. Even though the overwhelming majority of participants lived in La Paz, they still referred to themselves as residents of Sorata mostly because of some prior ancestors who were from the area. This type of identification with other festival participants for the May 3rd feast day, defined in opposition to the more rural and indigenous other, demonstrated a type of urban to rural continuum where La Paz was seen as the most urban and mestizo, followed by Sorata which was also considered a type of urban atmosphere despite it’s mostly non-mestizo makeup. Any population settlement without a Castilian style plaza,
which is settlements on the cantonal level and below, was seen as rural and inhabited by the indigenous classes.

**Creolizing the Center**

In addition to the information provided in the miracle held in San Pedro, from my interviews with Catholic priests and other residents in the area, I was told that the founding of the chapel for El Señor de Pascua involved several Patrons of haciendas and indigenous authority figures, for example the Jilikata of San Pedro was the person who officially ordered his men to take the rock to the parish church in Sorata. The patrons of different haciendas in the story also play a hand in organizing comparsas, the indigenous dance fraternities to perform in honor of the miracle. The miracle required commitments from all the citizens of San Pedro, and of the populations in the surrounding areas that were in some way connected to the activities of the region. The vow to hold a charitable feast day and to organize fraternities was made by community authorities and consecrated symbolically in a mass ceremony which required Catholic priests coming from Sorata to perform the mass. The vows that were made by Patrons and indigenous authorities were both contracts with the divine and also legally binding corporate obligations of the community, drawn up as an official act of government.

The history of San Pedro’s miracle evidences the merging of the Colonial hacienda system with indigenous social organization, and consequently Christianity with Andean religion. It is difficult to justify the motives of the past Patrons of several haciendas involved with the founding of the chapel, but it is apparent that the devotion became the means through which populations could be organized into a network that connected others from the surrounding area to a unifying force in which social ties and contracts could be formed, sustained, and renewed on a yearly basis during the feast day. As owners of land, patrons of haciendas would have needed laborers to work their fields, and possibly the ability of indigenous authorities like the jilikatas to coordinate their efforts in securing a work force and incorporating individuals into their system. Having several different comparsas from the surrounding haciendas devoted to a particular feast day in San Pedro would create a far reaching cargo system that relied on ayni and
reciprocal obligations among members of each fraternity, all of whom would have to recognize the authority figure of the feast, a malku, preste, or mayordomo that was chosen on an annual rotating basis, expending their energies and directing their efforts to the community’s needs while simultaneously collecting forms of tribute to ensure the institutional redistribution of wealth on the feast day.

In 2009, there were four comparsas that the preste had organized to dance in honor of the patron image in San Pedro. Three of the comparsas were Morenadas, the fourth a Quena Quena group composed of indigenous authorities from several comunidades in the municipality. While the makeup of comparsas devoted to El Señor de Pascua was seen as more indigenous overall, which would seem to imply they were composed strictly of individuals living in the comunidades, in actuality, in addition to being residents of comunidades, the participants in the fraternities were made up of residents of larger cities such as La Paz. Individual relationships to the municipality of Sorata formed complex linkages on many levels, reinforced and produced by laws and class positions throughout different historical eras in Bolivia.

Indigenous populations have always existed in urban spaces throughout Bolivia’s history, yet populations were continuously subjected to the government’s attempts to maintain separate urban spaces between more European and more indigenous populations. Bolivia’s legal history also rested on ethnic categories; in addition to public spaces that indigenous people were prohibited from occupying, institutions such as schools and governments discriminated against individuals who were traditionally dressed. Women for example in pollera skirts who braided their hair and wore bowler hats that distinguished them as Indian were forced to adopt mestizo dress and urban cultural behavior (Guss 2006: 4). Individuals could not call themselves Aymara if they were not residents in a comunidad or were engaged in work that was thought of as indigenous such as agricultural labor. While many of these laws were abolished after the 1952 revolution, urban indigenous identity is a product of the racial segregation of Bolivia’s past.

The populations devoted to El Señor de Pascua were not limited to residing in comunidades. Like the more economically advantaged mestizo groups of other devotions in Sorata’s municipality, many also migrated to La Paz or the surrounding
area for various reasons, sometimes on a temporary basis or for work rotations. An excellent example of this was the preste for El Señor de la Pascua who seemed to have dual lives between Sorata and Viachi (a neighborhood in El Alto outside of La Paz). In an interview, he told me that he was from Sorata where his family resided, though he would often travel to La Paz for “algunas cosas”. In talking to other people, I learned he was originally from Viachi but had married a woman from Sorata which authenticated his status as a vecino in Sorata’s barrios. Interestingly, several people referred to him as a forestero, the colonial term that originally was understood to mean “outsider” or migrant, perhaps trying to express their privileged status as residents from Sorata who lived a middle to upper class lifestyle in La Paz.

Like many reduction settlement towns, Sorata is divided into zones that correspond to how space is occupied by individuals and their activities. Because the founding of reduction settlements often coincided with traditional Andean jurisdictional divisions, ayllus organized themselves into neighborhoods according to opposing complementary halves, spatially arranged around a central square where the church’s patron saint resided. In spite of the Iberian style settlements designed and promoted by the colonial administration, reduction villages could become autonomous Andean microcosms by adhering to dualist and hierarchical logics that governed indigenous perceptions of spatial organization (Saignes 1999). While Sorata has numerous zones, the Morendas in the festival of El Señor de la Pascua corresponded to the occupation of three zones: plaza, gremial, and mercado. The preste symbolically represented the “whole town and surrounding area” for the festival while the Quena Quena group simply represented the rural countryside. These complementary halves were also reenacted at the Thursday mass for El Señor de Pascua in the community of San Pedro during which the preste and other celebrants including the priests walked to all four corners of the field in front of the chapel, pausing at each one to receive a blessing from the priest. This practice occurs in Sorata for other feast days when an object of devotion is paraded outside of the church to the four corners of the plaza where it receives four separate blessings. Despite not having a Castilian style plaza, the consecration of the four corners in front of the chapel reenacts the existence of spatial and hierarchical relations between San Pedro and Sorata. By mimicking the ceremonial movements’ occurring in Sorata’s
Castilian style plaza, participants reproduce the Catholic institution’s hierarchy where the more generalized and orthodox sources of devotion originate from to penetrate the local.

As Urioste states, “Cities are not simply the physical imposition of buildings and streets. They are above all spaces of symbolic interchanges whereby cultures that share these environments manifest their right to the use of its public space” (as cited by Guss 2006: 299). The feast of El Señor de Pascua moved between the public spaces of the plaza in Sorata and the public spaces of the comunidad de San Pedro. The use of Sorata’s public space for dancing and festivities by comparsas devoted to the San Pedro lord expresses a subversion of the hierarchical levels in the departmental government in order to gain access to their resources or to sell their products produced in the countryside in the main market. The parish church in Sorata, connected to the larger diocese of Corioco, channels the devotional movement which is bounded up in ethnicity and class positions across locality and space, from the rural shrine in San Pedro, to the municipality’s capitol and parish church in Sorata where the central governments offices function. Reduction towns such as Sorata evolved and continue to function by sustaining social relationships between the comunidades and those residing in the central town. The feast days are a means through which this is accomplished, though the differing social aspect of each devotion involves political consequence. One of my interviews with a malku from the Quena Quena comparsa participating in the feast of El Señor de Pascua highlights the municipal political divisions in feast days:

50 Jon: Do you think the fiestas are a way to express autonomy apart from the Prefectura?
51 Malku: Yes, it’s autonomy and more than autonomy it’s a form to symbolically occupy or re-occupy symbolically the space that they occupied in the day. It’s to say

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50 Piensas que las fiesta son una manera de expresar autonomía aparte de la prefectura?
51 Sí. Es autonomía y más que autonomía es una forma de ocupar simbolicamente o reocupar simbolicamente el espacio que ocuparon en el día. Es decir, dentro de la plaza. Ahora si estos señores no vendrían a la fiesta y no ocuparían ese espacio en la plaza, es una forma de que ellos estarían abandonando sus terrenos, entonces sí o sí tienen que ocupar ese espacio simbolicamente durante la fiesta. Normalmente todas las poblaciones en el mundo andino tienen una plaza y cada esquina de esa plaza está destinada para algún sector de la población. Entonces cada una de estas poblaciones
inside of the plaza, now if these people would not go to the fiesta or they would not occupy this space in the plaza, it is a form that they would be abandoning their plots of land, so they have to symbolically occupy this space during the fiestas. Normally all of the populations in the Andean world have a plaza and each corner of this plaza is designated for some sector of the population. So each one of these populations they occupy a place in the plaza and symbolically they are occupying all of the geographical space that they occupy in the places that they correspond to.

52 Jon: Is this like the word rubro?
53 Malku: Not exactly. It’s a symbol. Symbolically they occupy this space, they occupy the real places in which they live.

The meeting of two systems, the Spanish colonial cofradía and the Andean cargo system is expressed in this passage. Remember that for residents of comunidades, taxes are not paid in the form of currency to keep their land or membership in the community. Rather, tribute is paid through the hierarchical cargo system, where individuals are obligated to take on certain positions and titles that require devoting their efforts to the community, creating reciprocal social relationships through ayni. The zones that the comparsas represent in the main plaza of Sorata for a particular feast are also are symbolic of their relationships within the comunidades, with their land, and with their responsibilities and obligations to fulfill certain roles for their communities. Exchanges occurring in Sorata, the buying and selling of products in the central market, all are dependent upon producers from the rural countryside. The exchanges that exist between pueblo and comunidad are symbolically expressed on feast days, and in some cases participation in the fiesta system is seen as a necessary obligation among some community members.

Similar to the Andean cargo system, in sixteenth century Spain, participation in vowed days was enforced by laws, rules, and fines. Certain towns denied individual rights to become village members if they were not part of the village-wide brotherhood (Christian 1981). This exemplifies that regulation of vows was a process of creating divine contracts as a community’s juridical entity and was a governmental act. While villagers in Spain usually paid for the feasts, in legal terms the money was offered to the

_ocupan un lugar en la plaza y simbolicamente están ocupando todo el espacio geográfico que ocupan en los lugares que les corresponde._

52 ¿Es como la palabra "rubro"?
53 No exactamente. Es una simbología. Simblicamente ocupan ese espacio, que ocupan de verdad en el lugar dónde viven.
town as a corporation, where it was then returned in the form of symbolic ceremonies of commensality between village members, the neighboring poor, and their saintly protector. Eating with the saint embodied the community’s trust in the protector, and actualized into physical form the juridical body of the community that had made a decision to create a vow.

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century in the Americas, the far-reaching ayllu networks began to unravel in response to the continuous relocation of populations into concentrated reduction settlements. From these new towns, populations were granted citizenship under a new administrative system that channeled wealth to the church and state. The impact of the reductions and new government policies forced many migrants into liminal positions in colonial society, creating labor pools from which populations could be easily identified. The Spanish haciendas, the corregidores, the priests, and the caciques, all sought the labor of migrant populations disconnected from their family units. Still, migrant workers had the freedom to negotiate a variety of strategies for survival. Many utilized a duel strategy that involved straddling mercantile and non-mercantile exchanges to achieve social cohesion in their family units and to preserve the structure of the ayllu, a similar process which occurs today between the pueblos and comunidades. In the seventeenth century, working temporarily as wage laborers was complemented by returning back to their home ayllu with currency that was used to ensure the survival of their home community. To avoid the forced mita requirements, many fled their reduction town, returning to their home ayllu with new wealth that could be used for tribute payments to their cacique for the collective group. The foresteros, a group composed of migrants living outside of their reducciones, formed the majority of these Indian subgroups (Wightman 1990). By manipulating a wide range of kinship networks within indigenous communities, forasteros were able to avoid mita service and tribute by multiple strategies.

The double strategy forasteros utilized in response to colonial disruptions is evidenced by the linking of reduction settlements to outlying areas of the ayllu collectivity using both monetary and non-monetary circuits of exchange to satisfy obligations either to the cacique or reduction settlement. Saignes (1999) notes how individual households were composed of kin living in town where the central market
was located and also in remote hamlets where they engaged in agricultural activities, retaining economic and social capital among their households in both locations. Since many rural hamlets could elevate their status to that of an annex or secondary parish by building a chapel and founding a cofradía, populations used Catholic feast days to legitimize their place of residence within multiple communities.

Given the remoteness of rural communities from the concentrated evangelizing efforts found in the parish center, the influence of orthodox Catholicism was diminished in these distant collectivities. Rural communities preserved the traditional social organizational elements such as the Andean cargo system, yet outsiders who might have originally been denied membership in the community were recognized through new marriages performed by Catholic institutions. Marriages opened up wider networks of genealogical relationships between annexes and official centers. According to Saignes (1999), these relationships became cloaked in religious symbolism: in the rural chapels, icons of saints, crosses, and other images were identified as the sons of law or nephews of those belonging to the church in the town (103). These images as well as residents of the rural communities traveled to the parish center on feast days to pay homage to the parish church that recognized their cofradías as part of the wider body of the Catholic communion.

More forms of ritual kinship introduced from the old world such as baptismal sponsorship (compadrazgo) enabled communities to effectively integrate newcomers into more multifaceted networks of exchange. The advantages of the compadrazgo, which consecrated the alliance between a newborn’s parents and godparents, were particularly useful strategies utilized by communities struggling to adapt to intense cultural upheavals. The compadrazgo to some extent compensated for the loss of relationships that had occurred with the fragmenting of indigenous ayllus given that it could potentially connect individuals from widely dispersed areas and class positions in society (Saignes 1999). Baptismal sponsorship and marriage choices tended to reflect the Andean notions of complementary opposites; those living in the town might select persons from rural areas to complement their diet, or parents might select compadres who could access profitable ecological levels (Saignes 1999). Poorer families might elect wealthy godparents in an effort to acquire prestige, credit, or political protection.
Conversely, wealthy families benefited by obtaining allies that could help facilitate a range of duties from physical labor to political support or in helping influence poorer sections of society.

**Politics or Faith**

Percentage wise, the most common theme that emerged when analyzing my data had to do with what festival participants’ perceived a difference between the political realm and notions of faith. Many people I spoke with repeatedly stressed the separation of politics and faith, and therefore I feel it is necessary to touch on this theme. In spite of being the sub-prefecto of the Larecaja province, a member of the Junta, and as one of the candidates running for alcalde, the preste for El Señor de Pascua believed that his political success was a result of the help he had received from faith in El Señor:

**Jon:** Being a preste gives some sort of political advantage in the community? Do you become more important among the circle of people who is devoted to El Señor?

**Preste:** In the political aspect I don’t believe it influences anything. In the religious Catholic aspect is where it helps people more. Always after the fiesta he questions you: “¿You have been the preste for a year, what were you asking to god and what became true”? ¿The curiosity you see? The people visit you: “¿What were you asking to god and what becomes true?” One person expressed that he asked for the health of his son, his husband, of a relative… and he became healthy. So I preach and translate these words… almost it does not influence (the political) because so many festivals happen in Sorata. So it does not influence in the political aspect. “Lord, I don’t have money, but lord do it so it is your will” and gods will is done. In this sense we salute the band, the drink, the food.

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54 ¿Haber sido preste da algun tipo de ventaja política dentro de la comunidad? ¿LLeva usted a ser un poco más importante dentro del circulo de los que son devotos de el señor?

55 En el aspecto político yo creo que no influye en nada. En el aspecto religioso católico es donde mas ayuda a la gente. Siempre después de la fiesta te pregunta "Usted ha pasado preste, un año faltando, qué pidió a dios y qué hizo su realidad?" La curiosidad, no? La gente te visita: "¿Qué pidió a dios y se cumplió?" Uno manifiesta sí lo que yo he pedido por la salud de mi hijo, mi esposo, de un familiar...se sanó. Entonces yo transmito, predico esa palabra. Casi no influye porque tantas fiestas que se pasa en Sorata. Entonces no influye en el aspecto político."Señor, no tengo plata, pero señor haz que sea tu voluntad" y se hace la voluntad de dios. En ese sentido nosotros brindamos la banda, la bebida, la comida.
And the lord through your devotion helps you in many ways?

Yes in many ways, for example in the marriage, starting from there, the children, the family, the relationships from neighbor to neighbor, the social relationship in the town itself. I always ask God, as an ex-authority, all the cargo positions I held, that there shall be unity, that we shall all help eachother, that there is fewer egotism, that there is no envy, that we shall be united, that we shall all help, I always ask this for everyone. And I believe that this is seen that each year we have less enemies and more friends, and more people I am close with in my life.

The preste describes faith as a will power, something that motivates people to do good and be active in the community. The miracle represented in the magical stone represents a belief by the community of a miraculous event. Circulation forms around the stone, the object of devotion by believers. The Andean cargo system, a product of thousands of years of tradition and modifications by Catholicism, is set in motion only because of how a community has imagined the supernatural to take shape. Economic activity, consumption, and distribution of wealth, is all part of this human experience in San Pedro. For those who believe, their motivation to give and become closer to the community is inspired by the divine.

After the Thursday mass in the chapel of San Pedro, amidst the banquet and commencement of celebrations, I was offered a plate of food by one of the parish priests. We ate together and shared a glass of chicha while I recorded our conversation. One passage in particular expressed how the social activity of the cargo system seeped into the realm of the religious, and how as a defender of the faith, their role as priests was to help participants realize this separation that exists between socio-political activity and the religious.
Priest: the drinking, the trade, it looks more like a social activity right? So what we want is to give them direction that this is not simply a social act but rather something that joins them with God. So we act there, guiding the sense of their pilgrimage towards here. That it is not simply only a walk, but rather a pilgrimage, an encounter with Jesus. So we do it for this reason. To orient this, so that they become conscious of this reality.

For life in rural Bolivia where there are few economic options, reliance is placed more heavily on something that is not necessarily present in physical reality, and many parts of the human experience whether it be economic, political, or social, are guided by faith and the miracle that something or someone will provide. Relationships are strengthened around the devotion which draws them to it. Class positions are more dichotomous and less dispersed in impoverished societies; ethnicity and religious belief becomes something in which individuals zealously identify with out of disparity, perhaps contributing to the identifies that form around objects of devotion in Bolivia.

Below a passage by a preste expresses the notion of faith:

Preste: But it hurts, it hurts with this lord, with this sanctuary. I had him in my house. Every day I would wake up and ask for one thing, my health, I asked my job to pay good, I asked for some debts that I have. I would light a candle and return back from La Paz after 5 or 6 days and it became true. But now I feel empty in my house and a little abandoned. I said lord why do you abandon me? If I loved him so much why do you abandon me? I am alone and a little sad. That is the faith and the customs that they have, as well it is to have a part of an obligation with society.

Chapter 5: Conclusion
Using ethno-historical research methods, this thesis has described ritual characteristics that pertain to two religious systems, the Spanish cofradía and the Andean cargo system, demonstrating the differences and similarities between the two in order to build a comparative understanding of what present day religious practice has taken from both systems in the municipality of Sorata.

In what is described as constructivist grounded theory, I approached this research without a predetermined paradigm to structure the data I collected. Given the nature of religion and world view, any kind of pre-determined research paradigm would reduce a phenomenon that is best expressed in what is not planned. To approach such a research subject any other way would be to impose my own view of the nature of God on my research subjects. Rather, the ethnography sections developed from several years of work documenting the consistencies of differences between the religious experiences of my research subjects. From this information, a paradigm emerged in which I was able to formulate a scientific model. The information contained within the ethnography was a product of Spanish and Andean historical processes, therefore historical sources were used to build a context of several of the themes that emerged in my research.

Because the domain of religion is an extremely broad category, and in this ethnography I have widened it further by writing from a comparative religious perspective, many, if not all levels of society are mirrored by the concept of the divine. The main theme and central argument of this thesis is that ritual and religion as occurring within confraternities in the Catholic-Andean festival context regulate how social relationships are formed and sustained, and that these relationships have been structured by religious institutions that have historically paralleled administrative duties of governments or indigenous kingdoms. Relationships within the festival system have political consequences and interface with class, ethnicity, and economic phenomena in society, contributing to differing group identities among the feast dates occurring in Sorata and subsequently a political hierarchy.

Key to understanding how group identities form around particular feast days must be first examined within the religious institutions and the Catholic Church’s unique system of ritual celebration that is a product of both the Spanish Colonial...
cofradía and the Andean fiesta cargo system. The meeting of the colonial and Andean worlds produced a new and unique form of governing institutions that continued a pre-Columbian and Spanish pattern of legitimizing power through divine justifications and religious organization. Both religious institutions, from their inception in Spain and the pre-Columbian world, functioned on nearly every level of society. The Andean tribute system which constituted the rules of agricultural labor and determined property jurisdictions rested on the concept of ayni, the huaca, and the leadership of those closest to the huacas, namely the malkus. Much like the religious ceremonialism that surrounded the Andean huacas, western religious institutions such as the colonial cofradías functioned from individuals structuring their labor and economic activities around a religious object or saint that was recognized by a collective group and celebrated on a particular feast day officiated by the festival sponsor or the parish priest. Under the authority of these religious institutions, historical processes evidence that the means to becoming a tribute paying citizen in the community rested on an abstraction from nature in order for a bureaucracy to be sustained in a timeless fashion, in order for there to be a surplus to redistribute in times of need, and in order for there to be political leaders who governed society and asserted their authority by redistributing portions of this surplus with religious ceremonialism to symbolically validate their closeness to the abstraction and their higher status position in society.

Though cultural differences exist within the Andean cargo system and the Spanish cofradía, their systems of social management and the structure within both institutions adhere to the similar logic of contractual and non-contractual form. Many of these ideas refer to total social phenomenon, wholes or systems in their entirety concerning moral, economic, juridical, aesthetic, religious, and mythological social phenomena. In the discipline of Anthropology, these social systems have been analyzed in the activities of exchanges and gift giving, perhaps made most famous by Marcel Mauss, author of *The Gift*.

Marcel Mauss’s theories have been criticized as ambiguous and lacking clear definitions between categories. Marcel Mauss would even admit that he was not into system building or unifying principles (Allen 1998). Yet one distinction of categories that can be seen in his writings on gift giving societies exists in objects that are
alienable and exchanged as gifts which lead to counter gifts, reciprocation, and bonds of
mutuality, versus inalienable objects that never enter into the realm of exchange. The
inalienable object functions as the source in which a given population with a certain
social class standing in society are drawn to, and therefore the elements of a particular
social class become part of a larger group identity fusing with the inalienable object
anchored in time. It communicates rules, values, identity, and has been created so that
exchanges can take place around it and within its own system of pre-determined rules
for these exchanges. I also suggest that to further ritual studies we consider that
inalienable and alienable objects are characteristics of the two mutually dependent
categories found in the ritual form as discussed by Rapapport (1999), the canonical and
the variant.

Of course when Mauss made the distinction between alienable and inalienable
objects in a kind of totality phenomenon existing in primitive societies, he was also
describing something very modern and universal: the oscillation of the free market
which is able to operate only because money as an abstract and imaginable entity must
fulfill two functions simultaneously. The first function as a sign in the exchange process
and the medium of payment, and secondly as a stable reference point that measures the
value of objects circulating in exchanges beyond and prior to the exchange. Gold was
the capitalist economy’s original highly privileged inalienable object that fulfilled the
function of the immobilized reference point around which the free market’s machinery
was kept in motion and its volume and speed measured (Godelier 1998). During the 19th
century, the notion was held that all forms of money (paper or tokens of monetary
value) represented as monetary signs in circulation had value only because they referred
to gold, which was an entity that did not circulate on the market. Money fulfills three
functions: it represents the value of a product, the medium of exchange, and a reserve of
wealth in the form of a treasury (Godelier 1998). The value of gold existed in an almost
abstract realm far removed from market exchanges, kept away in the bank reserve.
Marx (1970) refers to the value of gold as an imaginary principle: “since the expression
of the value of commodities is purely an ideal act, we may use purely imaginary or ideal
gold to perform this operation” (189).
My research confirms that the fiesta cargo system adheres to the same logic and rules of exchanges found in Mauss’s studies, though I have focused on the miracle in San Pedro as the inalienable object. In a system that is farther removed from the capitalist economy, where Catholic and Andean religious institutions have co-mingled to produce a system of exchanges guided by faith in the miraculous, the Catholic fiesta cargo system manifests the inalienable objects in syncretic form as indicated by the stone relics that are used in rituals which mimic the concept of the huaca within a Catholic context. The organization of the ayllu seems to have taken on the role of the comparsas, with their extended networks of kin and social contacts, and the position of the preste mimics many of the roles of the pre-Columbian malkus.

For a given feast day, some exchanges are monetary such as the preste contracting a band, buying alcohol, or others supporting the preste by donating such items to him. Other exchanges are social obligations within the community such as attending weddings, funerals, helping out with agricultural labor or important community events. Both types of exchanges are taking place because they are stimulated to do so by an inalienable object that exists on an abstracted level of sacredness. Such exchanges are symbolic of participation in ayni and the greater good of the community, and the preste is careful to make sure these exchanges occur properly in order for him to have successfully fulfilled his position in the festival system. Exchanges bound up in the fiesta system are not necessarily measured in monetary values, but also socially and politically, for the preste who provides for the entire feast is symbolically giving more than the average person and therefore is evidencing the miracle of the stone Pascua that provides and watches over his community.

The stone Pascua, whose spirit refused to be moved from its place of origin, motivated the community to consecrate the place where it was found as a sacred location. When the chapel was built upon this sacred site, the homogeneity of space was shattered and divided into qualitatively different parts, separated from the totality to reveal a central or referential position which became a medium for the transmission of human consciousness and source of faith for the community. The fixed point, separated from its wider geographic context is sacred in that it provides a rationale through which a group of individuals organize themselves and their social activities through. The
profane homogenous world in San Pedro was represented as a world lacking devotion to god. This world may be thought of as chaotic and pre-linguistic; poisonous snakes were decimating populations and livestock. Snakes eventually came to function linguistically as a sign associated with the wrath of god, and therefore became a justification for the consecration of an organizing principal and sacred space through a hierophany. The imaginary, once taken out of the mental context becomes social and manufactures society based on how humans have organized their relationships with each other and their surroundings in nature.

It is important to discern the diversity of cultural logic utilized by Andeans in responses to colonialism, market intervention, and mercantile expansion. The devotees to El Señor de Pascua, and certain comparsars dedicated to El Señor de la Columna, show an ambiguous Spanish-Andean logic employed to advance their well being, avoiding commitments to a political economy defined by traditional Andean or colonial European models. They are involved with producing, buying, and selling products on the commercial market in Sorata while simultaneously retaining rights and membership to their comunidades. These groups waver in a liminal position between the legally recognized pueblos were taxes are paid in currency and the traditional comunidades structured by the fiesta cargo system. This is possible because of the ritual process aided by the Catholic Church. Both festivals evidence a migrant class manipulating the spaces of two legally recognized forms of social organization that adheres to different rules of establishing citizenry. In terms of political characteristics, the feast for El Señor de Pascua is farther removed from Sorata’s colonial design, and from pilgrims coming from foreign places.

The territory of grace that was confirmed by the miracle in San Pedro strengthened a collective identity that draws more from a population in the interior of the eastern valleys of Larecaja, many of whom are indigenous as evidenced by the comparsa of Quena Quena’s from the countryside. This group is bounded up in the history of the comunidades surrounding Sorata, and with the mythological story that associates the divine with certain individuals and owners of land, thus preserving collective identity through time. Likewise, several of the comparsas participating in the festival for El Señor de la Columna were members of comunidades. One difference in
this festival was the honoring of a pueblo’s patron in the plaza. Participation was more symbolic of their willingness to merge into the spaces where foreign institutions reside such as the Spanish bureaucracy, the parish church, and the school.

Public encounters between priests disapproving of festival participants behavior was a common sight at the festival for El Señor de la Columna. One such encounter that I will always remember occurred after the Sunday mass that ended the festivities. Each of the pasantes representing the individual comparsas was summoned by the priests in front of the church’s front doors. The priests were livid, condemning the pasantes for their drunkenness. The priests asked why the streets had been turned into a sewer full of urine, and why the dancers were able to purchase enormous amounts of alcohol but not able to provide funds to the municipality to construct public restrooms. Incidences such as these suggest that the use of alcohol ritually was something that belonged in the comunidades and not in the spaces of Sorata’s plaza or in front of the church.

The structures of the Catholic communion that were confirmed during the counter reformation in sixteenth century Spain have also taken root in the Americas and were confirmed by this research. The class positions that exist between different feast days in the municipality of Sorata demonstrate how the founding of a cofradía, the Quena Quena, and the building of the chapel in San Pedro, were used to express political autonomy from the parish center where other feast days are celebrated with non-local and even foreign participation. This is verified in my ethnographic interviews with the priests who speak of class differences between the feast days, with the preste of San Pedro who spoke of the feelings of “isolation” between other feast days in the municipality, and the malku who explained how occupying the ritual spaces of the Castilian plaza in Sorata is used to symbolically validate the connection between land tenure in the countryside and access to the public spaces in town. The miracle symbolized in the stone Pascua, of wanting to be returned to its place of origin, resumes the dialogue of mythological discourse surrounding the foundation of shrines and chapels in the rural countryside of Spain during the sixteenth century. The miracle in San Pedro becomes even more localized in the Andean context by incorporating the element of a magical stone that stresses its connection to a place in the landscape that coincides with the ancient ethnic jurisdictions of the Inca cacicazgo, and as a founding
governmental act of obligations required by the community. All of these attributes are very reminiscent of huacas.

Glossary

Advocation -- A variant form of divine figure.

Alcaldia -- Spanish for the offices associated with the mayor.

Apachetas -- Place of worship in Andean culture, usually on top of a hill or mountain peak where a stone cairn is placed.

Ayllus -- Andean kin group often composed of blood relatives and extended family that could trace their ancestry to a common founder, real or mythical, and had collective land rights.

Ayni -- Form of reciprocity in which lender expects repayment.
Aynicapunacuni -- Quechua meaning “to take revenge on.”

Bruja -- Witch doctor.

Cabildo -- Cabildo is the Spanish word for town council, referring to the colonial government’s buildings and offices.

Cacique -- The Spanish term applied to Andean chiefs and leaders. The word is taken from the pre-Columbian chiefs of the Taino groups in the Bahamas.

Camaquen -- Quechua for something that is animated with force or is a repository for sacred power.

Camote -- Sweet potatoe.

Central Agraria -- A political body made up of indigenous authorities in the municipality that holds office inside the alcaldía.

Capac apoconas -- Word used in the sixteenth century by Guamon Poma; Quechua meaning powerful men.

Charcas -- Aymara word for parcels of land. Charcas was also the name given to the city of Sucre in pre-Columbian times.

Chujña Q’epjaru -- Meaning “green cargo”, referring to a dance group in the Comunidad of San Pedro, Larecaja province.

Chuño -- A potato that has undergone a freeze dried process.

Chuquisaca -- An Aymara word meaning “headquarters for the Charcas”. It is the modern day city of Sucre, Bolivia, and the name of this region’s provincial department. It was also known as La Plata and Charcas in the colonial period.

Comunidad -- In Bolivia, a community that retains indigenous social organization and autonomy from the tax collecting activities of the national government.

Copacati -- Andean female deity that was worshiped to produce rain.

Corregidores -- A position held within Spanish colonial administration, responsible for collecting tribute and maintaining order.

Corregimiento -- A term used by the Spanish colonial administration for country subdivisions.

Encomienda -- The encomienda, taken from the Spanish verb encomendar meaning to entrust, was a trusteeship labor system employed by the Spanish crown during the re-
conquest of Spain and in the Americas. The Crown granted the receiver of the encomienda the right to exact tribute from populations in exchange that they be instructed in the Catholic faith.

Fanegas -- Spanish unit of measure that is equal to 1.58 bushels.

Foresteros -- While the term differed throughout the colonial period, it generally referenced a migrant or outsider that had left their native community to take up residence in elsewhere.

GENTE -- The name of Felipe “el malku” Quisipe’s political party in the December 2009 presidential elections.

Granos -- Spanish for grain.

Haymatha -- Aymara word meaning to go and work in the fields which are planted communally, and to dance in the ancient way particularly when they go to the fields of their leaders.

Hijos de Illampu -- Name of a Bolivian comparsa.

Huacas -- Regional and sacred places, often symbolized through a stone that refers to an ancestor who was the founder of a particular region or settlement. They are worshiped by Andeans as the protectors of a given locality.

Huacapvillackuna -- Andean priests that engaged in ritual activities with the huacas.

Jilikatas -- Indigenous authority figures subordinated to the position of the malku.

Khipus -- Khipus meaning “knot” in Quechua, were recording devices utilized by the Inca and other Andeans. They consisted of colored cords upon which knots were tied that encoded mnemonic values based on their position with other knots on the cord.

Kinku Circa -- Name of an apacheta just outside of Sorata.

Kuraka -- A type of indigenous authority figures.

Llacta -- Quechua for Hamlet or small Andean settlement where inhabitants claim descent from a common founder.

Llok’alla -- Aymara word meaning little boy.

L'Année Sociologique -- Sociology journal founded by Emile Durkheim.

Ley de Participacion Popular -- Bolivian law enacted in 1994 that decentralized the central governments budgets to the municipal level.
Malku -- Malku literally translates to an ancestor whose body has been mummified, or a regional god who is nourished with offerings at commemorative festivals. It is the title of the Aymara political leaders.

Marka -- Aymara for Hamlet or small Andean settlement where inhabitants claim descent from a common founder.

Mayordomo -- A Spanish official that fulfills a certain position within the cargo system.

Mita -- Quechua meaning to take a turn or shift. Under the Spanish administration, rotating system of forced labor.

Mita de captaincies -- An office created by the Spanish administration for the cacique who was responsible for supplying laborers in the mines.

Mitimaes -- Pre-Columbians from the highland areas that colonized agricultural lands at lower elevations for their communities living above.

Mitmaq -- Is the system of utilizing mitimaes to colonize land on different ecological tiers.

Muxsa misa -- Meaning “sweet offering” in Aymara, is a ritual offering on plate.

Organizaciones Territoriales de Base -- Basic unit of national social organization in Bolivia. Often corresponds to certain zones within a town or community.

Pachamama -- Female deity in the Andean pantheon, associated with agriculture and the underworld.

Pardon -- Census or tax paying list utilized by the colonial administration.

Pasantes -- Pasante meaning assistant. The term is used in the festival context to demarcate those who help organize a feast day.

Pincilleras -- A Bolivian comparsa that utilize the traditional pinqillo flutes as instruments.

Pinqillo -- Traditional flute of the Andes, usually made of bamboo.

Podria Ser -- Spanish phrase meaning “it could be”.

Prefectura -- Bolivian departmental governor.

Preste -- Preste is taken from the Spanish verb “prestar” meaning to lend or borrow. The preste is the ultimate authority position in the cargo system for a given fiesta.
Qala -- Quechua meaning naked or peeled.

Reducciones -- Viceroy Francisco de Toledo’s policy of moving native populations into nucleated villages.

Repartimiento -- From the Spanish verb repartir meaning to distribute, refers to the distribution of native communities to encomenderos or corregidores.

Rubro -- Guild like associations, composed of individuals from a certain part of a neighborhood, or work profession.

Shuruahta -- Aymara word meaning “brilliant peak”. It has been hispanicized into Sorata, the capitol town of the Larecaja province in Bolivia.

Sub-prefectura -- A type of governor on the provincial level that reports to the departmental prefecture.

Takis -- Meaning “dance paths” in Aymara, were songs and dances that reenacted the mythological foundational moment for a particular ayllu.

Taypi -- Aymara for “center of the world”, refers to the dualist perception of opposing opposites that is reminiscent of Andean world view.

Tomines -- Unit of measure for pre-Columbians.

Tunta -- White chuño.

Ulluntija -- A hill or “mirador” that overlooks the town of Sorata by 1,181 ft.

Unoyoc -- Aymara for spirit that resides in water.

Vecinos -- Spanish meaning neighbor.

Yanacona -- In the Inca Empire, yanacona was the name of the slaves of the Incas. They carried out domestic service to the upper class and in exchange were exempt from tribute payment and migratory labor duties. The Spaniards also made use of the yanacona; many yanaconas were allotted to frontier settlers along with encomienda grants. The word came to mean “servant” in Spanish.

Yungas -- Refers to populations native to the eastern valleys of Bolivia, possibly of Arawak descent.
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Appendices

Appendix A – Museum Credentials
DESIGNACIÓN INVESTIGADOR ASOCIADO

El Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore – MUSEF, con su política de repaso a investigadores extranjeros, designa como Investigador Asociado al señor JONATHAN LORD, con Pasaporte No. 134598200 de nacionalidad norteamericana, quien realizará la investigación titulada: “Relaciones Sociales y desempeño de rituales en Bolivia”, a desarrollarse en la región de Sorata Provincia Larecaja, de abril a junio de 2009.

Consideramos que la investigación que desarrollará es un aporte importante para el conocimiento científico en particular y para la comunidad boliviana en general. Por lo que el mencionado investigador, deberá estar en constante contacto con nuestra institución y una vez terminada la investigación, deberá dejar al Archivo del MUSEF, una copia del documento final.

La Paz, 3 de abril de 2009

[Signature]

Dr. Ramiro Molina Cisnero
DIRECTOR
Museo Nat. de Etnografía y Folklorico
Fondación Cultural del B.C.R.

cc: Arch.

RM/Ninaq.

Aceptado

Lucas Quemada
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Appendix B – AAMS Document
En el mismo día, en la madrugada, se acostumbra adornar a los animales colocándolos ares a las vacas, ovejas, gallinas, conejos, etc., y se le les coloca mixtura para que se procreen. La mixtura debe ser de todo color y abundante para el año que viene. Esta costumbre es realizada en el área rural, es decir, en el campo, en la actualidad se está perdiendo.

4. En Marzo, en los centros urbanos se celebra el Día del Padre y el día del radialista, en el área rural no es una festividad muy notoria.

5. **FIESTA DE PASCUA DE RESURRECCIÓN**: Se la realiza en abril, esta fiesta de Sorata es muy famosa y su origen viene de la Comarca de San Pedro y así es como empezó:

Un día como cualquier otro del año, sucede algo raro, como todos los días los niños del campo bajan del pueblo de San Pedro a pastorear ovejas y mientras juegan los niños en grupo, cesa una piedra sobre alguno de los niños y miran por todo lado y no ven nada, al poco rato sucede lo mismo y buscan y no encuentran nada y así pasan los días, hasta que un día una piedra, lastima demasiado a uno de los niños, al extremo de herirlo y sacarle sangre. Los niños fueron a avisar a su Padre y el Padre baja a San Pedro a averiguar de dónde provenía esa piedra o quién la arrojaba y se ocultó muy cerca del lugar. De pronto, ve salir una piedrita de una piedra grande que estaba muy cerca de allí, revisa la piedra, para ver si alguien se ocultaba y revisa y revisa y solo encuentra una pequeña cruz o crucifijo con la imagen de JESUCRISTO CRUCIFICADO y de tanto rabia coge un combo grande y empeza a golpearla hasta desmenuzarla y una urna que había saltado con los golpes del combo y buscando lo encuentra y lo lleva a su Dirigente y una vez revisada por la autoridad decidirán entregarla al Taita Curaca en Sorata, es decir, llevarla a la Iglesia de Sorata. Un buen día el "Jillico" o la autoridad principal hace ordenar que la imagen de lleve a Sorata y uno de sus empleados recibe la orden de llevarla. Una mañana muy temprano baja a la casa donde estaba depositada la imagen para llevarla al pueblo. Se la amarra en su atado y se la pone a la espalda y va rumbo a Sorata vía medio camino en el lugar denominado “PALLALL KALA”, lugar que se encuentra entre cerro Thaqui Kala y Corru, una población cercana, decide descansar de su viaje y mascar su “coquita”, después de descansar, decide continuar con la caminata pero ya no puede azar su atado, muy a pesar que seguirán las riadas y esto lleva a que llegue a lo que será el lugar de este hombre, una latita de sardina lombarda aproximadamente de unos 20 x 15 cm., similar a un balón de futbolito un poco abultado por detrás. Al ver que no podía levantar su atado, decide esperar a que alguien aparezca y le ayude a levantar, al poco rato alguien aparece y este le explica que le ayuda y entre los dos no pueden levantar el atado y ambos deciden esperar más ayuda, al poco tiempo aparecen dos personas más, entre los cuatro (4) no logran levantar el atado y de nuevo deciden esperar, llegan otras dos personas y entre los seis (6) tampoco logran levantar al atado, los acia (6) quedan muy asombrados y lo revisan retirados veces y finalmente después de tantos intentos y discusiones llegan a la conclusión de devolver el atado a la comunidad de San Pedro y intentan levantar y uno solo logra levantarlo, y retorna hacia la casa del dirigente que se la entregó.
y se queda en el lugar que en la actualidad está construida una cancha de futbol. Pasado mucho tiempo, en una noche mientras dormía el dirigente, se sienta en un anuncio que la piedra quiere que se la coloque en donde se la había levantado, hoy en la actualidad es el lugar donde se levanta el calvario. Pero el dirigente no hace caso al sueño, y mantiene la piedra en su casa, hasta que por medio de sueños, lo amenaza diciendo “Q’ICHJARAKA MAW JILIR WAWAMARU” que significa: “si no me llevas a mi lugar de origen, puse extinguir a tu primogénito”, pero el dirigente, no hace caso.

Hasta que llega el día, en que se cumple la amenaza con él Primogénito, pero este aun no se da cuenta, a los ocho (8) días, su segundo hijo muere, pero no pasa nada, después de ocho (8) días muere el tercer hijo. El dirigente se da cuenta recién que su desgracia era a consecuencia de no hacer caso a los sueños que tuvo, por lo tanto, envía la piedra a su lugar de origen, pero se olvida de ella. Después de un tiempo la piedra empieza a revelarse a las autoridades en sueños diciendo que le hace mucho frío, pero de nuevo nadie le hace caso, por ende, de nuevo la piedra amenaza con la extinción de sus animales con la picadura de cascabeles y como no le hacían caso, empiezan a morir de este modo sus ovejas, vacas, mulas entre otros y finalmente la autoridad se pone a pensar en los sueños que tuvo y decide informarle sobre los mismos al Patrón de ese entonces e inmediatamente entre patronos entran en un acuerdo para empezar la “Construcción de una Iglesia”, para el crucifijo de piedra.

En esta construcción, participaron varios patronos de diferentes haciendas, de Llabay, Laripata, Combaya, Chuchulaya, Quibay, Tintilaya, entre otros. Las personas que construyeron la iglesia, debieron ser, personas muy fuertes y grandes, porque los adobes utilizados en la construcción son de doble tamaño, a los actuales.

Una vez que se construyó la casa, las autoridades no sabían cuando festejarla, de pronto, una noche, en sueños la piedra se le revela al Patrón de Tutuaca y le exige que en honor a sus cumplenios le brinde algunos pares de yuntas, en cada uno de sus sueños del Patrón le mencionada que él era su amigo Pascaualito. Como en un par de semanas de ese entonces, se aproximaba la Fiesta de la Pascua de Resurrección, se decidió celebrarla ocho (8) días después de esta por la coincidencia del nombre en San Pedro. Para llegar a esto se le había revelado en sueños al Patrón Ruiz que vivía en Sorata. Por otra parte, se cuenta que el día de su fiesta el crucifijo se convierte en una “Patoma Blanca”, se va al frente, a una hora alta, en forma angular de donde disfruta de la fiesta. Cada año a partir de la fecha de la celebración, el Patrón Ruiz, llevaba una comparsa de WACA WACAS, a su vez muchos patrones llevaban otro tipo de danzas. La fiesta en la actualidad, muestra una diversidad de danzas típicas de la región y de otras regiones, de los Mineros de Tipuani, Yani, Residentes del Interior del País, los cuales, TESTIMONIAN, que si pasan la fiesta de corazón o con mucha fe, su negocio actual TRIPLICA o genera mucho más. Por esto, muchos de los feligreses prefieren llegar a pie y no en movilidad, asegurando los milagros testimonados.
Appendix C – Spanish Abstract

Estudios de Casos Antropológicos de las Prácticas Religiosas Españolas y Andina

Resumen

La presente tesis demuestra la naturaleza y características universales que expresan el ritual y la religión mediante una investigación etnográfica e histórica de dos festividades religiosas que tienen lugar cada año en una provincia remota ubicada en los valles al este de Bolivia. Los días festivos cristianos, de acuerdo con el calendario católico, constituyen modos predominantes de expresión ceremonial dentro del universo religioso latinoamericano. En los dos festivales documentados en esta tesis, los modos rituales de intercambio con figuras/objetos demuestran formas de sincretismo religioso y de superposición del catolicismo por sobre las tradiciones andinas. Con el uso de métodos etnohistóricos de documentación, este estudio muestra el proceso de transformación del significado de instituciones religiosas y prácticas culturales andinas nativas a instituciones españolas influídas en gran medida por el catolicismo romano. Asimismo, esta investigación confirma que si bien existe sincretismo religioso en ambos festivales, los elementos opuestos de la ortodoxia contra prácticas más idiosincráticas encontradas en los festivales ponen de manifiesto dos niveles de catolicismo y el desarrollo de una forma más localizada de celebración religiosa apartada de la iglesia universal, tendencia que, además, es análoga al desarrollo religioso de la España del siglo XVI.
Introducción

La presente tesis deconstruye la contradicción de las formas culturales andinas combinada con las formas españolas a fin de demostrar cómo se articulaba la expresión religiosa, que dio lugar a un sincretismo religioso en las colonias del Continente Americano/posesiones españolas como resultado del injerto español de su administración dentro de los modos preexistentes andinos de organización social.

El otro aspecto abordado en esta tesis es la aculturación, y cómo cambió la identidad andina a medida que los trabajadores ingresaban a una economía capitalista que era mantenida por instituciones católicas. La aculturación demostró ser un proceso complejo en los Andes, que se expresó de maneras impredecibles en circunstancias diversas. Los grupos indígenas improvisaron estrategias para conservar sus redes étnicas, el acceso a la tierra y la vida ritual, mientras que desempeñaban simultáneamente roles creados por instituciones coloniales y la Iglesia Católica.

Esta investigación demuestra este proceso mediante la documentación de procesos culturales que tienen lugar en dos festividades religiosas: la festividad del Señor de la Columna y la del Señor de la Pascua. Ambas festividades influyen sobre el modo en que se forman las relaciones sociales en la provincia de Larecaja, Bolivia, y además, esta investigación también demuestra el argumento central de esta tesis: la formación de identidades grupales que se mantienen por una creencia en ciertos objetos y devociones religiosos, que se expresan exteriormente mediante una celebración confraternal. Al esclarecer el modo en que se estructuran las relaciones sociales en relación con el ceremonialismo ritual en Sorata, las relaciones de estos seres humanos para con las figuras sagradas se materializaron, y señalaron una demarcación de identidades grupales con fuentes diversas que comparten valores religiosos y simbolismo. No obstante, se pudieron encontrar temas tales como la fe, la migración, los patrones laborales y los elementos religiosos andinos en ambas ceremonias. Por lo tanto, mi etnografía incluye una descripción de las similitudes y diferencias entre las prácticas religiosas españolas y andinas con el fin de elaborar una comparación de las prácticas religiosas en Sorata.
Metodología

Paradigma de la investigación

Tras este estudio se esclarecieron dos interrogantes generales: ¿cómo influye el proceso ritual que ocurre dentro las confraternidades sobre la organización sociopolítica y las identidades grupales en la provincia de Larecaja? ¿Cómo se han conservado los elementos religiosos indígenas a través de la Iglesia Católica a pesar de la aculturación a una institución dominante? Dado que el eje principal de esta investigación gira en torno de las teorías antropológicas de la religión y el ritual, resultó más adecuado emplear una metodología etnohistórica para separar patrones culturales y analizar su significado. Los rituales casi siempre son compuestos hasta cierto punto de “invarience”, es decir ese desempeño ritual casi siempre implica deferencia, y nuevos rituales son compuestos en gran parte de elementos tomados de rituales permeables. Aunque el aspecto invariable de ritual es en gran parte dominante y simbólico (es decir divorciado del tiempo y el espacio), hay también la necesidad para la variación en el ritual, como el donde y cuando el ritual es realizado, o si el ritual es realizado en todo (Rappaport, 1999). La tarea etno-histórica entonces es de documentar cómo la tradición de festivales en Bolivia ha experimentado un cambio que refleja corrientes sociales diferentes y desarrollos históricos a través del tiempo. Si los festivales del pueblo en Bolivia representan tradiciones importantes de la comunidad a través de la historia, entonces documentando los cambios que han ocurrido con festivales iluminarán cómo aspectos de variantes del ritual son recreados. Esta investigación se propone calcular la extensión de la innovación que las confraternidades facilitan en la vida cotidiana de los que toman parte en ellas.
Diseño de la investigación

Al la fecha, ningún trabajo erudito ha sido hecho en el valle de Larecaja en relación con las instituciones católicas que residen allí, ni en los festivales del pueblo. La etnografía del área dirá una parte importante de una historia nacional, acentuando rasgos característicos de una experiencia religiosa extraordinaria, y de una comprensión de valores nacionales y un compromiso a la identidad nacional boliviana. Mi investigación es de naturaleza exploratoria. Su objetivo principal fue recabar información concerniente a los valores asociados con la religión, la identidad, la participación en confraternidades, y la formación de relaciones sociales en la provincia de Larecaja. Utilicé un enfoque cualitativo ya que los métodos cualitativos son apropiados para abordar aquellas cuestiones relativas a las interpretaciones de significados, conceptos, símbolos, metáforas y para analizar la manera en que los seres humanos dan sentido a su entorno (Berg 2004).

Asimismo, utilicé un enfoque de estudio de caso para estudiar las percepciones bolivianas de los valores religiosos. Los estudios de casos son útiles para comprender la complejidad y el carácter social contemporáneo de un “fenómeno dentro de su contexto de vida real cuando los límites entre fenómeno y contexto no son claramente manifiestos, y en los que se utilizan diversas fuentes de prueba” (Yin 1989: 23). Esta definición es una descripción excelente de lo que encontré al analizar los dos festivales. A pesar de que el festival del Señor de la Pascua fue de tono más local e indígena que la Fiesta del Señor de la Columna, los temas no siempre se encuadraron dentro de categorías divididas claramente en indígena vs. española, y con frecuencia ambas poblaciones participaban en ambas ceremonias. Debido al hecho de que la simbología religiosa contiene una miríada de valores diversos, el papel que desempeñan dichos símbolos en la vida de las personas también muestra puntos en común entre identidades grupales distintas.
Población y selección

La intención de esta investigación incluye información documentada que proporciona en Museo Nacional de la Etnografía y el Folklore (MUSEF), institución que supervisa este proyecto. La misión para MUSEF, y por lo tanto para este proyecto, incluye la documentación local histórica y productos culturales de la diversidad actual en Bolivia, y para crear un espacio para la articulación del conocimiento local a la población general. Las poblaciones seleccionadas corresponden a individuos que participan ya sea en el festival del Señor de la Columna o en el festival del Señor de la Pascua. Seleccioné informantes clave para realizar las entrevistas en base a personas que yo creí eran expertas en el tema del ceremonialismo religioso en Sorata, tales como sacerdotes católicos y auspiciantes de festivales conocidos como prestes y pasantes, miembros de confraternidades que participaban en los festivales, así como figuras políticas destacadas de la comunidad tales como el alcalde, el sub-prefecto y mallkus.

Al principio, mi estudio se centró en un número predeterminado de preguntas de investigación que se conoce en etnografía como entrevistas semi-estructuradas. Al no ejercer un control total del estudio, surgieron tópicos nuevos que contribuyeron a la construcción de valores relacionados con el ceremonialismo religioso. N=17, se efectuaron dieciséis entrevistas. La presente investigación fue llevada a cabo mediante la observación participante, la revisión bibliográfica, y la investigación de archivo como técnicas de triangulación. A fin de llevar a cabo la observación participante, intervine esencialmente en la conducta y vida cotidiana de los informantes, cocinando, comiendo, participando en los sacramentos, bebiendo, celebrando, entablando amistades y buenas relaciones. Durante ese tiempo en el lugar, llevé a cabo entrevistas informales, en las cuales hablé con los informantes y registré notas de campo y descripciones de mis experiencias.

Aproximadamente la mitad del tiempo empleado para realizar la investigación en Bolivia fue dedicado a investigar información relevante en archivos y bibliotecas, procurando obtener fuentes principales de información tales como documentos coloniales sobre religión en Bolivia o las primeras descripciones registradas de Sorata y sus habitantes. Las fuentes secundarias de información fueron de gran valor para mi
estudio ya que mucho material no se halla disponible las en bibliotecas y librerías de los Estados Unidos.

**Análisis de datos**

Las entrevistas registradas digitalmente fueron tomadas de formato de audio y transcriptas primero en español, y luego traducidas del español al inglés con la ayuda de una persona cuya lengua madre es el español que también hablaba inglés. Este último paso permitió que las frases en español fueran escritas en inglés dentro del contexto correcto, por ejemplo si una oración estaba o no en subjuntivo en cuyo caso indicaría una posibilidad, un ejemplo o incluso una historia inventada. La totalidad de las entrevistas que se utilizan en esta tesis están en inglés. La versión en español se encuentra al pie de cada página en forma de notas al pie.

Los pasos del análisis son los siguientes: (a) recolección y análisis simultáneo de datos, (b) desarrollo de proceso de codificación de datos de pasos múltiples, (c) métodos comparativos, (d) memoing a fin de colaborar con el análisis y diagramación conceptual, y por último (e) aclaración de ideas teóricas con citas valiosas (Bernard 2006). Se utilizó el software Nvivo con el fin de organizar los datos codificados en categorías temáticas y para lograr la fácil recuperación de citas relevantes.

**Resultados**

El tema principal y argumento central de esta tesis consiste en que ritual y la religión que tienen lugar en las confraternidades dentro el contexto de los festivales católico-andinos regulan el modo en que se forman y se mantienen las relaciones sociales, y que estas relaciones han sido estructuradas por instituciones religiosas que han sido históricamente análogas a las obligaciones administrativas de gobiernos o reinos indígenas. Las relaciones dentro del sistema de festividades acarrean consecuencias políticas y se conectan con clases, etnias y fenómenos económicos en la sociedad, y contribuyen así a la formación de identidades grupales diferentes entre las fechas de las festividades que ocurren en Sorata, y posteriormente poseen una jerarquía política. Lo fundamental para comprender el modo en que se forman las identidades
grupales en torno a días festivos definidos debe examinarse primero dentro de las instituciones religiosas y del sistema único de celebración ritual de la Iglesia Católica, que es producto de tanto la cofradía colonial española como del sistema de cargo de la fiesta andina. El encuentro de los mundos colonial y andino dio como resultado una nueva y única forma de instituciones de gobierno que continuaron un patrón precolombino y español de legitimar el poder mediante justificaciones divinas y organización religiosa. Desde su comienzo en España y en el mundo precolombino, ambas instituciones religiosas funcionaron en casi todos los niveles sociales. El sistema de tributo andino, que constituía las normas de la mano de obra agrícola y determinaba las jurisdicciones de propiedad, recaía en el concepto del ayni, la huaca, y en el liderazgo de aquellos más cercanos a las huacas, a saber: los mallkus. Muy similar al ceremonialismo religioso en torno de las huacas andinas, las instituciones religiosas occidentales, tales como las cofradías coloniales, funcionaban a través de individuos que estructuraban su mano de obra y actividades económicas en torno a un objeto o santo religioso, que era reconocido por un grupo, celebrado en un día festivo en particular y oficializado por el cura párroco. En virtud de la autoridad de estas instituciones religiosas, los procesos históricos demuestran que el medio para convertirse en un individuo que pagaba sus tributos en la comunidad recaía en una abstracción de la naturaleza para que se mantuviera la burocracia de modo permanente, para que hubiera un excedente a ser redistribuido en épocas de necesidad, y para que hubiera líderes políticos que gobernaran la sociedad y que afirmaran su autoridad redistribuyendo partes de este excedente con ceremonialismo religioso a fin de validar simbólicamente su cercanía a la abstracción y su posición social más alta. En un sistema que está más apartado de la economía capitalista, donde las instituciones religiosas católica y andina se han entremezclado para dar lugar a un sistema de intercambios guiado por la fe en lo milagroso, el sistema de cargo de la fiesta católica manifiesta los objetos inalienables en forma sincrética como lo indican las reliquias en piedra que se utilizan en rituales que imitan el concepto de la huaca dentro de un contexto catolico. La organización del ayllu parece haber asumido el papel de las comparsas, con su amplia red de contactos familiares y sociales, y el puesto del preste imita muchos de los roles del mallkus precolombino.
Las estructuras de la comunión católica que fueron confirmadas durante la Contra reforma en la España del siglo XVI, también han echado raíces en el Continente Americano y fueron confirmadas en esta investigación. Los puestos de clases que existen en los diferentes días festivos en la municipalidad de Sorata demuestran el modo en que la fundación de una fraternidad, la Quena Quena, y la construcción de una capilla en San Pedro, fueron utilizadas para expresar autonomía política desde el centro parroquial donde se celebran otros días festivos con participación de personas que no son del lugar o incluso con participación de extranjeros. Esto se verifica mediante las entrevistas etnográficas realizadas a los sacerdotes que hablan de diferencias de clase entre días festivos, al preste de San Pedro que habló de la sensación de “aislamiento” entre otros días festivos en la municipalidad, y al mallku que explicó cómo se utiliza la ocupación de los espacios rituales de la plaza castellana en Sorata para ratificar de manera simbólica la conexión entre la ocupación de tierra en el campo pero también el acceso a espacios públicos en el pueblo.

El milagro que simboliza la Pascua de piedra, de querer ser devuelta a su lugar de origen, reanuda el diálogo del discurso mitológico en torno a la fundación de santuarios y capillas en la zona rural de España durante el siglo XVI. El milagro en San Pedro se torna aun más localizado en el contexto andino con la incorporación del elemento de una piedra mágica que hace hincapié en su conexión con un lugar en el paisaje que coincide con las jurisdicciones étnicas antiguas del cacicazgo Inca, y como un acto gubernamental fundacional de obligaciones que requiere la comunidad. Todos estos atributos tienen una gran reminiscencia de las huacas.