

NEGOTIATING HYBRIDITY:
MORAL ECONOMY AND GLOBALIZATION IN HIGHLAND BOLIVIA

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by
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May 2012

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Cornell University 2012

The norms and practices of reciprocity, or *ayni* in the Quechua language, deeply influence social and economic life among indigenous peasants in Andean Bolivia, both historically and in the contemporary period. Yet, integration into global systems and processes is profoundly shaping the rural highlands and people who live there. Using a mix of global and multi-sited ethnographic methods, this dissertation examines the interaction between local reciprocity norms, networks and practices, on one hand, and four moments of globalization, on the other. I suggest that reciprocity, which is frequently evaluated as a strictly economic strategy, is motivated by moral and symbolic considerations as well as technical concerns. This makes reciprocity institutions a uniquely socially and ecologically appropriate resource that people use to construct their livelihoods—a highly relevant living institution that is reproduced socially through enacted daily practice. In the process, it is constructed anew to respond to contemporary needs and conditions. In chapters that critically examine local instances of market integration, technological change, religious fragmentation, and shifting migration patterns, this research finds that reciprocity institutions provide a cultural ‘toolkit’ with which local people negotiate their experience of globalization more on their own terms. Andean peasants use indigenous economic practices and networks to access the opportunities and minimize the challenges and hazards brought by their increasing integration into global systems and flows. In doing so, they are

constructing a hybrid space that combines local and global systems, reproducing local communities and cultures while constructing the contemporary global countryside.

This work suggests that local institutions, grounded in culture, history and landscape yet dynamically responsive to current contexts, are key mechanisms through which people think through, take advantage of, contest and cope with the forces of globalization that have come to dominate their lives.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Marygold Walsh-Dilley holds a Bachelor's degree in International and Comparative Policy Studies with a concentration in Economics from Reed College. After college, she spent a year as a Junior Fellow in the Economic Reform Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC followed by two years as a Community Development Volunteer with the United States Peace Corps in Bolivia. Upon her return to the US, Marygold went on to earn a Master of Science degree in Applied Economics and Management with a focus on Development Economics from Cornell University before completing her PhD in Development Sociology also at Cornell.

a la Pachamama

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation, as is to be expected, was not simply a solitary pursuit. Rather, it has emerged out of the many interactions and experiences I have been fortunate to have with other academics, authors, and, of course, Bolivian *campesinos*. During my fieldwork, I was the receptacle for memories, knowledge, ideas, complaints, suppositions, jokes, and desires, all of which I have tried to weave into a comprehensive story that says something about rural lives in a global system. I am grateful to those who shared with me, and I am honored by their honesty and candor. As a researcher I often struggled with the need to exploit relationships to further my own goals. That so many people have been open and kind has meant a great deal.

I began the adventure that eventually turned into my doctoral dissertation as a Peace Corps volunteer in Charazani and San Juan de Rosario, Bolivia. My field research was made much easier by relationships that I had developed nearly ten years earlier; these friendships sustained me during two of the most challenging and fruitful periods of my life. In San Juan, I must principally acknowledge and thank the Yucra-Nogales family: don Teofiolo, doña Gumercinda, Elvira, Guillermo, Jacoba, Yeny, Aida, and the little ones Misael and Rusbel. During my field research, they incorporated me into their lives “*como miembro de la familia*”, answered my endless questions and others I hadn’t even thought to ask, championed me during town meetings, introduced me to the right people, cared for me when I was sick, and in many other ways provided friendship, support, data, and laughter. I must also acknowledge that the initial kernel of an idea for this research project emerged out of conversations with Teofilo Yucra in the years 2001 and 2002; without him, this research project might never have been, or would have been very different indeed. Also in San Juan, Esther Condori, Gumercindo

Cayo, and Francisca Villca Cayo were particularly helpful.

In Caata and Charazani, I also renewed friendships that began during my Peace Corps years. An old contact, Ermigilio Carrion, took me in and offered what information he could, but it was his wife Felina Mamani who took me under her wing as she would a babe. I am grateful to them both. Wendy Segurondo was a great friend and an invaluable resource, helping me with logistics, creating contacts, and sharing the local gossip. Doña Sofia Muñoz provided good food and, in her own way, friendship.

It was luck, not necessarily foresight, that the village of Pocona was my third and final research site. Physically, intellectually, and emotionally exhausted, I was humbled by the astounding generosity of the Poconeños. Two people stand out from a crowd of kind and helpful friends. Leoncio Olivera Ramirez facilitated entry into the area, provided lots of data (and food!) over the multiple interactions I had with him, and also participated in the photography part of the research. Joachin Valdarrama Quispe and his family were exceptionally generous and accommodating; I could always turn to don Joachin when I didn't quite understand something, to fill in gaps, and to inspire a new set of ideas and questions. I also acknowledge my Quechua professor at Cornell, don Luis Morató, who first introduced me to Pocona.

I must also take a moment to acknowledge the wonderful Duran and Sarage family of Uyuni, Bolivia. Chris Sarage's excellent pizza would have been enough, but they gave me a home away from home. I thank this family from the bottom of my heart for being such good friends and making me feel so welcome.

In a more general sense, I acknowledge and thank the following, who all contributed

in some way to this dissertation while I was in Bolivia: the staffs of the Unidades Educativas San Juan, Yawar Mallku, 23 de Mayo and San Francisco de Asis, the Hospital San Juan, Puesto de Salud Caata, and the Hospital Parroquial “Padre Rosario” in Pocona; San Juan village leaders Teofilo Cayo, Cornelio Oxa, and Mauricio Villca; Caata “Central” Mario Quispe Supo; the Honorable Alcaldia Municipal de Pocona; Sra. Yolanda Espinosa; CERES; PADEP; former Peace Corps Volunteer Gina Kosek; Professor Marta Giorgis at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón in Cochabamba; sisters Elizabeth and Maria of the Pocona Parish and Centro de Formación San Antonio; and, of course, all the Quispes, Yucas, Choques, Cayos, Villcas, Oxas, Huancas, Yanahuayas, Condoris, Tipulas, Toconas, Mamanis, Huanakus, Supos, Laymis, Yawris and many, many others of San Juan, Caata, and Pocona who provided data for this project.

In the Andes, and in each of the villages where I worked, the landscape itself has an immediate presence. Andean mythology holds that the mountain peaks, or *Apus*, were once gods who walked about, had their own personalities and dramas, and meddled in the affairs of humans. It is with this in mind that I also acknowledge the presence of the Andes Mountains themselves, and in particular the sacred peak Akhamani. Perhaps it was the steep mountain valleys that tricked my eye, but during my time in Caata it was as if Akhamani was always just over my shoulder, silently watching over me, giving me much needed strength and willing me perseverance. Throughout my research, the Andes cradled me. To the Apus, I offer a metaphorical *ch’alla*.

At Cornell University, I must first and foremost acknowledge the superior guidance of my committee chair, Dr. Max Pfeffer, who expertly steered me through exams, research, and writing despite my sudden appearance at his office door. I think it is rare

for a graduate student to have such a perfect balance of freedom, cheerleading, and meddling that I had. Max was actually my second committee chair, taking over after the untimely passing of Dr. Tom Lyson who I must thank for getting me interested in sociology in the first place. Tom's ideas regarding civic agriculture and problem solving were influential to much of my thinking as a graduate student. I salute as well the guidance of Dr. Billie Jean Isbell, titan of Andean Studies, whose depth and breadth of regional knowledge both provided reassurance that I was on the right track as well as pushed me analytically. I also acknowledge the remaining members of my overgrown dissertation committee, Drs. Fouad Makki, Angela Gonzalez, and Wendy Wolford, for providing a different perspective on my work. Wendy Wolford, in particular, was especially helpful for me as I sought to frame my work theoretically.

I would be remiss not to mention my colleagues in the Department of Development Sociology. I'm lucky to be one of those boats buoyed on the tide of incredibly gifted fellow students, who constantly pushed me to think in new ways or with greater rigor. Perhaps more importantly, though, is their friendship and camaraderie. I especially wish to acknowledge and thank Andrea Woodward and Amanda Flaim, who inspired me, read and critiqued my work, commiserated with me, and, when warranted, helped to celebrate my victories.

Finally, I must acknowledge and thank my partner Kevin Dilley who supported this endeavor in a thousand ways, and my children Huckleberry and August who were born with this dissertation.

Funding for the research presented here was provided through the Inter-America Foundation's Grassroots Development Fellowship. Funding for pre-dissertation

research and Quechua language training came from the Cornell University Department of Development Sociology, the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies at Cornell, and FLAS fellowships during the 2005-2006 academic year and following summer. My participation in the Advanced Graduate Workshop on Globalization, Development, and Poverty, which took place at Manchester University during the summer of 2008, helped jump-start the writing of this dissertation.

The Quechua words for offering thanks are “*dios pagarasunki*”, which literally mean “God will pay you”. I can only hope that the generosity of the people whom I encountered during the process of conceptualizing, researching, and writing this dissertation will be plentifully repaid.

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I

INTRODUCTION:

THE GLOBAL COUNTRYSIDE

I am on my way to Don Elián's house. Pulling closed the creaking metal gate that fortifies the compound where I rent a small room, I turn right, away from town, and set off by foot across the puzzle of fields. Today, I take a shortcut, skirting Don Damian's newly ploughed field and hopping the rocks of the irrigation canal to meet up with a well-worn path that runs parallel to the river. I see no other human, but shoo away two dogs that bark uproariously as I pass the compounds they guard, take pains to avoid a hulking cow tethered in the middle of the path, and startle snakes from the underbrush. Past Don Joachin's adobe-walled compound, but before I get to Don Elián's lower field, I cut across, down toward the river, doing my best to judge from memory where the footbridge across the rushing waters has been placed after being washed out during recent rains. I've gotten lost here on a few occasions, but this time I remember to jog downriver a few steps rather than follow the more beaten path upriver. And there it is, the bridge: three narrow eucalyptus trunks, roughly hewn and set precariously across the narrow banks, with a smaller sapling nailed to two trees on either side of the river to serve as a handrail. I cross the river and continue up around a second of Elián's fields, where small piles of invasive weeds smolder after being collected and burned yesterday, up a steep rock embankment, around a field of yellow maize drying on the stalk, and I can finally hear the bark of the family dog and catch glimpse of the thatched roofs over the adobe rooms that make up Elián's house.

A strange place, some might—in fact, did—say, to situate a study of globalization. But

that is exactly what I came to Bolivia to do. Spend any time in the rural hinterlands of the Andes Mountains and you will quickly come to appreciate that they are being transformed by globalization. New experiences with global economic systems are shifting production practices and opportunities—and risks. Cultural globalization is changing the way of life of indigenous highlanders, from the foods they eat to the gods they worship, and everything in between. And migration patterns are molding the demographic shape of the rural Andes and raising a set of new challenges for the people who live there.

At the same time, observers marvel at the high degree of cultural continuity in the Andes over centuries of colonization, conquest and nation building—not to mention the social engineering of the Inca and earlier civilizations. One of the most outstanding of Andean institutions, which is said to lie at the heart of its culture and society, is reciprocity. Reciprocity, or *ayni* in the language of the Quechua Indians, the largest indigenous group in the Andes, is both a moral understanding of the world and how we should act within it and a material practice of exchange central to indigenous agricultural strategies. Reciprocity, as Marcel Mauss suggested in his essay on *The Gift* (1950), is a “total social phenomenon”, reflecting and articulating multiple aspects of social interaction among Andean people, from religion and ritual to the materiality of everyday struggles to forge a living. Needless to say, reciprocity is a culturally significant institution, a prerequisite, some say, for self-identification as Quechua (Mannheim 1984).

In this dissertation, I use reciprocity institutions among indigenous peoples in the Andes as a way to focus my study of globalization. I ask not how globalization impacts reciprocity practices and networks—to do so would frame Andean

communities as the victims of globalization rather than as active participants in its invention and reproduction (Massey 2004). Rather in this dissertation I seek to explore the “friction” between globalization processes and reciprocity institutions—the interconnections between the global and local that work to produce cultures and opportunities across scales (Tsing 2005). I want to know about how rural and indigenous peoples, at the margins of the global system, are able to negotiate or shape their own uneven experiences with globalization. I want to know how global processes and systems constrain, compel, or oblige local cultural practices, and how those practices might in turn affect people’s experiences of globalization. And I want to know what the potential is for the unique highland culture in the future as rural communities are increasingly integrated into rapid and global processes of social change. At the very root of these questions, however, lies a larger examination about the ways in which we think about the economy and our own economic behavior, how we conceptualize the interaction between local and global spaces, and how we might envision alternative possibilities to dominant narratives about globalization and development, and the role of marginalized peoples within these processes.

Globalization is a dynamic and multifaceted set of processes of that integrates localities into networks of interconnectivity and interaction, organized at the global scale, that facilitate the global circulation of people, products, ideas and representations (Woods 2007: 487; cf. Steger 2009). It is a flow of meaning as well as goods and services (Bannerjee and Linstead 2001). Globalization is not a new process but in the contemporary period, what some call ‘neoliberal’ or ‘second wave’ globalization (Woods 2007; Massey 2004) these connections are facilitated and accelerated by changing information and transportation technologies. Some of the early literature on the contemporary phase of globalization presents the simplistic idea

that globalization is an inevitable process of universalizing western civilization, battling the parochial forces of nationalism, localism, and tribalism (Steger 2009). This creates a rigid dichotomy that pits the universal against the particular, the global against the local (*ibid*). But a more sophisticated understanding points to the uneven, fragmented and multiple nature of globalization, suggesting instead that it should be thought of as globalizations plural, a series of overlapping and even contradictory processes with messy and complicated outcomes (Santos 2006) that are themselves constructed within the interaction between the universal and the particular (Tsing 2005). This dissertation is precisely a study of that interaction.

The approach I take in this dissertation is a bit unorthodox among globalization studies. As Hogan points out, among the most prominent scholars globalizing processes have been theorized primarily at the macro level (2004: 22). She writes: “Institutions rather than individuals have been conceptualized as both the engines of globalizing social changes and the entities most radically transformed by them [and] little empirical research to date has investigated the ways individuals experience and understand the global” (*ibid*). Furthermore, Hogan suggests, little work has examined the ways cultural specificities mediate the impacts of globalization as these accounts generally rely on Western subjects and settings—and, as Connell (2007) notes, Western tools and ideas. These tendencies reproduce a global-local divide, always setting the global, as the site for dynamic social change, in opposition to the local, which is framed as static, traditional, and parochial (Connell 2007; Tsing 2005). This view neither helps us understand the lived experiences of globalization nor sees the ways in which individuals, groups, places or cultures fit into and shape global systems and processes.

Also unconventional is the approach taken in this dissertation that situates globalization in the rural sector. There is a discernible spatial bias in globalization imaginaries, a privileging of urban over rural in both scholarly and lay accounts of globalization (Hogan 2004: 22; Woods 2007). When we close our eyes to visualize “globalization”, we might see fast moving traffic on an expressway, stock exchanges presiding over the global movement of capital, large factories and the even larger multinational corporations they serve. McDonald’s on a busy urban street; call centers in Bangalore; the crush of migrants waiting for work on a street corner. We don’t imagine the bucolic countryside of the remote Andes, where sheep graze, people still wear traditional, handmade clothing, and agricultural practices employ the tools and knowledges of the past. But here, in the pastures and hills of Elián’s back yard and throughout the Andes, is a countryside increasingly caught up in shifting networks of interrelation.

Despite a series of approaches that study the impact of globalization on rural areas—from research on commodity chains and the global agri-food system to studies of the impact of globalization on rural development—Woods (2007: 488) finds that there is no coherent, widely accepted, core body of literature on rural globalization. In the literature that does exist, Woods argues (490), “globalization is taken as a ‘given’ in structuring the rural experience”. Notably absent, he suggests is place-based studies that examine precisely *how* rural places are remade under globalization. He suggests that in part this is because of how we tend to think of rural places—as static and disconnected to, or victims of, external processes—and instead uses a relational view of space (see Massey 2005) to propose an approach to thinking about what he calls the “global countryside”. The global countryside is a “hypothetical space, corresponding to a condition of the global interconnectivity and interdependency of rural localities”

(Woods 2007: 492). It is not a uniform, homogenous, or static space, but rather is differentially articulated and contested in particular rural localities.

Woods suggests that the global countryside is marked by hybridity—a view that corresponds to the approach I take in this dissertation. Hybridity is a concept emerging from postcolonial theories of development to indicate the “sociocultural process in which discrete structures of practices, previously existing in separate form, are combined to generate new structures, objects, and practices” (García Canclini 2005: xxv; see also Bhabha 1994; Gupta 1998; Escobar 1996). The idea of hybridity initially came from the biological sciences, indicating the interbreeding of different species, but is also used in the social sciences to indicate the coming together, or fusing, of two distinct cultural forms. It has been critiqued for signalling an origin in distinct entities, for underlying assumptions of cultures as bounded wholes, and for reproducing the basic opposition between ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ (see Crehan 2002). However, postcolonial notions of hybridity emphasise the impurity of all cultures and discourses (Gupta 1998), noting that the “abrupt opposition between the traditional and modern does not work” (García Canclini 2005, 2). Rather, hybridity is about a “present-oriented process of invention” (Escobar 1996: 219) in which “the ‘non-Western’ is not just a residual trace of a vanishing ‘tradition’, but a constitutive feature of modern life” (Gupta 1998: 9; see also Mignolo 2005, 2001).

Like in all cultures, Andean people have always been living within hybrid spaces. The Inca colonized a vast empire from present day Ecuador to the northern region of what is now Argentina, engaging in social engineering to change the culture, economy, and even geography of its people (see Larson 1998 for a discussion of how this took place in Cochabamba, Bolivia). Later, Andean people had to negotiate a new reality under

the tutelage of the Spanish Crown and Catholicism. The ethnographer Catherine Allen emphasizes that the Quechua people she studies are “a people in a society whose origins lie neither in the Incas nor in Spain, but in the Spanish conquest of the Incas” (2002, 188)—an already hybrid society well before the modern era. But, there is something unique about the contemporary period of globalization and heightened interchange. While contemporary hybridity is not a radically new system it does involve the intensification of ordinary cultural processes (Herzfeld 1999: 133).

Latin American society is characterized by hybridity in many forms (García Canclini 2005). Such hybridization is the result of the necessity of social fusion in the clash between indigenous and European social and belief systems. This is particularly salient in Bolivia and other areas where the indigenous population was not wiped out through disease or explicit policy. For instance, *mestizaje* is one of the “foundational themes in the Americas” (Sanjinés 2002: 39). *Mestizaje* refers to the racial mixing of Spanish and indigenous descendents in the Americas. It was used as a strategy in the construction of unified nations in Latin America, and as a way for elites in the New World to create new discourses of history outside of European design (Sanjinés 2004). Medicine and healing is another area marked by hybridization in Latin American society (see Crandon-Malamud’s work [e.g. 1991] on medical pluralism in Bolivia). Religious syncretism, which is treated at length in Chapter VI of this dissertation, is another form of hybridity that has strongly shaped Latin American society. These forms and discourses of hybridization—religious, racial, and cultural—are all overlapping and mutually constructive. They are outcomes shaped by the dynamic negotiations made by people living in Latin America, and reflect hierarchies of power

and resistance.¹

Woods argues that the ‘global’ countryside must be understood as involving hybrid interactions at multiple levels (2007: 495). Not only is the countryside already a hybrid space, transformed over an eternity of interactions between different systems, humans, and non-human actants (such as the landscape or climatic interventions) but globalization itself is a hybrid and multistranded entity. There are multiple processes of globalization, often described as different types, economic, cultural, or political globalization, for example. Not only do these processes play out at the same time, but are often overlapping or become “knotted together such that globalization is experienced by rural localities as a hybrid of economic, social, cultural and political processes” (*ibid.*; see also Beck 2000). The benefit of adopting a place-based perspective is its ability to help us see the ways in which these overlapping processes are experienced simultaneously on the ground. These experiences are not unilaterally positive or negative; the “immanent contradiction” of globalization is that it presents new challenges and uncertainties precisely as it offers new opportunities and possibilities (el-Ojeili and Hayden 2006; Woods 2007).

Second, globalization proceeds via hybridization (Woods 2007). While some argue that globalization involves cultural homogenization (see Holton 2000; Ritzer 1993), increasingly research suggests that globalization crystallized local diversity even as it transforms it along globally familiar lines (McMichael 1996; Woods 2007). Woods argues (497):

¹ In using the terms syncretism and hybridity, one must be careful not to be drawn into an essentialist argument. Fusion of two different forms into something new, and unique, need not imply that the two original forms were truly original or essential in any way. Those two distinct forms are themselves the result of historical and ongoing processes of hybridization.

these processes of hybridization occur within particular locations, and as they take place so they have a transformative impact on their locale. It is in this way that localities are reconstituted under globalization, not as an imposition from above, but through a process of co-constitution that involves both global and local actors. To make this assertion is to go beyond a recognition that global and local are co-defined, or that they exist in symbiotic relationship which each transformed through interactions with the other, as the concept of ‘glocalization’ describes (see Robertson, 1992; Urry 2003). Rather it acknowledges the variegated politics of globalization, in which localities can be, as Massey (2005) argues, agents in globalization but with their capacities to act shaped by their position within wider power-geometries.

In the process, the impact of globalization on rural localities is not a straightforward relationship of domination or subordination, but rather one of negotiation, manipulation, and hybridization, conducted through and reflecting local conditions and contexts (Woods 2007: 487).

This focus on hybridity lays bare that the economic processes—and the economy in general—must be thought of as fully integrated with and embedded in wider social intercourse. I am inspired here by the concept of the “moral economy” (Thompson 1991; Scott 1976; Sayer 2007, 2006, 2000). As a kind of inquiry, moral economy sees economic behavior and institutions as motivated by moral values and not just by self-interest and calculative, rational valuation (Sayer 2007). In describing the moral economy of the peasant, James Scott (1976) emphasizes the role of reciprocity as a key normative principle underlying peasant ideas of how human interaction should unfold. The concept of the moral economy is useful here because it helps us to see how reciprocity institutions are made up of both technical livelihood strategies as well

as based upon a deeper social contract and shared moral understanding. I use the concept of moral economy throughout this dissertation as a reminder to see the economic processes I study as fully embedded within the moral order and cultural meaning of rural Andean society. As is developed in Chapter III, reciprocity institutions in particular are unquestionably influenced by symbolic and moral considerations in addition to technical economic concerns. But moral economy is not limited to reciprocity institutions. While both reciprocity institutions and globalization are frequently thought of and studied as economic phenomena (Spedding and Llanos 1999; Woods 2007; el-Ojeili and Hayden 2006), both are deeply embedded in and reproduce moral and symbolic flows of understanding and meaning.

This dissertation is about the ways in which increasing integration into global systems and processes interacts with, shapes, and is shaped by cultural livelihood practices of reciprocity and cooperation. What are the challenges, the new opportunities, that globalization brings to Andean communities? And how do rural people respond to these new circumstances? What resources do they use as they negotiate this shifting terrain, and how do cultural ideas and institutions influence how they do it? What is the role of cultural institutions like reciprocity within a world increasingly reorganized along capitalist, competitive, individualistic, and unequal lines? This dissertation examines four distinct, yet overlapping, flows of globalization—economic, technological, cultural, and demographic—to explore how they come up against, conflict or converge with culturally significant networks and practices of reciprocity and cooperation.

A DISCUSSION OF METHODS: GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY

This dissertation seeks to explore how people negotiate their increasing incorporation

into global systems, and the role that cultural and cooperative institutions and practices play in this process. I ground this research in an empirical examination of reciprocity activities among indigenous peasants in Andean Bolivia. In particular, I focus on reciprocal labor sharing as a window onto the interaction between the global and the local. I argue that reciprocity institutions provide a socially and ecologically appropriate “tool kit” that people use to negotiate their uneven experience of globalization—ultimately constructing new and hybrid spaces within which particular cultural institutions enable people to make sense of global systems.

In the globalization literature more broadly, and understandably, there is a tendency to remain at a macro level when analyzing the intricacies and implications of global processes. Yet, taking inspiration from feminist critiques of knowledge as partial and situated, critical scholars increasingly seek to “denaturalize” global systems (Gibson-Graham 2006), pointing to how globalization is an ongoing process of transformation (Woods 2007). Inherent in these approaches is the critique of both the local and the global, and the intention of deconstructing the taken-for-granted categories and dichotomies—the global/local divide, for instance—that long supported colonial and neo-colonial forms of domination and subordination (Gupta 1998). The abrupt division between the global and the local is unhelpful because it paints an image in which the global is homogeneous and predictable (Tsing 2005: 58)—in essence reproducing it as a natural entity free from interrogation. Instead of such an approach, this dissertation takes the view that globalization is a process of transformation, an aspiration to the universal but nonetheless an unfinished achievement. And far from the distinction drawn in dichotomous framings, global forces are seen as produced in encounters between the global and the local—the awkward negotiations across difference that Tsing (2005) calls “friction”.

The global/local divide is not only unhelpful for thinking about how the process of globalization proceeds, but it also reproduces the ‘local’ as a set of heterogeneous but pure or traditional spaces, divorced from external influence yet ultimately defenseless against the spread of the universal. Thus, a critical approach calls for a rethinking of the local as well as the global. A “global sense of place” (Massey 1991) sees local spaces as also co-produced by global processes. This point of view critiques romantic visions of place as characterized by stasis and reaction against external threats (*ibid.*). The newly developing field of Andean Studies in the 1960s and ‘70s had a tendency to view highland communities in such a misguided way, an error exposed by their failure to recognize the linkages between rural and urban spaces that culminated in the Peruvian Civil War (see Chapter II). Scholars’ commitment to such an essentialized understanding of place undermines their ability to appropriately evaluate local processes and events or place them within a wider global context.

But places are important. After all, places are not just nodes within the world system, but are the sites of live cultures, economies and environments (Escobar 2004). And a politics of place, rather than the more familiar paradigm of revolution offered by classical Marxist traditions, is increasingly significant in political struggles against the violence of globalization and development (Gibson-Graham 2004). Reciprocity networks and practices, like all livelihood pursuits, link people to place and are an important part of the construction and performance of identities. This link is especially salient for indigenous people in Latin America for whom self-identification and culture are often closely tied to agriculture, its associated practices, and particular landscapes (Muehlebach 2001; Varese 2001; Bebbington 1993). Indigenous groups and movements sometimes use an essentialized notion of place as part of an explicit

strategy to make and legitimize claims against the State and international bodies (Mato 2000; Jackson and Warren 2005; McNeish 2002). Clearly we need an appreciation of the specificity and diversity of place in our analysis of globalization.

But we need an appreciation for and conceptualization of place that is not, as Doreen Massey writes (2006, see also 2005), bound by parochialism. We can do this through a relational vision of space, one that understands place as the site where people meet and interact. Seeing place as “meeting place” (Massey 1991) de-essentializes place, emphasizing instead that places are constituted through interrelations, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny. This necessarily means that places are never closed, never finished, always in the process of being made (Massey 2005: 9). A global sense of place is one in which place is seen as a process—it is not bounded or enclosed, it does not necessarily have a single unique identity and may be full of internal conflict—and in which each place is a distinct mixture of wider and more local social relations (1991: 29). Particular landscapes are the sites for a meeting up of trajectories (both human and not) through which cultures—and in fact, the future itself— are negotiated (2006: 46). Inherent in this understanding is a critique of images that paint a single, knowable form globalization as inevitable, predictable, or homogeneous.

This dissertation is an exploration of how people negotiate this uncertain future, how they “think through” the global in their local practices and relationships (McNeish 2002: 262). I aim to elucidate how local people negotiate the new opportunities and challenges of globalization, paying particular attention to reciprocity institutions as a site around which this negotiation takes place. I do this with an empirical focus on indigenous peasants in highland Bolivia. This group has been doubly unseen within

globalization studies because of both a spatial bias in research on globalization that privileged the urban over the rural (see Woods 2007) as well as modernist constructions of indigenous as traditional, authentic, pure, and, in fact, endangered by their interaction with external forces. Yet, it is precisely here at the margins, where conjuncture and disjuncture may be laid most bare. While reciprocity is a common form of exchange and provides a rubric of ethical intercourse in all human society (Simmel 1996 [1908]), in the indigenous highlands of Bolivia reciprocity is constructed as an essential element for life and identity. It is a key factor in how the contradictions, challenges, and opportunities of globalization are faced. How these negotiations take place ultimately inform us about what the experience of globalization—both in the Andes and more broadly—is all about.

In this research, I am motivated methodologically by sociological and anthropological efforts to use ethnography to study global systems—and more importantly, the friction between the universal and the particular, the global and the local (Tsing 2005). Participant observation *in situ* is the hallmark of ethnographic methods, but, much like the related notions of place, it was critiqued heavily during the 1980s and early '90s for representing culture and communities as coherent, homogeneous, and timeless—and disconnected to outside systems (see Abu-Lughod 1991; Starn 1994). Over the past two decades, such discussions and critiques have produced a number of methodological tools for overcoming this failing and connecting the dots between scalar levels. The methods employed for this dissertation are inspired by two such tools: global ethnography and multi-sited ethnography.

Global ethnography, elaborated by sociologist Michael Burawoy and colleagues (2000), seeks to explore the ways that global forces, global connections, and global

imaginings are evident in the “lived experiences of globalization” (344). It seeks to link macro level processes to the grounded material realities that people find themselves in. Similarly, anthropologist George Marcus proposes multi-sited ethnography (MSE) as an ethnography in and of the world system (1995). Any ethnography of a cultural formation within the world system, Marcus suggests, is necessarily a study of the system itself, and researchers must make sure to represent places as embedded within wider spatial and temporal contexts. MSE is not simply about ethnography located in multiple places—in fact, Marcus suggests that strategically situated single-site ethnography could be considered under the rubric of multi-sited ethnography. Rather, it is an ethnography that is itself mobile, that sees its objects of study as mobile and multiply situated, and that involves strategies of following connections, associations and relationships rather than reproducing conventional ethnography’s commitment to localism. It expands what is ethnographically “in the picture”, both in the field and as the research is written up (1995: 102). Thus, it is more an ethnography of connections than of one particular site. Such research sees the field site as a matter of “shifting locations” rather than the bounded communities of traditional *in situ* work (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 37). Taken together, a global and multi-sited ethnography uses a combination of movement and dwelling to explore the global system by setting out from real experiences.

In this research, I follow reciprocity as a window onto questions around the interaction between global and local. I did this physically—the research brought me to three communities where I pursued reciprocity practices in agricultural fields, household compounds, and community functions—as well as dialogically by using reciprocity practices to kindle reflection in interviews. I paid attention to the ways that people utilize reciprocity institutions both within and beyond the field sites for this study. The

primary questions that I sought to examine were: what motivates reciprocity practices and why; how are reciprocity norms and networks used in the everyday activities of Andean life; what are the consequences of such practices; and how are reciprocity institutions influenced by—and in turn influence—the changing circumstances of rural life.

On the other hand, I operationalize ‘globalization’ through four concrete expressions across the range of economic, technological, cultural and demographic shifts. I initially began my research intending to focus on just the first two—particularly how interactions with markets and the related processes of technological modernization interact with reciprocity patterns—and this is indeed the focal point for Chapter IV. However, during fieldwork two other global processes emerged as highly significant and I shifted my focus to incorporate an examination of religious change and migration as well. Chapter V examines how reciprocity institutions interact with the increasing presence of Protestant churches in rural spaces and Chapter VI turns to look at the influence of different flows of migration. This shift in focus was influenced by methodological choices that emphasized a qualitative and inductive approach to fieldwork.

As noted above, this research was situated in three Andean villages in Bolivia. The initial idea for this project—the question of how reciprocity institutions fit into and interact with processes of globalization— emerged from observations I made as a development worker with the United States Peace Corps from 2000-2002. During this time, I established ties and began working in the three regions where I ultimately completed my dissertation research between 2006 and 2008: the fertile valleys of Cochabamba, the Kallawayá region north of La Paz, and the bleak Lipez region

Southwest of the Uyuni salt flat. In 2006, when I returned to select field sites for my dissertation research, I sought villages that were similar in size and distance to major cities, which were all ethnically Quechua (the language I had been studying) and thus culturally similar, and within which agriculture was pursued as the primary livelihood strategy. However, I chose field sites that were different in terms of their geography and topography, which of course meant that they each had different production systems and agricultural strategies (see below for a description of field sites). I also specifically sought villages with varying degrees of interaction with capitalist markets—an indication, I hoped, of their histories with and relative integration with global systems more broadly. Overall, field sites were chosen to maximize their comparability, with some significant differences particularly with respect to agricultural production and livelihood practices but with other characteristics more alike to enable meaningful comparison. While I do not claim that these field sites are representative of Andean or even highland Bolivian villages—there would be no such place—I chose the three villages in order to get a sense of the general themes and issues facing rural communities in the contemporary period as they transition towards greater integration into global markets and systems. The themes that emerge in each of the field sites are typical of those in other communities that lay at similar points along this continuum.

A second consideration in choosing field sites was accessibility. There are many parts of the highlands with very limited transportation, or which are seen as closed off to or hostile towards outsiders. I needed to be able to get to these villages, gain entry, and secure a place to live while I was there. I also had to have some degree of trust that I would be safe while working in the field. Thus, I chose field sites where I either already had local connections and networks or felt like I could develop them relatively

easily. This means that I did not complete research in the most remote or ‘untouched’ villages, and that each of these villages did have experience with foreigners and sometimes even foreign researchers. As my study was about precisely the interaction between rural spaces and global systems, I was not looking for the most ‘pure’ or traditional sites, but rather where local culture and global processes were actively negotiated and thus the considerations for accessibility did not significantly limit or alter my ability to undertake my research or make claims based on the data I gathered.

The three villages that I explore throughout this dissertation are San Juan de Rosario in the *Salar* region of Southwest Bolivia, Caata in the high transitional valleys north of La Paz city, and Pocona in the lower transitional valleys southeast of Cochabamba city. Sites were selected in during an eight-week trip to Bolivia in 2006, and preliminary fieldwork was undertaken in San Juan and Pocona at that time. I returned again for one year between 2007 and 2008, and spent 3-4 months in each village with some limited time in Cochabamba and La Paz cities where I utilized the libraries and resources of development agencies, research organizations, and universities². In San Juan and Caata, I lived with host families who—thankfully—fed me and helped me immensely with access. In Pocona, I rented a room from an absentee landlord who resided in Cochabamba city but was able to build networks through select key informants whom I identified early on in my research in the village. During my research, I was aware that aligning myself with a specific family or individuals could potentially impact my ability to access certain groups and factions within communities and I thus attempted to keep some distance and build my own networks across

² In La Paz: the Food and Agricultural Organization, Programa de Apoyo a la Gestión Pública Descentralizada y Lucha Contra la Pobreza (PADEP-GTZ), Universidad Mayor de San Andres, and the Centro Boliviano Americano. In Cochabamba: Universidad Católica, Universidad Mayor de San Simón, the Centro Boliviano Americano.

communities.

This work makes use of a variety of qualitative methods, including participant observation, formal and informal interviews with individuals and, sometimes, small groups, visual methods of participant photo-making and photo-elicitation, as well as an analysis of published and unpublished written materials, objects, and exhibits. Actually residing in the field sites was key for the two most important facets of my research: participant observation and interviewing. In each community, I negotiated access through the governing bodies of the village. This process was very different in each community, and my participation and observation of these procedures was instructive of the social and governance organization within communities, of how work gets done, and, in some instances, expectations of reciprocity. In San Juan, for instance, I was granted access only after I presented my request at a community meeting, where it was discussed democratically and during which stipulations were placed on my involvement (I agreed to write a report of my findings to submit to the community upon completion of my research). In Caata, I had to make small gifts of coca and cash to various community leaders in their homes, where my request was entered into the public record book and a handwritten letter of permission was drawn up. In Pocona I received an official memorandum of understanding after submitting a formal petition along with supporting documents from Cornell University and a Bolivian institution to the mayor's office.

The primary sites for participant-observation were the fields where agricultural work was undertaken. I frequently joined the work parties that gathered together groups of laborers for significant activities like planting and harvesting. These are the main sites for the reciprocal interactions I focus on in this dissertation (see Chapter II for a

detailed descriptions and discussion). I also observed in community meetings, public rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations, and other public functions and spaces. I was also frequently invited into private homes to observe preparations for planting or the ways in which agricultural products were processed. While I frequently relied upon invitations to work parties, I often hiked through in the fields and simply showed up when I saw agricultural work taking place. I garnered invitations to work parties through the networks I had established, by making new connections during work parties, or out and about in the communities or in the outlying fields.

In addition to participant observation, I conducted just over 100 formal, open-ended interviews and had ongoing informal interactions with roughly 15 key informants (see Table 1). Most of these interactions were with the indigenous residents of the villages, but I supplemented this with data gathered from government officials, development practitioners, school officials, and health care workers, who are often not from the village where they are working. I accessed participants through networks I developed and by speaking with people in public spaces and work parties. I found that discussing reciprocity was a concrete way to explore peoples' experiences of, and narratives around, shifting landscapes. I used an interview guide of 10 questions to steer the interviews, but would follow up on the answers provided to push for more detail. Thus, the interviews were only semi-structured and often led to data that I was not directly seeking but which were extremely helpful nonetheless. This inductive method allowed for the emergence of themes and narratives that were highly instructive and influential in the direction of my work. For instance, this approach led me to realize the importance of religious change in thinking about rural livelihood practices, resulting in the discussion reported in Chapter VI. I interviewed until I had reached saturation. Throughout fieldwork, I kept daily field notes of observations and

summaries of interviews from recall. Interviews were also recorded using a digital voice recorder (if permission was granted), which, along with the field notes, were transcribed and then coded using ATLAS.ti qualitative data analysis and research software, and by hand.

Table 1: Interview participants (some interviewed more than once)

Field Site	Men	Women	Total
San Juan de Rosario	20	25	45
Caata	17	11	28
Pocona	22	15	37
Total	59	51	110

While I accessed research participants through a sample of convenience, I did make extra effort to connect with people that were underrepresented in my sample, or those who belonged to important groups I had not heard from. There were three primary lines upon which I differentiated research participants: gender, age, and religion. First, I sought to balance the gender of research respondents, or at least bring it more in line with population figures. For instance, in San Juan I went out of my way to access and interview men, as I had an easier time setting up interviews with women. Women were more likely to be residing in the village (ie, less likely to have migrated for work [see Chapter IV]) and were more likely to be found in the home or village rather than on the fields³. In Pocona, on the other hand, women are more likely to reside at least part time in the cities whereas men stay in the community to take care of the

³ Since the agricultural fields surrounding San Juan are at quite a distance, I rarely came into contact with potential research participants in the fields. This is in contrast to Pocona and Caata, where the agricultural areas are at close proximity to the village and I was thus able to access research participants out on the fields.

agricultural work. In both Pocona and Caata, men were more likely to be out and about, working on fields for instance, and were thus more accessible to me. In some research, the gender of the researcher impacts whom he or she has access to. However, I found that I had access to both men and women as my status as a tall, foreign, highly educated, Spanish-speaking woman disrupted their gender expectations. This allowed me access to both female and male spheres for participant-observation and interviews. Still, I paid careful attention to gender in order to make sure I was able to include both male and female perspectives in this study.

Second, I made extra effort to access participants of all ages. The elderly were generally more likely to be present in the villages, and to have more time to talk with me. Young adults were often not in residence in the village, having migrated for school or work. Those who had returned to settle down in the village also frequently migrated temporarily or seasonally and were more likely to be out in the fields or too busy to talk with me. To access these two groups—men and younger people—I relied heavily on developing networks through participant observation and by spending significant time out in the fields. I could often complete interviews during lunchtime or another break on the field, for instance.

Finally, as I came to recognize the importance of religious change and fragmentation in rural social networks, I made extra effort to include both Catholics and Protestants among my participants. This was actually quite difficult, not only because Protestants remain quite a minority in many rural villages, but also because 1) not everyone would identify their religion and it was a delicate question to ask, 2) because of experiences of marginalization, Protestants often kept a low profile, and 3) Protestants did not always participate in the same social networks and work activities as Catholics (see

Chapter V). While I sometimes was able to come across Protestants using my regular method for accessing research participants, I also accessed others by identifying church leaders and utilizing their networks and connections. Questions of religion in the field sites had to be approached delicately, since there is significant animosity between groups, and, in some instances, could be serious repercussions for openly Protestant community members (see Chapter V). My status as an outsider of indeterminate faith was extremely beneficial in terms of accessing data regarding experiences of different religious groups in the villages; I found that, despite the dangers, once I accessed Protestants they were very interested and relieved to tell me about their experiences.

I complemented these more traditional ethnographic methods with newer approaches emerging from visual sociology, including photo-elicitation and participant photo making. Photo elicitation is a simple variation on traditional open-ended interviewing that uses images to initiate questions and guide discussion (Harper 1994). Participant photo-making takes this one step further by involving research participants who use digital cameras to take photographs (Auyero and Swistun 2007 and Bolton, *et al.* 2001 are two examples of this method). I lent digital cameras to families in each village to take photos of their reciprocity exchanges, and later downloaded these images onto my laptop to use in photo elicitation interviews. These photo elicitation sessions enabled me to triangulate my data and also to think about it in a new way; it gave me access to more work parties than I was able to participate in, but also highlighted some aspects of these interactions that I had overlooked or not taken as seriously. For instance, photo-elicitation interviews drew attention to the importance of non-production activities taking place within work parties—the sharing of food and social interaction I describe in Chapter II. In addition to photo-elicitation and participant photo making, I

also took portraits of research participants and printed copies of these photos to give them as tokens of thanks for their involvement in my study. Finally, simply having my digital camera with me during participant-observation provided an interesting and fruitful addition to my own presence, as research participants would tell me what to take photos of or pose while “doing reciprocity” or other activities that they judged would be helpful for my research. Using these visual sociological methods helped me to gain entry into the community, establish friendly relations with people who became important research participants, and garnered invitations to work parties and other activities (see Medina 1998). It also helped make the research process more collaborative (Harper 1994).

Finally, I supplemented these sources with an analysis of documents, data, and objects that were available locally. These items included materials written or created by scholars, government officials, journalists, development practitioners, and local historians. I used reports and data from health centers and civic registrars, published and unpublished historical texts and oral histories, exhibits and presentations in local museums, libraries or other public buildings, documents from development agencies and NGOs, materials that research participants received in development trainings and workshops, newspaper articles, as well as reports and proposals for municipal works projects. Most of these items are those that I came across during my regular interactions with research participants, and are thus both commonly available and part of local discourses. An example of these resources is the handout entitled “The Andean Cosmovision”, which a research participant received at a training given by a Bolivian development organization on community museums (ASUR nd.). It describes four basic principles of the Andean worldview, including unity, reciprocity, and

community, in order to help local people attract tourism by displays of local culture⁴. These resources helped to clarify some of the data from the interviews as well as provide historical context, but were also effective reminders that local culture, and even the narratives that emerge during interviews, are constructions influenced by many entities.

This bricolage of methods allows me to follow reciprocity as a node around which to explore a series of larger questions about how the global and local are co-constituted. This approach was selected as a means to study the lived experiences of globalization and a way to place local negotiations within the wider systems and processes within which they take place. Furthermore, such qualitative methods have been identified as particularly appropriate for studying indigenous and other marginalized people in Bolivia (Goldstein 2002). Goldstein points to a pervasive “*desconfianza*”—suspicion, fear, and general feeling of unease with fieldworkers—because of the precarious and marginal political and economic situations within which these groups exist. Illegal and informal economic strategies, which are widespread across Bolivia, may lead people to manipulate researchers or respond to questions untruthfully (Goldstein 2002; see also Harris 1995). This is particularly problematic in quantitative and survey research, Goldstein argues, because people are suspicious that enumerators are tax collectors or other government officials and their participation in such research will have negative ramifications for their own livelihoods. Goldstein argues (see also Harris 1995) that qualitative and *in situ* work, in which personal ties and networks are built and utilized, overcomes some of this distrust.

⁴ Development agencies promote tourism as a tool for development in the Andes, encouraging local communities to use cultural patrimony as a mechanism to attract visitors and their money.

In addition, extended interactions and *in situ* research help to avoid being misled by research participants (Goldstein 2002; Isbell 1995; Emerson 2001). Qualitative work, and especially work that dialogically engages research participants to demonstrate that the researcher “knows enough” about the topic at hand (see Isbell 1995), is more likely to see through and get past false claims. Such methods make it difficult to consistently present a false front to the fieldworker over time (Emerson 2001).

I certainly saw the effectiveness of this methodological orientation as I undertook my research. Very frequently in initial interactions with research participant, they attempted to mislead me or feign ignorance on the topics I was asking about. For instance, there was a tendency to either overstate or understate knowledge about and participation in traditional practices like reciprocity. I interviewed people who initially feigned ignorance about reciprocity only to later reveal a deep engagement with reciprocity networks. Similarly, some research participants exaggerated the importance of traditional reciprocity practices and their involvement with them but later revealed that they don’t really participate in them. This tendency is related to histories of oppression against indigenous peoples in the Andes, where practices have long devalued indigenous knowledge and culture and encouraged *metizaje*, or racial and ethnic mixing. This is complicated by a recent revaluation of indigenous culture spurred on by the election of Evo Morales as Bolivia’s first indigenous president. These conflicting processes alternatively led some to disavow involvement or knowledge of what is considered an indigenous practice or to exaggerate involvement in such institutions. However, I was able to elicit more accurate data by following up with appropriate lines of questioning, or asking directly about their involvement in

networks or work parties I had observed or participated in⁵. The open-ended and semi-structured nature of my interviewing strategy, in which I was able to pursue what I suspected were misleading claims or push respondents to clarify and provide specific details, was complimented by the knowledge gained from participant-observation and my extended presence in the community such that I was able to recognize and navigate past these initial claims.

On the other hand, however, how I conducted this work did limit the types of questions I was able to ask and the set of claims I can make based upon the data gathered. The methodological commitment to following reciprocity means that I was limited to the spaces within which *ayni* circulates, particularly as experienced by local villagers. This means, of course, that I was limited to a focus on the practices and realities most pressing to people in their everyday lived experiences, and did end up emphasizing community interactions and networks. However, this pursuit did not confine my analysis to the village sphere—it brought me to the global marketplace and shifting religious institutions, for instance. But, it did circumscribe the types of interactions and relationships that I was able to examine, as well as the types of questions and analyses I was able to pursue.

⁵ This conflicts, of course, with the edict to avoid leading questions in interviews and runs the risk of interview respondents parroting my questions to provide the answers that they think I want to hear. However, as Isbell (1995) notes, because of the dialogical form of knowledge sharing in Quechua society, indicating at least limited knowledge of the topic at hand through appropriate questions, for instance, is a much more effective strategy for this community of research participants. Isbell indicates that the researcher must indicate that she is worthy of the knowledge to be imparted. I was, however, conscientious of this tension and utilized a strategy whereby I asked similar questions in a variety of ways to make sure that I could trust the accuracy of the data. Isbell also suggests that interviewing in pairs or groups may be useful in this regard because the respondents can serve this dialogical function with each other—asking the appropriate questions themselves or forcing a storyteller to expand on a point. I did use this strategy to good effect on a few occasions, but it wasn't always feasible.

For instance, my pursuit of *ayni* as a node around which people experience and integrate their experiences of globalization ended up precluding an examination of the role of the state in village social, political, and economic relationships. This was, of course, not necessarily an expected outcome given the historical utilization of reciprocity as a mechanism for state consolidation and control under the Inca Empire and during the colonial period (see Chapter II). But it does nonetheless tell us something about contemporary forms of state and how people in rural spaces experience them; the people in my study do not strongly identify their interactions with the state as falling under a rubric of reciprocity, and do not identify the state as something that impinges directly upon their cooperative networks and practices. It also tells us something about how *ayni* shifts over time—a theme I explore to a much greater extent in Chapter III. This is not to say that the state fails to play a significant role in how rural people in the Andes experience the various processes of globalization; surely it does. But, the methods I used in this study prevent me from addressing these questions here.

Thus, *how* this research was conducted certainly created both a set of opportunities and limitations that shape the kinds of questions and analyses I am able to pursue in this study. The methodological approach does allow me to situate my work in rural communities but not be constrained to the village level. As noted above, this comes with a series of advantages that enable me to respond to and avoid some of the pitfalls of traditional ethnography. Yet, it also shapes the questions I ask, leaving some potentially important and interesting dynamics—such as the role of the state—unexamined in this work. Such are the limitations of fieldwork.

FIELD SITES

Caata, Bautista Saavedra, La Paz

Perched along the cliffs of the Apolobamba Range of the Andes Mountains, Caata is the most “traditional” of the three villages where I conducted research. It sits at an altitude of roughly 10,500 feet above sea level, under the glacial peaks of Mt.

Akhamani (18,589’) and looks down over mists billowing up from the lush Amazonian cloud forests below. While a dirt road does pass through it, the village was clearly not built for automobiles. A warren of narrow footpaths connects small thatched-roofed adobe homes that are often hidden behind tall mud walls. Up on a hill, the oldest area of town is built around a crumbling stone church and its village green. Down below are two additional levels around which snakes the road through town. In the lowest level, the school, walled by a red brick enclosure, a small cement and rebar clinic (with a tin roof), the village meeting room, and a motley collection of household compounds sit around another plaza. A tiny, dark shop operates intermittently from a family home. From the village, one is treated to a dizzying view down the steep valley to a small ribbon of a creek that tumbles down to the Amazon basin. Above the community, in the frigid high *puna*, llamas and other livestock are pastured, but the sheep—the primary cash crop of the village—are husbanded around the village itself and the paths are all pocked with hoof prints. Around the edges of the village are small garden plots, surrounded by rock enclosures to keep the sheep out, and further out surrounding the village lie the terraced fields that go back to the time of the Inca. Beyond them is an open expanse of scruffy, rocky slopes where the sheep graze during the day. Condors—sacred to Quechua people—soar overhead.

Caata is a village of about 180 families—roughly 870 people total. They make their living through subsistence agriculture, and there is very little opportunity to sell their

products for cash either within or outside the community. They primarily grow local varieties of potatoes and other Andean tubers like *papa lisa* and the Andean sweet potato, wheat, oats, barley, and peas. Families who have access to plots at a lower altitude can grow maize in limited quantities. Some families supplement this with herds of sheep, which they can sell for cash, but not all have the resources for this. The primary source of cash income is migration. Men in most families migrate seasonally down to the sub-tropical *Yungas* region (*yungas* means “warm lands” in the local language) to work harvesting rice and other crops (see Chapter VI).

About 100 miles Northwest of La Paz, Caata is located in the Kallawayaya region, a culturally distinct area known for its shamans, weaving, and adherence to Andean traditions. One of these traditions is related to the communal control over land. In Caata, families have hereditary use rights over plots in eight agricultural areas, known as *qapanas* (see also Spedding and Llanos 1999 for a more detailed description of the *qapana* system in the region). All families rotate their crops through these *qapanas*, which lie fallow for at least four years out of an eight-year cycle. The *qapana* is planted with the same crop, or set of crops, each year, rotating through the principle crops grown in Caata. There is a high degree of social control with regards to the crop rotation; for example, the timing of planting (whether early or late in the season, for example) is determined by shamans and adhered to on all plots, and the type of crop planted is determined by the traditional rotation cycle. Failure to follow these rules leads to sharp censure, and even, as one villager told me, acts of sanctioned vandalism against transgressors. Villagers continue to dress in what is considered traditional garb—the intricate red weaving the village is known for. Men wear ponchos, *ch’ullu* hats, and elaborately woven bags, and many women still wear black roughly woven dresses and bright red shawls. Potable water is available through communal spigots

placed centrally throughout the village, and there is no electricity in Caata.

San Juan, Nor Lipez, Potosi

San Juan de Rosario lies in the semi-desert Lipez region of the southern Bolivian *altiplano* (high plain), a four-hour drive from Uyuni across the Uyuni Salt Flat. It is nestled in between the largest salt flat in the world and the Atacama Desert, the world's driest desert with areas of no recorded rainfall. Lonely groups of vicuñas and llamas nose around the sparse and scruffy *thola* bushes as the wind hurls sand and dust across the seemingly deserted landscape, which is itself interrupted only by outcroppings of volcanic rock and cacti 20 feet tall. At an altitude of over 12,300 feet above sea level, this is a forbidding territory. Nonetheless, San Juan is a community of roughly 120 families—between 500 and 800 people⁶.

Nearby archeological sites attest to the fact that people have inhabited the area and engaged in agriculture for over 6,000 years. This historically involved the subsistence production of potatoes, quinoa, llama meat, and small vegetable gardens, along with hunting and foraging for tubers and other native species. Within recent memory, people in the region would lead trading caravans to the temperate valleys of Tupiza and Tarija in Southern Bolivia to exchange salt, quinoa, and llama meat for corn and other staples. Over the past 50 years, however, the primary economic activities of llama husbandry, potato and quinoa production have been coupled with high levels of

⁶ Accurate population data are difficult to obtain. National population figures reports data for San Juan that includes a nearby settlement, and thus overestimates the population. On the other hand, the local health center is required to enumerate a population survey each year, but this depends on the accurate counting of the center's nurse and is likely an underestimate. Registration with the election officials also underestimates the population, though all Bolivian adults are required to register and vote; I counted a number of research participants who were not listed in the official registry.

out-migration to international destinations (San Juan is closer to the border with Chile than any Bolivian city), the interior of Bolivia, or to nearby mines and work camps⁷. During the 1990s, San Juan turned to tourism as a potential source of revenue. The village lies on a tourist circuit through the Uyuni Salt Flat and south, past the volcanoes, ‘painted’ lakes, and surrealist valleys of the Southwestern tip of Bolivia. With external help, San Juan developed an archaeological site and set up a museum, and eight families built rudimentary hostels. However, tourism declined as tour companies increasingly bypass San Juan in favor of other sites where they have developed their own accommodations. Increasingly, San Juan has shifted to market-oriented production of quinoa, which is now the primary economic activity of the majority of families in the village (see Chapter IV).

In San Juan, land is also held communally with families having stable and hereditary use rights. Although San Juan controls a very large landmass, much of this is not arable and includes salt-flats and barren expanses that turn into a large muddy morass during the rainy season. Families are free to claim whatever lands they think will produce quinoa, and, unlike in Caata, this process is largely unregulated. However, the few areas with reliable access to water (near an ancient well said to have been constructed by the Incas, for instance) the distribution of small plots for cultivating carrots and other vegetables and the use of water are highly regulated. Herds of llamas roam freely over the expanse, and there is an informal and loosely shared responsibility for keeping the camelids off of quinoa fields.

San Juan has attracted quite a bit of development assistance, but has also engaged in

⁷ During the 20th century rail companies employed large groups of men to gather yareta, a highly combustible evergreen perennial that was used to power the trains that transported minerals from Andean mines to ports in Chile.

self-directed modernization projects. Each family has access to potable water through a spigot within the compound though most homes do not have indoor plumbing, and there is a community generator, which (when functioning) generates electricity for two hours a night.

Pocona, Carrasco, Cochabamba

Pocona is both a village and the seat of a larger municipality of the same name. Unlike the other two field sites, Pocona has a central village that is surrounded by a number of smaller communities that all ‘pertain’ to Pocona⁸. The population of this area is just over 1,000, but it is hard to estimate how many people live within the village proper as there is a high degree of “coming and going” and many people in the village keep homes there but live full time elsewhere. Pocona is the political and economic hub of the area.

Pocona sits at the head of the Pocona Valley, a broad, largely flat, fertile area that is known as the bread basket of Cochabamba. At an altitude of 7,000 feet, the climate is much more temperate than either of the other two sites where I completed my fieldwork. It is a crumbling colonial village, and as such has historically been much more integrated into national economic and cultural systems than the other two villages. For instance, the Pocona area was one of the principle zones for the production of food for rapidly growing Cochabamba city during the colonial period (see Larson 1988), and the village is dominated by the formidable Catholic cathedral that sits along the formal plaza in the center of town (see Chapter V). Also around the square is a parish boarding home for girls (who come from the outlying areas to attend

⁸ In this study, I refer to this entire area—both the formal village and the small communities surrounding it—as “Pocona”.

the local school), three small *tiendas*, the electricity company office, and a health clinic. Just a short walk away is the auditorium for community meetings and a demonstration garden run by a local development NGO. The village itself has electricity 24 hours a day, running water, and indoor plumbing, a welcome treat after eight months of fieldwork without such amenities.

However, while Pocona is the most ‘developed’ of the three villages, it also has an oddly deserted feel to it. All three communities are marked by migration, but the village of Pocona is particularly so. The colonial houses are as often shuttered tight as inhabited, and many of the residents are either part time (spending most of their time in Cochabamba city) or are quite elderly and have returned to live out their remaining days in their natal village. Others are short-term residents, living in Pocona on weekdays while serving their term as elected or appointed municipal authorities. Many of the families that live in Pocona permanently are those from the outlying communities who have settled into what they proudly describe as the urban space of the village. Unlike my other two field sites, there is also in-migration from other regions in Bolivia who are drawn to the agricultural potential of the valley. Increasingly, the families in Pocona are all headed by people who weren’t born there, and those that were have largely migrated away. The few exceptions are the aging elites, generally holding more land and often serving as the *transportistas* who, for a fee, truck produce and supplies back and forth between Pocona and the markets in Cochabamba. Overall, Pocona is obviously past its earlier glory days under colonial and republican regimes and the stately architecture decays further every year. But, the larger Pocona area—including both the families within the village and those that reside in the settlements surrounding it—remains an active agricultural zone, taking advantage of the fertile valley and temperate climate.

The Pocona Valley is known for the ruins of Incallaqta, an Inca fortress on the eastern edge of the empire when it was at its pinnacle. However, tourists rarely come to the village of Pocona and, like the other two sites, agriculture is the primary economic activity. With the temperate climate, Poconeños practice agriculture year round, rotating the primary crop, potatoes, with maize and broad beans, which are mostly transported for sale to the regional market in Lope Mendoza or Cochabamba, four hours away. Land is held privately here; it was appropriated from indigenous people during the colonial period and the land reform of 1954 did not recognize Pocona as an indigenous community eligible for communal landholding. Some families own significantly more land than others, while others who live and work primarily in Cochabamba also own and control land locally. These lands are planted under a sharecropping arrangement, whereby the “*capitalista*” provides the land, seed, and fertilizer (either chemical or manure) and the “*compañero*” provides the bulk of the labor and daily management of the fields. The local elites often engage in such sharecropping arrangements as well, for even though they own land and take an active interest in its management they do not work the land themselves. Sharecropping arrangements significantly favor the capitalists, and this, and the system of private land tenure more generally, has led to noteworthy social stratification in the village unmatched in my other two field sites.

STRUCTURE AND KEY ARGUMENTS OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation tells two stories. On one hand, it is the tale of globalization and reciprocity in a specific time and place. It examines how reciprocity institutions among indigenous people in the Andes fare as these people and spaces increasingly interact with structures that operate at a global scale—including capitalist goods and

labor markets, labor migration, Projects of development and modernization, and new religious institutions—and tells a story about how reciprocity shapes and is shaped by local people's dynamic negotiations with these global processes. This is a story of possibility and potential for indigenous culture and local diversity within a global system.

On the other hand, however, this dissertation is a critical examination of the economy itself, and how it functions in people's lives. It calls for a new imagining of the categories and concepts we use to describe it, a rethinking that places people as whole beings—not just disembodied rational actors—at the center of the economy. It recognizes the ways that the economy is as much structured by symbolic and moral considerations as by technical ones—and that, in fact, these considerations are overlapping and mutually constituting. Indeed, this dissertation's story is one in which how we think about the economy has everything to do with how we evaluate and understand local interactions and experiences with globalization.

In the empirical chapters of this dissertation, I take on a series of globalizing flows individually and ask how they interact with reciprocity institutions in three Andean villages. But in order to evaluate the impact of globalization on Andean reciprocity, we must first define and describe the very institutions and practices that are the focus of this dissertation. To that end, Chapter II lays out the historical and social context necessary for a rich understanding of Andean reciprocity and discusses the role of reciprocity practices in contemporary Andean life. I suggest that reciprocity contributes not only to local livelihood construction but also to the ways in which indigenous self-identity is forged and reproduced, the social reproduction of communities, and community development.

In Chapter III, I step out of the Andes to take a look at reciprocity from a theoretical perspective. This chapter elaborates a sociological and grounded theory of reciprocity that frames it as a dynamic social institution that adapts to change but is not engulfed by it. I propose that reciprocity is a multi-dimensional practice motivated by a mix of moral, symbolic and technical considerations, which contribute to its unique position as a socially and ecologically appropriate resource for indigenous peasants in the Andes. Reciprocity both reflects an underlying moral order and is an enacted practice of exchange. Such regular practices engage reciprocity norms, strengthen networks, and otherwise contribute to the social reproduction of reciprocity institutions. This enactment takes place within shifting contexts, such that reciprocity institutions are continually renovated—and thus remain relevant even in the face of deep and far-reaching social change.

After laying out the theoretical foundations for this work, I then turn to an examination of the actual interactions around a series of global flows. In Chapter IV, I examine how integration into markets, and the concurrent process of technological modernization, interacts with reciprocity institutions. This chapter focuses on the experience in San Juan de Rosario, which has only over the past two decades been integrated into global commodities markets as a producer of quinoa. Quinoa is a grain native to the Andean region that is not produced anywhere else in the world, giving peasants in some of the most difficult ecological zones of the Andes a unique opportunity. In San Juan, community members have jumped on the boat, enlisting modern technologies to intensify and expand quinoa production—the only commodity they can produce given the difficult geography of the community. I find that reciprocity institutions provide a resource, one that rural people use to take advantage

of the opportunities that the market provides. Ultimately, the people in San Juan combine the cooperative logic of reciprocity with the competitive logic of the market in what I call a hybrid economy, which not only enables them to better make a living, but also contributes to making life meaningful and just.

Chapter V turns to the Protestant wave that is spreading throughout much of Latin America. Contact with and conversion to evangelical Christianity is creating an unprecedented religious fragmentation in a society deeply shaped by Catholicism. In this chapter, I interrogate how such religious fragmentation is impacting social networks—and reciprocity networks in particular. I suggest that the outcome depends on the shape and nature of these existing networks. In Pocona, for instance, reciprocity activities centralize ritualized and excessive consumption of alcohol. Here, religious differences are shifting reciprocity network, reinforcing the social fissures between evangelical Christians and Catholics. However, in Caata and San Juan, where alcohol is not an important part of labor sharing, reciprocity activities provide a neutral site of civic engagement between Catholics and Christians, reinforcing common moral understandings and aiding in the sought-after recognition of the much maligned Christians. In fact, in Caata Christians are explicitly exploiting reciprocity arrangements to gain trust and build solidarity across religious lines.

Chapter VI turns to migration, which is considerable and deeply shapes rural Bolivian communities. While migrant networks incorporate reciprocity arrangements within migration decisions, in migration destinations, and along the way, most research indicates that migration raises considerable challenges to the maintenance of social networks and cooperative arrangements within sending communities. But based on a series of ethnographic snapshots from all three field sites, I suggest a number of ways

in which migration patterns need not disrupt reciprocity networks, and rather, may contribute to or enliven reciprocity institutions. Reciprocity arrangements are used as a mechanism to deal with some of the challenges that the absence of household members raises. Migration may also provide resources, either ideological or financial, that contribute to the desire and ability of rural people to engage in reciprocal practices. Overall, I suggest in this chapter that the interaction between increasingly global labor markets and reciprocity networks is neither simple nor straightforward; it is a negotiated process within which people creatively respond to shifting demands, opportunities, and challenges.

As is clear from this synopsis of the empirical chapters of this dissertation, one of the overarching themes in this work is that of reciprocity as a cultural “toolkit” (Swidler 1986) that people use to negotiate their interactions with global systems and processes. Such cultural institutions circumscribe the ways in which people understand, experience, and confront globalization through the concrete experiences of their life, whether by producing quinoa for foreign consumers in a global market, participating in new forms of Christianity emanating from North America but increasingly spreading around the world, or through shifting migration patterns within their household. This is even more the case with reciprocity because of its multifaceted nature—it relies upon and reproduces symbolic, moral, and technical ideas that provide not only the mechanisms for constructing livelihoods, but also the content of local orders of meaning and justice. Thus, it is highly relevant in multiple ways, making it a particularly appropriate set of tools within the unique social and ecological context of the Andes. Furthermore, because it embodies and reproduces values of communalism and cooperation, I suggest reciprocity institutions provide a resource that helps indigenous peasants avoid the “tipping point” of proletarianization, allowing

them to interact with global systems and markets as opportunities rather than becoming dependent upon and beholden to the market imperative (see Wood 1999).

A second overarching theme in this dissertation is that of the embedded economy. I suggest that livelihood construction in the rural Andes take place within a moral economy that is profoundly shaped by the ethic of reciprocity. Reciprocity practices are an economic strategy, to be sure, but the empirical evidence makes clear that there is no way to conceptualize them free from the sedimented flows of meaning, ethics, and culture within which they take place. It is precisely these flows and connections that this dissertation seeks to draw out throughout the chapters.

The final and perhaps principal theme of this dissertation has to do with the role of localities in constructing, negotiating, accommodating, and resisting global systems and processes. People use reciprocity institutions to access opportunities and confront the challenges they face as they become increasingly integrated in globalization flows. But as the pages of this dissertation illustrate, Andean people don't just rely on past institutions and practices, but mobilize them in creative ways, ultimately shaping these dynamic institutions to serve the contemporary landscape. While this era of globalization certainly brings unprecedented challenges as well as opportunities, Andean people have been reshaping reciprocity institutions for millennia. It is this creative dynamism that makes reciprocity so fully suitable to the needs and realities of the indigenous peasants I study; and it is the grounding for my optimism for indigenous reciprocity institutions in the future. Ultimately, I suggest that the global and the local interact within a dialectic whereby they mutually contribute to the construction of the other. This dissertation is the story of how that happens in rural Bolivia.

II

AYNI ES LO QUE HACEMOS:

IDEOLOGY AND PRAXIS OF ANDEAN RECIPROCITY

The Andes Mountains are striking; they would take your breath away if you didn't already have difficulty breathing in the thin air of the Bolivian high plain (*altiplano*). The crests of the Cordillera Occidental rise up sharply from the coastal deserts on the west while the Cordillera Oriental emerges abruptly from the tropical rainforest to the east. The altiplano—the flat, high and often dry Andean plateau with an average altitude of over 12,000 feet—sits in between, punctuated by high peaks and fertile valleys. The Andean region includes snow-capped peaks, steep highland valleys, arid plains, lowland tropical forests, transitional forests and valleys, and arid coastal valleys. These extremes of altitude and gradient, of climate and topography, produce in the Andes a highly diverse landscape; the ecology of the region shifts with nearly every step one takes in these mountains.

Scholars of the Andes frequently link this extraordinary landscape to the social organization of Andean communities in both the past and the present. For instance, historian Karen Spalding writes: “The relationships between human groups and their environment in the Andes is basic to any understanding of the patterns of Andean society”(1984:9). This is documented for both the material and spiritual lives of Andean communities, suggesting a close link between livelihood pursuits and religious devotions. Ethnographies of contemporary Andean communities detail how the mountains, the earth, and the “Places”, which are imbued with spirit and agency by Andean people, are unfailingly remembered in the rituals and libations that are part of

the everyday practices of livelihood making (see Allen 2002 and Abercrombie 1998, for instance). Andean people believe that the “mountain gods” and “caretaker hills” observe and interact with humans, nurturing, protecting, or chastising them for their actions. These practices reflect what Vasquez (1998) argues is a pan-Andean cosmology that sees humans as constantly engaged in relationships of reciprocity with the material landscape. In fact, anthropologists suggest that it is precisely the uniqueness and diversity of the landscape from which Andean practices and ideals of reciprocity emerge (Murra 1972; Wachtel 1973; Murra, Wachtel and Ravel 1986).

In this chapter, I outline contemporary practices of reciprocity, placing them both in the unique landscape of the Andes as well as the region’s social history. I begin with a review of the literature on the Andean norms of reciprocity, tracing reciprocity practices back to ancient civilizations, through the Inca Empire, and into contemporary Andean communities. In this review, I focus on the ways that scholars of the Andes have come to take reciprocity as a central thematic for work on indigenous communities and how these ideas have shifted over time while also remaining central to social scientific research in the region. I then focus on the predominant form of reciprocity in Andean villages today, reciprocal labor sharing, and describe how these practices take place within the daily lives of Andean peasants. Finally, I present a set of local narratives and models that villagers use to express and order their understandings of reciprocity norms and strategies. Here, and throughout this dissertation, I suggest that reciprocity practices contribute not only to local livelihood construction but also to the ways in which indigenous self-identity is forged and reproduced, the social reproduction of communities, and community development. In this chapter, I set the stage for the rest of this dissertation by outlining the historical and contemporary importance of reciprocity practices in rural Bolivia, building the

foundation for how to think about how these practices fare in the rapidly changing social context that Andean communities increasingly face.

VERTICAL ZONAL COMPLEMENTARITY IN PREHISPANIC ANDEAN SOCIETIES:

CONNECTING RECIPROCITY TO THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE

By all accounts, until the conquest there was no market system in the Andean region. Yet, like everywhere, groups sought to complement locally available resources and extend their economies beyond what was provided by the ecological niche within which they resided. The social process by which this took place in Andean societies is referred to as *zonal* or *ecological complementarity*, or, in reference to the importance of altitude in determining Andean ecological zones, *verticality* (Stanish 1992). As Stanish notes, verticality models have been applied to nearly every period of human occupation in the Andes and have significantly influenced our understanding of indigenous cultural reality in the region.

The most widespread and influential perspective on verticality is the idea of the vertical archipelago, which was developed by anthropologist John Murra⁹ (1964; 1972; 1975; see also Murra, Wachtel and Revel 1986). While he did not identify or focus on the vertical archipelago at the time, in his dissertation, entitled *The Economic Organization of the Inca State*¹⁰, Murra began to develop his ideas about the

⁹ Murra was born in the Ukraine in 1916 and raised in Romania, but emigrated to the United States at 18 to attend the University of Chicago and soon lost his status as a Romanian citizen. Due to his radical political affiliations—he fought with the Spanish Republican Army from 1937 to 1939—the naturalization process in the United States was slowed and he was unable to travel outside the US to complete his planned dissertation fieldwork in Ecuador (Fajan, et al. 2007; Murra 1980). This led him into the archives, where he completed research on the economic and political structure of the Inca Empire.

¹⁰ Murra defended his dissertation in 1955. It was later published in 1980.

importance of redistribution and reciprocity in the Andean region. In the following decades, these ideas were developed into a regional theory of ecological complementarity, which Murra called the vertical archipelago.

Based on ethnohistorical documents from shortly after the arrival of the Spanish to the region, Murra proposed a model whereby ethnic groups or communities sought to control multiple non-contiguous ecological zones in order to strategically exploit resources from different altitudes (1964; 1972). They did this by dispatching colonists to peripheral settlements, which stood at a distance of two or more days of walking. This led to a “‘sprinkled’ distribution of dispersed settlements belonging to a single polity” or an “archipelago” that grouped together “islands” at different altitudes (Murra, Wachtel and Ravel 1986: 4). Murra first proposed the model in 1964 with evidence from the Lupaqa kingdom of the Lake Titicaca region. He later formally outlined the verticality model and presented supporting evidence from four additional ethnic groups (1972 [1967]). The Lupaqa was a highland ethnic group of at least 20,000 households. This group had its nucleus on the high plateau, at 4,000 feet above sea level. There they grew tubers and herded camelids (llama, alpaca, and vicuña). At a 10-15 days’ walk to the west were colonies providing maize, cotton, and guano. On the eastern side towards the high Amazonian valleys were colonies that provided wood and coca. Another case Murra outlined was that of the Quechua speaking Chupaychu, a smaller community of 2,500-3,000 households that had their mono-ethnic political nucleus at a level of around 3,000 meters, where they produced tubers and maize. From this nucleus, the Chupaychus sent colonists to the high plain, a walk of three days and another 1,000 meters in altitude, where they tended herds of camelids. Colonies at lower altitudes produced cotton, hot pepper, wood, and coca. Murra suggests that these systems involved a relatively closed economic circuit, linking

several tiers through ties of kinship, ethnic identification, and political subordination (Murra, Wachtel and Ravel 1986: 5). While colonies were often in very close proximity to settlements that pertained to other ethnic groups, economic exchange between groups was, Murra argued, extremely limited. The products of the nucleus and the colonies were redistributed throughout the full ethnic group via reciprocity and centralized redistribution schemes, leaving the Chupaychus, the Lupaqas, and many other groups more or less self-sufficient, with barter and trade reduced to a marginal proportion of the exchanges made (Murra 1972; Murra, Wachtel and Ravel 1986).

Murra was profoundly influenced by Karl Polanyi (1957), who proposed reciprocity and redistribution as the key mechanisms by which non-market economies function (see Chapter III). Murra had been increasingly unsatisfied with the primary terms by which non-capitalist economies were described at the time. While early anthropologists of the region identified Inca society as socialist, and Murra himself originally described it as feudalist, having come into contact with Polanyi's work and having read widely on the ethnology of Africa which describes a great diversity of non-capitalist societies, Murra came to view the Andes from a different perspective (1980). But whereas other non-capitalist societies did sometimes utilize reciprocity and redistribution, Murra suggested that this was one of the essential characteristics of Andean societies. He argued that the vertical archipelago system emerged from the unique Andean environment and its great degree of variability at different elevations. He suggested that the existence of significantly different ecological zones in relatively close proximity led to the development of a unique economic system not found anywhere else in the world. Furthermore, Murra argued that while considerable local variation existed, the vertical archipelago was in fact pan-Andean (1972). Finally, Murra suggested that the cases he uncovered through ethnohistorical documents were

not singular cases within the Inca Empire, but rather were late manifestations of an ancient Andean pattern, a suggestion corroborated by archaeological evidence dating back to 500 AD (cited in Spalding 1984).

Murra's verticality model was superlatively influential. Anthropological interest in the Andean region grew rapidly in the 1960s and '70s, and this new group of structuralists sought to identify the essential features characteristic of Andean society, what they described as "*lo andino*". Murra's verticality model connected non-market patterns of reciprocity and redistribution, which were increasingly highlighted in ethnographic research in the area (Alberti and Mayer 1974 and Fonseca 1972 are two early examples of this work), to the landscape itself. Aided by Murra's work, the idea that reciprocity was a fundamental characteristic of the socio-economic organization of Andean society became one of the constituting features of the rapidly expanding field of Andean studies.

Not that Murra's model was unquestioned. Alongside Murra, Maria Rostworowski developed an alternative model of zonal complementarity (1977, 1978). This model is based upon craft specialization and exchange between independent polities—a model that is more consistent with other systems and thus challenges the Andean exceptionalism that Murra proposed (see Stanish 1992). Stanish (1992) uses Rostworowski's work to develop an argument that posits a much more limited role of Murra's verticality system throughout the Andean region, suggesting instead that the vertical archipelago based on reciprocity and redistribution was only significant during periods of regional political disruption or demographic loss. In other times, Stanish argues, exchange between independent groups was the norm. Another critic, Mary Van Buren (1996) looks closely at one of Murra's primary cases, the Lupaqa. She

argues that their colonial verticality arrangements were relatively short-lived and should be “understood as the result of strategic decisions in the context of contemporary socioeconomic conditions rather than as an ecological adaptation rooted in cultural tradition” (1996: 339). These and other critics suggest that the vertical archipelago had a much more limited or short-term role in the Andean political economy. Such evaluations were part of a sustained critique of Andean studies during the period.

As noted, between 1960 and the end of the 80s, there was an upsurge in anthropological interest in the Andean region and Andean Studies as a field began to coalesce. At the time, Andeanists began to question the relationship between indigenous groups and colonial and neo-colonial forces, attributing value to indigenous culture and disputing the longstanding belief that indigenous people would lose their distinct identities and become integrated into national *mestizo* society (Starn 1991; Healy 2001). They saw Andean indigenous culture as a living institution, suggesting that indigenous groups and communities had been able to resist colonization and continue with their traditional ways of life. They argued that *lo andino*—this essence of Andean culture—was unique to the region, intimately connected to the landscape, and a continuation of the socio-economic organization of the past (van Niekerk 2003). Grounded in work like Murra’s, the *lo andino* perspective posited that Andean communities were largely internally homogeneous, marked by a collective spirit and strong traditions, relatively static over time, and minimally influenced by the modernity of Western colonial powers (Zoomer and Salman 2003; van Dam and Salman 2003; van Niekerk 2003). This point of view was very influential, impacting both rural development interventions and indigenous resistance movements in the decades since (van Niekerk 2003; van Dam and Salman 2003;

Healy 2001). But it has also been soundly criticized, and now scholars frequently seek to distance themselves from this perspective.

The problem with the *lo andino* framework was that it tended to exoticize indigenous people in the Andes, framing rural communities and cultures as static, homogenous, and unified. While this perspective challenged dominant ideas and took an explicitly anti-racist stance (Starn 1991), it also reproduced the idea that indigenous culture was intrinsically different from Western and Creole cultures—and the events and tensions that existed within them. By suggesting that indigenous communities were closed off from these influences, anthropologists at the time were unable to recognize the troubles brewing in the Peruvian highlands in the ‘70s and ‘80s. The emergence of the Shining Path and the resultant Civil War in Peru caught most Andeanists completely off-guard because they failed to see the ways in which highland communities are deeply connected to and influenced by events and struggles in cities, *mestizo* communities, and national politics and society (Starn 1991; Rivera 1993). In a famous and damning assessment of Andean Studies, Starn (1991) argues that the commitment to the *lo andino* perspective caused anthropologists to downplay and overlook the interconnections that enabled the Shining Path to operate in the highlands as it did¹¹. That is, the way Andeanists theorized indigenous communities—ideas closely tied to Murra’s model of vertical complementarity— led them to miss some of the most

¹¹ Starn’s and Rivera’s critiques were part of a larger moment of reflection in Andean Studies. For instance, Billie Jean Isbell, author of *To Defend Ourselves: Ecology and Ritual in an Andean Village*, against whom Starn (1991) levels a particularly scathing critique, had already acknowledged that the anthropological perspectives of Andean Studies in the 1970s blinded her from connecting the village she studies with either historical processes or the wider world-system within which it existed, leading to a “somewhat romantic view of Andean continuity” (1985: xiv). This sort of self-reflection was characteristic of anthropology in general at the time (see Marcus 1986; Marcus and Cushman 1982; Clifford 1998; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Abu-Lughod 1991).

important and consequential aspects of the region. In response to this, discourses within Andean Studies have shifted towards an understanding of Andean identity as constructed and plural rather than something endogenous or intrinsic, shaped by the encounter between indigenous communities and others both before and after European colonization (van Dam and Salman 2003; van Niekerk 2003; Abercrombie 1998).

Despite these and other critiques, however, Murra's vertical archipelago model remains the most dominant idea of pre-hispanic socio-economic organization. However, the vertical archipelago has been increasingly taken as a model not simply of prehistoric land tenure and control but also of a continuing and prevailing moral order (see Stanish 1992). Anthropologists and ethnohistorians emphasize reciprocity, one of the key economic and political mechanisms of the vertical archipelago, as a pan-Andean ideal shaping human action and interaction (Fonseca 1972; Vasquez 1998; Stanish 1992). However, in line with discursive moves in Andean Studies and anthropology in general, Andean reciprocity is increasingly seen as a dynamic institution that has shifted in accordance with the changing socio-economic environment.

ANDEAN RECIPROCITY: IDEOLOGY AND PRAXIS

To an extent under the Inca Empire and certainly after the European conquest, the vertical archipelago system of direct colonial control over multiple ecological zones was no longer possible for most Andean communities. However, throughout this period there has been a degree of ideological continuity regarding reciprocity and redistribution ideals. As the Inca Empire expanded, this ethic underpinned the interaction between the Andean people and the Inca state. The Inca used symbolic and material reciprocity—along with a heavy dose of social engineering—to ensure social

control, maintain order, and justify their political reign (Wachtel 1973; Spalding 1984; Larson 1988). The success of the Inca Empire was based on leaving local capacity and social organization relatively intact, but it also extracted labor and tribute from local groups as part of a centralized redistribution system (Mayer 2002; Spalding 1984; Murra 1980). However, in a form of “institutionalized generosity” that was designed to “make the tribute labor appear as if it were part of the mutual obligation of reciprocity”, the Inca state clothed and fed the laborers it utilized (Mayer 2002: 53). This indicates, as Wachtel (1973) argues, there was a high degree of ideological continuity though the mechanisms and practice of reciprocity and redistribution were completely re-formulated—re-utilized in a way that produced a new structure.

Similar expectation regarding a generalized morality of reciprocity and redistribution were significant factors explaining the relatively uncontested extension of Spanish political control over the region. The unfulfilled expectation of reciprocity contributed to the ability of the Spanish conquistadors to subjugate and severely exploit indigenous communities (Spalding 1984). Extraction of labor and tribute were familiar from the earlier empire, though the Spanish did not even uphold the fiction of reciprocation and redistribution. Furthermore, after the Spanish invasion, indigenous authorities lost power and with this centralized redistribution declined in importance (see Stanish 1992). Still, reciprocity remained as a deeply held moral ideal for human behavior and interaction, particularly at the community level.

As Andean Studies began to coalesce in the 1970s and after, norms of reciprocity were taken not only as part of the “common sense” of the Andean world (to use Swidler’s [1986] language) but have also become part of the common sense of Andean Studies as well. Engagement in reciprocity norms and activities is a general assumption that

Andeanists frequently make regarding rural communities. And, the literature certainly does suggest that these are safe assumptions to make: over the past three decades research has continued to emphasize the contemporary importance of reciprocity in both Andean ideology (see Mannheim 1986; Vasquez 1998; Allen 2001; Temple 2003) and praxis¹² (see Morrée 1998; Mayer 2002; Ledezma 2003; Michaux 2003; Wutich 2011). In this work in general, reciprocity norms, networks and practices are associated with solidarity, equality, mutuality and respect, along with a perhaps romantic vision of indigenous communities, though some authors suggest that reciprocity institutions can also support an ethic of redistributive justice or an exploitative social hierarchy (Spedding and Llanos 1999; Sánchez 1982). Still, there are many in Andean Studies who are concerned with the impact of globalization on reciprocity, lamenting that greater interaction between global structures and rural communities has weakened and continues to threaten reciprocity institutions (see Chapters IV-VI for reviews of the literature regarding migration, integration into markets, technological modernization, and religious change). But recent work also suggests that the Andean cultural revitalization that has taken place alongside recent indigenous social movements has sparked new interest in reciprocal institutions both as enacted in rural spaces and as a model for the interaction between migrants and others (Weismantel 2006; Wutich 2011). As a whole, the recent literature suggests that reciprocity remains an important institution in Andean communities, both as an ideological instrument and a structured practice.

The Quechua root word *ayni* is used to denote both the norm of reciprocity and the

¹² In Chapter III, I emphasize the importance of the latter for the former, thus suggesting that the ideology and praxis of reciprocity are mutually constitutive and reinforcing.

actual practice of reciprocal interaction¹³. *Ayni* represents a cosmic relationship of giving and receiving (see Vasquez 1998), and all physical and metaphysical interactions are considered reciprocal. Humans can shape these interactions in their favor by interacting with other people, the land, animals, and deities—even what we would call inanimate objects—in ethically appropriate ways. They engage in reciprocity with the land and landscape, objects, or animals by treating them gently and respectfully, through “payments” small and large—from gifts of song or small objects, to libation of coca or alcohol and animal sacrifices—or by engaging in rituals wherein help, guidance, and fertility are courteously requested. For instance, in Caata one morning during the planting season, I overheard my hostess, Doña Erma, urgently whispering apologies and blessings to a sack of seed potatoes. It wasn’t strictly necessary as there had been a communal blessing at the start of the planting season presided over by community elders (see Chapter V), but Erma was worried about the irreverent treatment that the seeds had received from her husband. Don Feliciano, after carting the seeds about 45 minutes from their home to their terraced field, had simply dumped the sack out of the cart and allowed them to roll down the final ten feet to the field. “They are alive!” Erma exclaimed in dismay, referring more to their spirit than their biological condition: “We have to treat them well. If we don’t, they won’t produce.”¹⁴ This is an example of how *ayni* provides an ethical norm for how people should act within social, material, and spiritual environments, stipulating that these relationships should be based upon respect, mutuality, and equivalence. Many Andean

¹³ Quechua is an agglutinative language, which means that words are made by combining a root with a series of suffixes that modify both the technical significance of the root as well as add subtle indications of meaning. *Ayni* is the root for reciprocity, with suffixes added to indicate the particulars of the practice: *ayniriway* to indicate *doing* ayni, or *ayninakuy* to emphasize the partnership undertaking a reciprocal exchange.

¹⁴ “*Son vivos! Hay que tratarle bien. Sino no produce.*”

rituals reflect this norm, from the everyday offerings to *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) that are spilled from each glass of beer, to the sacrifices of llamas and libations offered to the land, the mountains, and other deities during the sowing of the fields (see Chapter V).

Interaction between humans is also governed by an ethic of reciprocity, and concrete acts of reciprocity are a regular part of livelihood strategies in the Andes. The rules and expectations around reciprocity exchanges between humans are a bit more straightforward: at its most fundamental level, *ayni* involves the prestation of a good or service with the obligation of equivalent return¹⁵. This ideal influences human interaction in a number of settings, from ritualized sharing and hospitality (Allen [2002] details the highly ritualized reciprocal sharing of coca leaves in Sonqo, Peru, for instance), to very pragmatic arrangements for pooling labor in order to undertake agricultural production. In this dissertation, I focus on this last form of reciprocity — what I call reciprocal labor sharing, or mutual aid. But it is important to place such livelihood strategies within the larger ethic of reciprocity that fundamentally shapes social experience in the Andes.

CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES OF RECIPROCAL LABOR SHARING

While *ayni* reflects an ethic of how to be in and engage with the world, the most frequent way that this ethic is enacted in every day practice is through reciprocal labor sharing. People can be “in *ayni*” — a state of reciprocal interaction — with other animate and inanimate objects, but to “do *ayni*” generally refers to the act of engaging in

¹⁵ Equivalence is a judgement call, and may not be the exact same good or service in return. This was the case under the Inca Empire, when the Inca state only symbolically fulfilled their obligation of return (Spalding 1984). Similarly, Sánchez (1982) suggests that reciprocity arrangements within patron-client relationships can lead to systematic exploitation of peasants and consolidation of wealth in the hands of elites.

mutual aid, and reciprocal labor sharing is by far the most common form of reciprocal exchange for people residing in the villages where I completed my fieldwork. When I asked people to define *ayni*, they responded, with surprising agreement across field sites, with the phrase “*tú me ayudas, yo te ayudo*”, or “you help me, I help you”. This help generally takes place in relation to agricultural work; “*ayni* is, first and foremost, working the fields together”¹⁶, one man told me and I heard the same basic idea repeated many times. While *ayni* is essentially a dyadic relationship that can be used to exchange labor for any type of task, when I asked people to tell me about an *ayni* exchange, they would generally describe the familiar pattern of gathering groups of laborers together in work parties. That is, engaging in *ayni* is primarily associated with the work parties that take place throughout the agricultural production cycle¹⁷.

Work parties function somewhat differently in each of the three field sites, depending on the geography, climate, culture, and production needs of each community.

However, there are also some basic common features of work parties across communities. In all of the villages where I completed fieldwork, work parties are used during periods of high labor needs—generally during the beginning and end of the growing season when seeds are planted and the crop is harvested. Work parties range in size, from the smaller groups of 6-10 laborers needed to plant the small terraced fields in Caata, to the somewhat larger groups used to plant potatoes in Pocona (8-12), all the way up to the very large work parties used on the most expansive quinoa fields

¹⁶ “*Ayni es primero hacer junto chakra.*”

¹⁷ Reciprocal labor sharing is not the only type of repayment for labor used during work parties; sometimes people are paid in kind or paid in cash (see below, and in Chapter IV). However, work parties are very closely aligned with reciprocal exchange; the two are often conflated in interviews and the ethic of reciprocity underlies the ways people interact in work parties even if laborers receive a cash wage. This dynamic is discussed at length in Chapter IV.

in San Juan, which can require 70-100 laborers. Furthermore, there is a great degree of variability in the size of work parties even within communities, depending on the amount of land being planted.

One commonality regarding the work parties in all three field sites is the importance of providing food and refreshments to the laborers during the day of work. When laborers are on the fields, the hosts are expected to provide both coca leaves to chew¹⁸ as well as at least a hot mid-day meal. The expectation to provide food for laborers is constant across rural Bolivia, and extends even to the contracting of casual labor in urban settings as well. But, there is also a wide degree of variability in terms of the quality and quantity of refreshments provided. In Caata, for instance, coca is offered in the morning and the afternoon, as is a hearty midday meal (generally hot potato soup). In Pocona, on the other hand, coca and a midday meal are provided alongside an ample supply of *chicha*, a fermented alcoholic beverage made locally from maize (see Chapter V for more on *chicha* in Pocona). In San Juan, on the other hand, laborers receive meals and refreshments for the entire day, from the morning meal through supper (described below). That these refreshments are such an important part of work parties indicates that labor pooling is more than just about the completion of production needs (see below, and also Chapters IV and V). Throughout this dissertation, I argue that *ayni* serves a larger role beyond its technical function in agricultural production.

The observations I made during the first work party I participated in provided the

¹⁸ The telltale bulge of a ball of coca in the cheek of campesinos is a nearly ubiquitous sight in rural highland Bolivia, especially on the fields. Coca is a mild stimulant, thought to make those who partake of it stronger and faster workers. Both men and women chew coca, though some but far from all Protestants abstain (see Chapter VI for a discussion).

initial indication of the wider social significance of *ayni* interactions. Don Emiliano and Doña Elastina were the first to invite me to a work party. They live in San Juan and Doña Elastina remembered me from when I had lived in the village years earlier as a volunteer with the United States Peace Corps. They had agreed to become participants in my photo-making experiment—to take photos of their *ayni* exchanges and to discuss these images after the fact. But when I came by to drop off the camera they suggested I come to see the interactions for myself. I arrived the next morning at 8am, unsure of what to expect and a bit nervous about my first day on the fields. When I stepped into their front hall, a room with whitewashed walls, a cement floor, and sacks of quinoa stacked along one side, I came across two men curled over steaming bowls of soup. Doña Elastina saw me through the doorway to the other room (where I caught glimpse of an enormous cauldron bubbling over a fire) and bustled out with a bowl of soup and a large roll, asking if I wanted tea or coffee. I ate my potato and quinoa soup and drank my overly sweetened tea as I watched others arrive, settle onto benches around the large table, or balance their soup on sacks of quinoa. People chatted and joked—with me in Spanish and about me in Quechua—and discussed the previous night's town hall meeting wherein an agreement was made about the length of the work day for such work parties. Elastina brought out endless bowls of soup and cups of tea. It was getting crowded, and in order to avoid eating yet more soup, I excused myself to stand outside and watch the preparations. By then, a rusty, rumbling truck had arrived, looking like it had seen better days perhaps in the 1960s. Emiliano was busy loading it with large barrels of water (there is no water out on the fields so you must bring enough for all your needs, including the drinking water for the entire work party), seeds, tools, and the bundles of food that Elastina would prepare and serve on the field. While Emiliano and Elastina were bustling around, everyone else was calmly arriving, eating, chatting and gathering outside.

It was nearly 9am by the time the back of the truck was all loaded, including with all the workers. There were about 30 of us, with a few children bouncing around for good measure. As the creaking truck rumbled out of town we passed a local *campesino* on the road who made an exaggerated gesture of tapping on his watch and shaking his finger in jest as many in the truck laughed—a reference to the agreement from the town meeting which stipulated that work parties be on the fields by 9am. The ride out to the field was a jostling affair, half an hour over a dusty road. Emiliano and a few others rode ahead on their motorcycles while in the back of the truck, where there was standing room only, we held on and squinted against the sun and wind as the truck groaned over the rolling hills. It was a festive atmosphere, with people laughing and chatting, handing children back and forth—and even holding one small boy over the side to urinate when the truck stalled going up a small hill.

When we arrived at the field, a spot so dry and barren seeming that I could hardly believe anything could grow there, we disembarked from the truck and, once again, everyone settled down to wait. Elastina brought around handfuls of coca, with hard candies for those who chose not to chew coca. She and Emiliano readied the *q'owa*, offerings to Pachamama and other gods asking for their blessings, good weather, and fertile soil, and once the fire was lit and the cases of beer laid out, most of the workers joined the ceremony (see Chapter V). After a brief ceremony, the group moved off to the far corner of the field, which was about one hectare large. I was provided with a small hand tool and a young woman, Beatriz, took me under her wing and showed me how to plant quinoa (see Chapter IV). We worked until around noon while Elastina and a few helpers prepared lunch in huge pots over fire pits dug into the sandy soil. For lunch, we were served large plates of grilled llama meat, potatoes, rice and

salad—the most elaborate and tasty meal I ever had in San Juan—and after eating everyone rested, chewing coca, or went off to gather herbs or the small shrubs that they use as firewood. After a few more hours of work, we took an afternoon break, where we were served *pito*, a quinoa flour that they mix with water to make a drink or to form into tight balls for a snack. After a few more hours of work—they worked past 5pm trying to get the field finished up, though they didn’t quite manage and Emiliano told me he would have to come back the next day to finish the planting alone—the truck was loaded up again. Although the food had all been eaten, and the water mostly used up, the truck was weighed down with bundles of firewood and an exhausted, dirty group of workers.

Though the work on the field was completed, a few important aspects of the work exchange remained even after the workers scattered back to their own houses as soon as we arrived in the village. They returned to Emiliano and Elastina’s house again an hour or so later—after they had washed the dirt from hair and faces and changed their dusty clothes. Once there, they were served large servings of soup and noodles—most had brought their own pots or large bowls for just this purpose—which they each took back to their own homes to eat with their families. Also in the evening after a work party, the terms of the exchange were stipulated. Each worker told Emiliano his or her preference for repayment: *ayni*, cash, or, in some instances, payment in-kind¹⁹.

Emiliano carefully recorded what each person was owed in a tattered notebook.

¹⁹ In-kind payment, or *mink’a* (see below and Chapter V), was a usual form of repayment particularly during the harvest season and in some other circumstances. For instance, in-kind payment was often made in Caata, and was particularly requested by families who lacked enough resources even to engage in work parties. A few families do not have access to enough land to grow their own food, or do not have the other resources (familial labor, stores of food to provide for refreshments during work parties, or ability to invest in seeds or fertilizer, for instance).

I came home that evening sore, grimy, and utterly exhausted, my hands red and blistered. But I was struck by the convivial atmosphere on the field, in the truck, and during the meals. They had made a game of the work, competing to see who could plant the fastest. They laughed uproariously at a group of women who were racing with the men, trying to show them up. Small groups worked side-by-side, gossiping. Young children ran underfoot, minded and entertained by the entire group. They worked hard, but also relaxed during breaks and enjoyed the ample refreshments they were offered. Throughout my fieldwork, on small neatly terraced fields in Caata and in the flat Pocona valley, I saw such work parties laboring, eating, and relaxing together, building relationships and deepening bonds²⁰. I also noted the informal discussions and jokes about the town meeting, indicating that work parties provide a space for civic engagement and interaction (see Tolbert *et al.* 1998).

Ayni is, first and foremost, a matter of completing agricultural work together, but as I argue throughout this dissertation, “working together” is about more than just completing production tasks. The provision of food and coca for workers is so closely associated with such work parties (and *ayni*) that accounts of “working together” almost always included descriptions of the food, drink, and other refreshments one could anticipate receiving on the field. Across all three villages the provision of food and refreshments was an integral part of the work party. These non-production practices are inseparable from the labor exchange, and they exemplify the ways in which reciprocity institutions involve motivations and considerations beyond the

²⁰ This point was first brought home in the photo-elicitation interview that I completed with Emiliano and Elastina after the workday. Often when I asked them to describe what was going on in the photos they would emphasize first the talk, laughter, and playfulness rather than the technical work people were also doing in the photos.

technical, or rational. The provision of food is of symbolic and moral importance as well (this perspective is developed in Chapter III). For instance, in one interview a woman suggested that food provision during work parties involves a bit of competition, with each host trying to outdo the last—and that community members notice and make judgements about food provided. One family, my informant reported with disdain, even provided fresh fruit in an opulent gesture of social position. This suggests that the quality and quantity of food provided during work parties reflects a family's status in the community. The provision of food during work parties also reflects the morality of reciprocity. Gregorio Condori Mamani, a Quechua Indian living in Cuzco who is well-known for his testimonial life story published in both English and Spanish, spoke about *ayni* exchanges this way: “When you swap *ayni* favors, you have to put your heart into it, and when they come to help you, you have got to treat them right” (Valderrama *et al.* 1996: 44; quoted in Mayer 2002: 138). In *ayni* exchanges, all workers put in their best effort—the same that they would for their own fields. They are rewarded with the best refreshments the host can provide. This demonstrates that the motivations and considerations surrounding *ayni* exchanges include but go beyond their strictly economic functions, and that these various concerns overlap and are inseparable.

OTHER COOPERATIVE FORMS

Reciprocal labor exchange is not the only cooperative and non-monetary form of accessing labor in rural Bolivia. There are a number of informal mechanisms for sustaining livelihoods and engaging in inter-household exchange. These include regular acts of “helping out” (*ayuda*) between kin and fictive kin groups, a type of generalized reciprocity where interactions are not recorded or close equivalences kept (see Rivera 2003 for a more complete description). Barter, or *trueque*, is also common

between households. *Mink'a* is another frequently used form of labor exchange, in which payment for labor is made in kind and is not tied to market prices or rules. This form of exchange is discussed at length in Chapter IV (see also Chapter VI). While the main focus in this dissertation is on reciprocity, and *ayni* in particular, these other forms of cooperative interaction and exchange crop up throughout the chapters and are highly relevant to the discussion of reciprocity institutions. This is because these cooperative forms of exchange are based not upon an individual or maximization rationality, but rather upon the morality of reciprocity. Thus, in addition to strictly reciprocal exchange, these cooperative and non-monetary forms of exchange are further sites where the norms of reciprocity are enacted and negotiated. While I focus on *ayni* exchanges in the chapters that follow, I often include other cooperative forms (particularly *mink'a*, see Chapter IV) since they are part of the stories I heard from local voices and because they similarly operationalize and reproduce the underlying norms of reciprocity as well.

LOCAL NARRATIVES

In the remaining section of this chapter, I turn to the local understanding of the significance and function of *ayni* exchanges. Throughout this dissertation I privilege local models and explanations for reciprocity activity and institutions. These models are the narratives that local people tell, how they explain, structure, justify and make sense of their own behavior (Gudeman 1986; 2008). These explanations are not always fully consistent—Gudeman reminds us that local models are heterogeneous, a mix of voices, tropes, images, and ways of doing (2008:17—but throughout my fieldwork a coherent set of narratives around reciprocity emerged that point to diverse motivations underlying reciprocity activities. We will see these narratives surface again and again through the chapters of this dissertation, but it is worthwhile to

introduce the most frequent of them here. Taken together, they demonstrate a wide range of considerations that go into livelihood construction in rural Bolivia, and indicate that reciprocal labor sharing is multifunctional, uniquely appropriate for the local social reality, and carries a great degree of meaning beyond its function within production. In Chapter III I develop a theoretical framework with which to think through the interaction between global social change and local reciprocity institutions, but here I provide a descriptive outline of these principal narratives and suggest that local people view *ayni* as an institution and a practice of great importance for indigenous and rural identity, community cohesion, and community development.

Ayni: lo que hacemos—reciprocity as indigenous custom

I generally began my interactions with research participants by introducing myself and explaining that I was doing a research project on *ayni*. As I began each interview, it was often clear that *ayni* was not something people frequently thought about; it was generally described simply as “what we do,” “our custom,” or “the manner of life around here”²¹. Thus, this ‘narrative’ is less a description of motivation than a reflection of the unselfconscious “common sense” (Swidler 1986) of local people. It indicates that *ayni* is a cultural institution deeply implicated in the self and community identity of Andean people, a matter of who they are and what they do. I suggest that this is one of the ways in which rural people self identify as indigenous.

This is a highly sensitive issue, as the language of indigeneity (“*Indio*” and “*nativo*”, for instance) has been used since colonial time to indicate a social and intellectual status far below the creole, mestizo, and urban elites. The term “*indio*”, and the historical meaning it implies, is so contentious that many rural people continue to see

²¹ “*Lo que hacemos*”, “*nuestra costumbre*”, and “*nuestra manera de vivir*”.

it as a deeply offensive racial slur (Morató 1998; see also Postero 2007). Instead, since at least the middle of the 20th century and in line with the increasing influence of Marxist political thought at the time, Andean people more frequently simply identify themselves as “*campesinos*”. This term is generally translated as peasant but reflects more than anything a connection to the land and residence in rural areas. Still, in Quechua, the term that rural Andean people use to describe themselves is “*runa*”, originally simply meaning “person” but used post-conquest to indicate the indigenous people of the region. This suggests a definite understanding of ethnic difference, with boundaries drawn between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. Linguists suggest that one of the principal means by which Quechua speakers differentiate between *runa* and others is through engagement with *ayni*: *runa* are bound by the morality, networks, and practices of *ayni*, whereas others are not (see Mannheim 1986). That is, *ayni* institutions contribute to indigenous self-identification among Andean people despite that they do not do this in the terms familiar to outside observers.

Despite this contentious history with the category “indigenous”, over the past few decades social and intellectual movements have increasingly used ethnicity as a node around which to organize and make claims. While the Aymara Katarista movement of the 1970s and ‘80s raised the profile of indigenous concerns enough to prompt the highly regarded Bolivian social scientist Xavier Albo to claim the “Return of the Indian” (1991), it is only more recently, with the success of social movements against neoliberal structural adjustment and US influence in Bolivia, that a widespread shift has taken place. With these movements has come a revalorization of rural and indigenous communities, social organization, and practices (Weismantel 2006; Wutich 2011). With this new appreciation, indigenous social movements in Bolivia have used reciprocity in often essentializing but highly productive discourses and claims-making

against hegemonic economic forms and processes (see Dieterich 2005; Fabricant 2010). Evo Morales, the first indigenous president of Bolivia and social movement leader, has increasingly taken on the term “*indio*” to describe himself and others, for instance. This new appreciation has begun to filter down to indigenous communities, where the self-identification with the terms we link to indigeneity is becoming less resisted. While those I interviewed remained uncomfortable with the designation “*indio*”, “*indigena*” has become less objectionable and other words to express indigeneity, like “*originario*” (translated as original descendent) or “*costumbre*” (custom) increasingly are used by people in rural Bolivia to describe themselves or their activities.

These shifts have contributed to a revalorization of indigenous practices like *ayni* in both rural and urban settings (Weismantel 2006; Fabricant 2010; Wutich 2011). However, while *ayni* and related practices have been heralded by well-known native leaders and social movements as indigenous models for sustainable, anti-colonial economic forms (see Dieterich 2006; Fabricant 2010), beyond expressing a degree of social habitus, indigenous custom was not generally framed as a motivation for engaging in *ayni* among the participants of my research. In response to my questions about why people engage in *ayni* and its advantages relative to other forms of exchange, people replied with startling similarity: it’s about money, risk, and communality.

“*Falta de economía*”—the cash constraint motivation

One of the first reasons that *campesinos* gave me for engaging in *ayni* was that they lack the economic resources needed to pay laborers. For many of them, their lives remain largely oriented toward subsistence and many household consumption goods

are produced within the family. But this is not the case for everyone, and many families are highly dependent upon the market for consumption and production needs. Still, paying cash wages can be a significant burden even when, as in the case of many in San Juan discussed in Chapter V, households do have the resources. Yet, this is a complicated assertion; the very poorest families and individuals do not engage in *ayni*. They either do not have sufficient excess labor or do not possess enough land to need additional labor. Furthermore, the costs associated with providing the required food and refreshments can be prohibitive or injurious for some, as I explore in Chapters V and VI (see also Mayer 2002). Nonetheless, the “lack of cash” explanation does match the literature’s framing of the Andean economy as non-monetary (Ledezma Rivera 2003; de Morrée 1998), and indicates a technical constraint that inhibits greater reliance on market mechanisms for accessing labor.

“*Ayni es mas seguro*”—the risk minimization motivation

Nearly every person I talked to expressed that “*ayni* is more certain”; using *ayni* to access labor reduces the risk of not having enough labor during labor-intensive activities. This phrase was repeated so frequently in interviews, with surprising uniformity in all three communities, that it is undoubtedly an explicit local narrative around reciprocity. This discourse reflects a severe shortage of labor in rural areas in combination with high labor demand during certain periods within the agricultural cycle. Attracting workers for labor-intensive periods in the production cycle is a significant concern for most households, which is exacerbated by seasonal and long-term migration patterns (see Chapters IV and V). The going cash wage of around \$2.50 per day is frequently not enough to lure farmers away from the work they have to complete on their own field. Historically labor needs were either lower or were taken care of within the household, and now kinship and fictive kinship relationships

are instrumental in assembling the needed labor. In Pocona, for instance, elites can mobilize labor through *compadrazco* ties, the god-parentage relationships that tie households together though which tend to favor elites (see Chapter VI). They can also pay a premium wage to attract labor. But many people use *ayni* to guarantee labor because it rests upon very strong underlying norms of ethical behavior. *Ayni* is more *seguro* because of the shared Andean morality of reciprocity.

Both of these narratives reflect technical concerns that impinge on the practicality of market solutions. However, whereas lack of cash to pay workers is principally a technical issue overcome by reciprocal labor sharing, the technical problem relating to the risk of unmet labor demand is solved by reciprocity arrangements because of the strong moral understanding that underpins *ayni*. Thus, we can see that the considerations underpinning reciprocity institutions are overlapping and mutually constituting.

“*Solo no se cumple nada*”—the social motivation

Finally, a common sentiment that people expressed about *ayni* is the idea that we “can’t accomplish anything alone”. This narrative highlights the deeply social nature of reciprocal labor exchange. On one hand, this idea expresses social interaction as a mechanism to “lighten” the grueling effort that goes into agricultural work. While working in a group, one *campesino* told me, “We are conversing about this and that, we’re not always solitary. Alone in my field, I don’t have anyone to talk to, nothing. Meanwhile, among many there is happiness. We are laughing, chatting about something, there’s always some news”²². Working with others makes the work more

²² “*Estamos conversando cualquier otra cosa, no siempre estamos solitarios. Solo en mi chakra no tengo con quien conversar, nada. Mientras en harto, hay alegría. Estamos riendo, conversando algo, algún noticia hay.*”

bearable, allowing the time to pass more quickly, and speeds the work through friendly competition.

On the other hand, however, this narrative reflects an understanding about the wider community benefit from a regular practice of shared work. One middle-aged farmer from San Juan told me, “In the community, we practice working with *ayni*. All for one, one for all. The labor of cooperation. All for one, one for all. That is what *ayni* is”²³. When I asked what the benefits of such practice are, while most farmers noted that it allowed the agricultural work to be completed, others also responded that it contributed to the maintenance of “communal well-being” and “unity”, which are considered as very important for progress and development²⁴. For instance, one elderly woman in San Juan declared “If only we could be more united. Oooh, we’d really make some progress”²⁵. Building unity, according to those I interviewed, involves coming together in shared experiences, and *ayni* is considered a form of unity. “*Ayni es unidad*”, they say, or “*se unirse en ayni*” (“we unite in *ayni*”). This is a common theme explored in anthropological work in the region, which suggests that Andean communities are united through links of reciprocity as Andean people commit to mutual aid in daily tasks (ASUR nd.). And this community level solidarity facilitates joint projects, for both social and individual benefit. As one woman from Caata expressed “Alone, we aren’t worth anything. And none of us can do anything alone. We have to come together to be able to do [anything]”²⁶. Thus, as this theme indicates,

²³ “*En la comunidad se practica esos trabajos de ayni. Todos para uno, uno para todos. El labor de cooperatismo. Todos para uno, uno para todos. Esa seria en ayni.*”

²⁴ Unity was considered an important goal in San Juan in particular, but also in Caata. It appeared less motivating for those I interviewed in Pocona.

²⁵ “*Si podemos estar mas unidos, puche, progresaremos!*”

²⁶ “*Solo nadie nos vale nada. Tampoco no vamos hacer solo nada. Tenemos que reunirnos para hacer.*”

there is a local recognition of reciprocity activities as a mechanism to forge stronger relationships, which contributes to the development and progress of the community.

These local narratives resurface throughout this dissertation, and taken together they point to the complex considerations underpinning reciprocity institutions and practices in highland Bolivia. They demonstrate the various considerations that go into reciprocity decisions, and also point to the multiple functions reciprocity serves. While reciprocal labor sharing is perhaps foremost a mechanism to gather resources for agricultural production, and thus is most frequently interpreted as an economic or technical concept (Spedding and Llanos 1999), a more inclusive look at reciprocity institutions in the Andes reveals its overlapping symbolic and moral characteristics. Qualitative research methods that preference local narratives lay this complexity in plain relief. A holistic approach is necessary to capture and appreciate the dynamism and diversity that make up contemporary reciprocity institutions in highland Bolivia.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have sought to lay the foundation for the rest of the dissertation by providing the social and historical context within which contemporary negotiation around reciprocity practices are undertaken. Scholars of the region have long considered reciprocity institutions as of utmost importance to understanding the social reality of Andean peoples. As this chapter makes clear, *ayni* is a longstanding institution that serves many functions in Andean society. Thus, it must be examined as a social institution rather than simply an economic practices—though it certainly is the latter as well. Reciprocity is fully embedded in the Andean society; it is both a product of the indigenous visions of the world, but also contributes to reproducing them. Yet, also, we see that reciprocity ideals and practices have shifted over time, serving

different functions within different contexts. The literature and empirical evidence rehearsed in this chapter demonstrates that a simplistic notion of reciprocity will not be helpful in any examination of the negotiations around and possibilities for reciprocity and cooperative behaviors in the contemporary social landscape.

As I argue throughout this dissertation, *ayni* is a site for the social reproduction of communities. While it is first and foremost a mechanism to gather labor for agricultural production, I discovered that in the process of completing work collectively *ayni* clearly provides a space for the construction and maintenance of social relationships and common understandings. It is an institution of civic engagement (see Tolbert *et al.* 1998), which undergirds a collective sense of unity, contributes to indigenous and rural identity formation and maintenance, and influences community development trajectories. It does this precisely at the same time as allowing for the physical reproduction of the members of the community by contributing to their ability to undertake and expand agricultural production. These ideas are taken up formally in the following chapter, which focuses on developing a general, sociological understanding of reciprocity institutions and how they fit into the contemporary global economy.

III

TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEMPORARY RECIPROCITY INSTITUTIONS

As was made clear in the previous chapter, Andean reciprocity is both a material practice utilized in livelihood construction and an overarching ethical understanding regarding how we should behave in the world. We see from local narratives that *ayni* is motivated by multiple considerations, serves many different functions, and contributes to a range of outcomes. In this chapter, I take a step back from these specific narratives and practices to place Andean reciprocity in a larger theoretical context. I seek to develop a sociological understanding of contemporary reciprocity institutions that will ultimately help me think about how reciprocity fits into global processes of social change. The overarching question of this dissertation has to do with the role that reciprocity institutions play in Andean villages that are increasingly interacting with global systems and processes. But in order to get to that, we must first develop a general understanding of what motivates reciprocity activity and how reciprocity institutions are reproduced over time. Once we know more about these institutions, we can use that understanding to build an analysis of their contemporary and potential significance. Are contemporary reciprocity norms, networks, and practices a vestige of a doomed tradition, or are they vibrant social institutions that contribute to how local people experience and navigate the world around them? How do such cooperative and communal practices fit into an increasingly individualistic and capitalistic world? These questions are examined in the remaining chapters of this dissertation, but the answers depend, fundamentally, on how reciprocity is framed theoretically. This is the task of the current chapter.

In its concrete form, reciprocity has been the object of much study throughout the social sciences over the past century. As is reviewed in greater detail below, there is a long history of thinking about reciprocity activity, its motivations and the implications of these motivations. This literature has coalesced around two competing points of view. On one hand are those that frame reciprocity as, above all, an economic activity. By this they mean that reciprocity is a rational strategy employed by individuals to maximize their own self-interests. This point of view emphasizes that reciprocity is simply another form of exchange through which individuals access and accumulate objects or services. On the other hand are those that frame reciprocity as a primarily symbolic activity. They suggest that the things or services exchanged are much less important than the social meaning surrounding this exchange. Ultimately, much of this literature comes down to the question of whether reciprocity should be seen as an economic or symbolic practice.

While this literature has elaborated on many of the technical and symbolic facets of reciprocal interactions, in this chapter I suggest that this is not sufficient in order to evaluate the impact of globalization on reciprocity because it 1) ignores the *ethic* of reciprocity as a motivating factor, and 2) reproduces assumptions that segregate the economy from society and reduce economic action to calculative and self-interested maximization. Furthermore, 3) these existing theories pay little attention to reciprocity as a dynamic institution capable of transformation—an error exposed by empirical observations of reciprocity practices in the Andes. These tendencies lead to an impoverished view of reciprocity, and ultimately constrain our ability to construct a suitable model for evaluating reciprocity institutions in a changing world.

In this chapter, I offer a theoretical framework that sees reciprocity as a dynamic cultural resource motivated by and responding to diverse considerations. After a brief outline of the major features of this theoretical perspective, I review the trends in social scientific work on reciprocity, mutual aid, and gift-giving over the past century. I find that the existing theories fail to provide a suitable basis for answering my key questions, and that in order to rethink reciprocity we need to rethink the economy itself. I suggest “moral economy” as a useful way of conceptualizing rural economies. Doing so allows me to ground the choices people make about reciprocity in both the changing global environment as well as particular and embodied histories. I suggest that reciprocity institutions are not only constantly reconstructed in response to global pressures, but that they also provide people with a mechanism by which they are able to negotiate their experience of globalization more on their own terms. Finally, I conclude with three key theoretical propositions and a related set of questions that I seek to systematically examine in the remainder of this dissertation.

RECIPROCITY AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

In this section I outline a model that 1) highlights reciprocity as a multi-dimensional practice that is motivated by a mix of (often overlapping) moral, symbolic and technical reasonings, and 2) frames reciprocity as a dynamic social institution that adapts to change but is not engulfed by it. In his classic work on *The Gift*, Marcel Mauss (1990 [1950]) prompts us to think of reciprocity activity in non-market societies as economic exchange. Indeed, the forms of reciprocity that I study in this dissertation are important parts of livelihood construction for indigenous people in rural Bolivia. Like any exchange, however, reciprocal gift giving is an objectification of social interaction (Simmel 1996; Schwartz 1996). That is, reciprocity is fundamentally a human and social relation. As such, it is an economic institution that

does not merely exist, but must be activated and enacted by humans in order to persist.

To develop these ideas, I take an approach borrowed from feminist political economy, which uses social reproduction to emphasize that institutions and relationships emerge through the material social practice of people (Mitchell *et al.* 2003: 425; Bakker and Gill 2003; Bakker and Silvey 2008). Social reproduction refers to the reproduction of labor power as well as biological reproduction, but it also involves institutions, processes and relationships associated with the creation and maintenance of communities (Bakker and Gill 2003: 17). The social reproduction approach is distinguished by its focus on mundane practices that enable our very existence—what Katz (2001:711) calls “the fleshy, messy, and indeterminate stuff of everyday life”—and the relationships and processes that are exercised as people piece together a livelihood. This allows feminists to make visible the often-devalued work that enables human survival, and the women and other disenfranchised people who do it (Mitchell *et al.* 2003). It also exposes that all social institutions, but especially those that we work with, through, and around on a regular basis as we make a living, are created and maintained through our regular engagement with them.

If reciprocity institutions rest on social relationships that are themselves constituted in everyday practices of living, then we must acknowledge the potential for change. Social relations are transitory, and are continually transformed through human activity (Bakker and Gill 2003). Thus, reciprocity institutions are inevitably “unfixed” (Massey 2000) because the social relations that produce them are themselves dynamic and changing. This process takes place within a particular historical and geographic context, and human interventions are shaped by the *habitus* of specific places as well as the surrounding socio-economic and political orders (Bakker and Silvey 2008:3;

Mitchell *et al.* 2003; Bourdieu 1977). The material practices people engage in as they go about making a living and the relationships they constitute within this process thus respond to pressures and shifts from above and below (Bakker and Gill 2003). Thus, we see how the shifting practices of reciprocity in the Andes both reproduce and shape reciprocity ideals.

Extending ideas of social reproduction to reciprocity in this way does a double duty. On the one hand, recognizing that reciprocity institutions must be enacted in order to be reproduced allows us to see the ways in which the concrete practices and the moral order of reciprocity are co-constituted and mutually productive. This means, of course, that we ought to think about reciprocity as a dynamic institution as its enactment in practice takes place within a changing social and environmental context. This gives us a way to think about reciprocity as a dynamic institution shaped by many influences and enables us theorize reciprocity as a changing institution.

On the other hand, however, applying a social reproduction framework to reciprocity also helps to avoid reproducing reciprocity as a local “tradition” of the past in contrast to a globalized modernity. As noted in Chapter I, such a dichotomy is rooted in discourses that justify and legitimize colonial and neo-colonial practices (Gupta 1998), ultimately reproducing ideas about the local as static, closed and resistant to change. A social reproduction approach allows us, instead, to see the ways that indigenous culture and global processes are mutually constitutive (cf. Mignolo 2005, 2001; Tsing 2005).

But, what motivates reciprocity practices? This is precisely the subject of competing claims made by social scientists of the 20th century, who argue over whether

reciprocity is motivated by self-interest or symbolic concerns like identity, status, and recognition (see below). In this chapter, I suggest, rather, that reciprocity practices reflect negotiations that people make between three forms of reasoning: technical, symbolic, and moral. The technical aspect of reciprocity reflects the use of reciprocity in making a living. It refers to reciprocity as a technical strategy of livelihood construction. The symbolic aspect of reciprocity reflects its role in shaping social and individual identity and constructing the shared meaning upon which that identity is based. Finally, the moral aspect of reciprocity is related to ideas of justice and legitimacy. These three aspects are overlapping, and while they may intersect in messy or contradictory ways, they cannot be separated analytically. As Bebbington (2000: 498) writes: “Making a living, making life meaningful, and struggling for the rights and possibilities of doing both are all related”.

This model avoids the economy-as-rationality assumptions that are either implicit or explicit in the earlier literature, recognizes reciprocity as multi-faceted and multifunctional, and helps us to see reciprocity—and indeed the economy in general—as a socially embedded and embodied institution (Polanyi 2001; Elyachar 2005).

Framing reciprocity in this way, as a highly dynamic social institution in which technical, symbolic and moral values are mutually constituted, has important consequences for how we think about the persistence of traditional practices or indigenous ways of being. Reciprocity is a lived tradition, one that responds to the needs, challenges, and realities of the people and places where it is undertaken. It is not sclerotic, not unresponsive or rigid. Quite the opposite. As was outlined in Chapter II, reciprocity has remained an important practice in the Andes over thousands of years—years that were marked by significant upheaval and change: shifting empires, landscapes, and economic systems. Contemporary experiences of economic and

cultural globalization provide a new challenge, and is certainly unique in terms of its scope and scale, but external influence is not unprecedented in an Andes that was always already interconnected (to use Gupta and Ferguson's [2002] language). While the ability and tendency to engage in reciprocity is often highlighted as one of the defining characteristics of Andean culture, reciprocity norms are not some *thing* that people participate in. Reciprocal interactions do not exist outside of the social experience of them. Seeing reciprocity practices as relations highlights the potential for a constant (re)negotiation of these practices and structures as the social and physical realities change and new needs, opportunities, and challenges arise. In fact, Andean people have long been doing this (Abercrombie 1998) and continue to reinvent traditions within the contemporary period (McNeish 2002).

Not only do reciprocity practices, arrangements, and networks respond to the changing social and physical environment, but I suggest that they are in fact part of the "tool kit" (Swidler 1986, 2001) with which Andean people confront and take advantage of the challenges and opportunities of globalization. This allows rural people to access markets or new income streams, but also to overcome the social fragmentation that taking advantage of such opportunities is often assumed to bring. This perspective highlights that rural people have agency to shape their experiences of globalization beyond the simple resistance "weapons of the weak" (Scott 1985), but also recognizes the structures within which this negotiation takes place (Nygren and Myatt-Hirvonen 2009). Thus, I present the interaction between rural people's experiences of globalization and reciprocity practices as a dialectic, with each informing the other, but which nonetheless provides a mechanism through which Andean people are able to shape their own experiences more on their own terms. Rural people do not always use this resource to contest or resist interaction and connection with global systems

and forms, though they certainly do that to some degree, but they also use cooperative practices as a means to deal with the challenges of globalization as well as to access new opportunities. In the end, we find in these villages—and, I believe, in all locales within the global system—a negotiated space, a hybrid experience at once affected by and responding to shifting global institutions but also supremely grounded in local histories, experiences, and ultimately, local actors.

HOW RECIPROCITY HAS BEEN FRAMED THUS FAR

Reciprocity has been an object of study in the social sciences for at least a century. In a recent review, Aafke Komter (2007) characterizes the literature on gift-giving and reciprocity over the 20th century as falling into utilitarian and anti-utilitarian camps. In the former are those that see gift-giving as a simply rational economic activity. In the latter camp are those that object to an overly economic view of society, and emphasize instead the symbolic meaning that goes along with gift-giving and the social relationships that emerge through the process of reciprocal exchange. Thus, Komter suggests, these discussions basically boil down the question of which factors—economic or symbolic—are the key motivation for reciprocal exchange.

While early sociologist Georg Simmel used reciprocity as a way to explain why social relationships persist beyond the conditions that created them (1996 [1908]), much of the work on reciprocity has been done by those interested in describing and explaining the social organization of non-market societies. This work was prompted by Malinowski's description of the Kula trade. In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Malinowski (1922) details an elaborate system of relationships through which goods are exchanged as gifts throughout the Tobriand archipelago. This Kula system, as it is called, is of paramount cultural importance in tribal life. Malinowski knew that the

Kula system described in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* was, as he wrote, “an economic phenomenon of considerable theoretical importance” (*ibid*). While he did not frequently use the term “reciprocity” (he wrote instead of mutuality), the ethnographic accounts offered by Malinowski and others at the time point to reciprocity as a key principle of behavior within non-market societies (cf. Polanyi 2001 [1944]). Malinowski’s detailed description of the Kula system became one of the primary sources of data for later theorizing about reciprocity and non-market economics.

Soon after Malinowski published his account of the Kula trade of Tobriand Islanders, Marcel Mauss used this work to develop his highly influential theory of reciprocity. Mauss’ *Essai sur le Don* appeared in 1924 in *L’Année Sociologique* and was later published in a small book in 1950²⁷. Mauss took issue with the way Malinowski framed gifts as free and altruistic, and instead argued that gift-giving and reciprocation are motivated by self-interest. He emphasized that there are three obligations built into gift exchanges: the obligation to give, the obligation to receive, and, importantly, the obligation to reciprocate. Thus, for Mauss, while gift giving may seem voluntary, free or disinterested, this is in fact a “polite fiction, formalism, and social deceit... when really there is obligation and economic self-interest” (1990:3)²⁸. He portrayed the gift cycle as a complement to the market in non-market societies and suggested that it similarly provides individuals with incentive for collaboration (Douglas 1990: xiv). Indeed, the Tobriand Islanders and others who engage in gift cycles, Mauss argued,

²⁷ This was published in English in 1954 as *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*.

²⁸ Russian naturalist Petr Kropotkin also pointed out the self-interested motivations for cooperation, and framed cooperation as a strategic choice in his treatise *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1955 [1914]) which was written between 1890 and 1902 (cf. Caparrós, et al. 2010).

proceed much like the capitalist to maximize and mobilize his or her capital over time (1990: 74).

Mauss' work resonated with the ascendant neoclassical economics, with its assumption that it is human nature to be self-interested and rational—that is, to seek to maximize one's own self interest. It provided support for the social scientists who were interested in applying neo-classical economic analysis to non-market societies that are characterized by reciprocity and other cooperative economic practices²⁹. From this point of view, reciprocity is seen as primarily an economic transaction that functions with a series of rules and contracts predicated upon the economic self-interest of the participants (cf. Schrift 1997: 4). Altruism and generosity are not considered as important motivations behind reciprocity³⁰. This idea of gift-giving as rational exchange between self-interested actors is the predominant perspective in current discourses (Schrift 1997: 19; cf. Komter 1996:4, 2007)—reflecting dominant assumptions about human nature, calculative reason and self-interested maximization.

But there is also another side, which argues that framing people within non-market societies as the rational, self interested *homo economicus* is, as Malinowski (1996 [1926]) put it, preposterous. This perspective suggests that we should not think of

²⁹ This was precisely the subject of a debate that raged in the social sciences in the 1950s and '60s. The substantivist-formalist debate argued over the applicability of neo-classical economic analysis to non-market societies. Ultimately, it boiled down to the question of whether rationality is a characteristic of human nature, or just of humans within market societies (see below). The subdiscipline of economic anthropology coalesced around this debate, which has never been conclusively resolved.

³⁰ While this is generally true, some scholars writing from a rational choice perspective do try to incorporate an understanding of altruism. David Schmitz (1993) for example provides an account of reflective rational choice that seeks to explain the development of concern and respect for others.

reciprocity as a mechanical law necessarily guided by rationality (Bourdieu 1996 [1990]). There are other motivations for reciprocal interactions beyond the maximization of self-interest, such as symbolic motives, altruism, and the social functions that reciprocity serves. Levi-Strauss (1996 [1949]: 21) emphasized of reciprocity that “There is much more in the exchange itself than in the things exchanged”. These gifts, he continues, “are not only economic commodities but vehicles and instruments for realities of another order: influence, power, sympathy, status, emotion...” (1996:19). Reciprocity, then, is not simply a rational means of cooperation, but is, in fact, “the symbolic media for managing the emotional aspects of relationships” (Cheal 1988: 5). Thus, rather than focusing on the item or service that is exchanged or its economic utility, this point of view emphasizes the social relationships that emerge through the process of reciprocal exchange.

From this perspective, then, one of the most important features of reciprocity is its contribution to social solidarity and stability. Gifts and reciprocation have a symbolic meaning, which enables the reproduction of relationships over time (Cheal 1988; Simmel 1950). They contribute to social cohesion, and engender feelings of friendship, respect, dignity and compassion—what Temple calls the “human values” (2003; c.f. Komter 2007). From this perspective, it is the common experience and mutual understanding built by reciprocal interaction, not the economic necessity of interdependence, that contributes to social solidarity and stability³¹.

Social psychologists suggest that reciprocity and gift-giving can tell us about an individual’s personal and social identity (Schwartz 1996; Komter 1996). From this

³¹ This argument need not be structuralist since, as Gouldner (1960) points out, the moral norm of reciprocity is also a mechanism to start social relationships rather than just perpetuate existing structures.

perspective, part of the importance of reciprocity comes from the fact that gifts can reflect the identity of both the giver and the receiver, say something about the nature of the relationship between them, and be an important mode for the public presentation of self. The exercise of reciprocity, Schwartz (1996) argues, tends to dramatize group boundaries and provides a mechanism to mediate difference. He writes: “Gift exchange influences group boundaries by clarifying them; and the more group boundaries are defined, the greater favorability of intragroup over extragroup exchange” (79-80).

Gift-giving dramatizes boundaries because reciprocal exchange fundamentally rests upon recognition (Honneth 1992; Komter 2007). Implicit in such an exchange is the recognition of the other person as an ally (Komter 2007: 102) and worthy of trust and respect. Thus, reciprocity is a mechanism of inclusion, and engaging in reciprocity with someone indicates recognition and acceptance of their identity. Withholding reciprocity, then, is also a mechanism of exclusion from a group or relationship. Overall, this point of view, which Komter (2007) calls that anti-utilitarian perspective, downplays the economic aspects of reciprocity and highlights the symbolic social meaning behind and constructed by reciprocal interactions.

Komter (1996; 2007) seeks to transcend the utilitarian and anti-utilitarian divide, arguing that both the economic and the symbolic motivations are important. Gift giving, she writes, often involves a mixture between altruism and self-interest, which are themselves far more intermingled than is generally supposed (1996: 11). Komter sees reciprocity as a “multipurpose symbolic ‘utility’” (2007:94) effective at creating social ties and ensuring stability precisely because of its ability to kill two birds with one stone, that is, reconcile individual and social interests. Her answer to the

longstanding debate, then, is: reciprocity is both economic *and* symbolic, and this is exactly what is so great about it.

Komter accurately paints reciprocity as motivated by and involving both classic economic rationality and other, less individualistic modes of thinking. But the debate in general, which pits the economic against the symbolic, reproduces assumptions about the economy that are unhelpful for thinking about cooperative livelihood institutions like reciprocal labor sharing—assumptions that Komter repeats even in her critique. She suggests that reciprocity is one unique arena within which the symbolic and the ‘economic’ coexist, but this does nothing to break down the idea of the economy as a disarticulated sphere separate from the rest of society. This problematic view of the economy as separate from social institutions restricts our thinking about reciprocity because it prevents us from seeing how reciprocity is a multifaceted, multifunctional, and socially meaningful institution. Furthermore, this formulation elevates a single kind of rationality, that is, calculative self-maximizing rationality and fails to acknowledge the ways in which social and other rationalities impact action as well. It also avoids ethics as a motivation for action. Thus, while building a bridge between the two sides of this long-standing debate is a step in the right direction, it continues to reproduce ideas that are unhelpful for thinking about reciprocity institutions as shifting, dynamic structures.

I argue that a more useful framing of reciprocity motivations and consequences involves a rethinking about what we mean by the economy. We need to move towards a more embedded approach. That is, we need to see the ways that the economy is inseparable from other social institutions. People make economic decisions or engage in economic behaviors for a wide array of reasons, many of which might not seem to

have anything at all to do with the economy when viewed from the narrower lens that has characterized dominant ideas about the economy. When we do this, it is easier to see how the various motivations of reciprocity—which, I argue, include technical, symbolic, as well as moral reasonings—are negotiated, though not necessarily reconciled, in daily practice.

RETHINKING THE ‘ECONOMY’, RETHINKING RECIPROCITY

The classical view of the economy heralds back to Adam Smith, who proposed self-interest as the key principle underlying economic cooperation. “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest” Smith famously wrote (1776: 4). Indeed, Smith suggested that enabling rational maximization creates a system that is best for everyone. Neoclassical economics has framed the economy as the system that provides an orderly mechanism for social economizing (LeClair 1968 [1962]), or, rather, the ability to make decisions to maximize one's own utility in the presence of scarcity. It is seen as a universal fact of human experience that people will maximize their own satisfaction in the choices they make, regardless of the presence of market structures (Herskovitz 1968 [1940]; Goodfellow 1968 [1939]). Furthermore, formal economic analysis tends to assume that the economic sphere is separated from other spheres, and is oriented by mechanisms—the invisible hand, for instance—that are completely distinct and distinguishable from non-economic social institutions.

The assumptions of calculative rationality and self-interest that underpin formal economic analysis are predominant within the social sciences. However, this version of the economy is just as socially and historically constructed as other categories of modern social science (Mitchell 2002; Polanyi 2001; Fiske 1991; Gudeman 2008).

How we usually think of the economy—as a self-regulating market defined by rationality—is a result of the political struggles around 19th century nation-defining projects (Mitchell 2002) and did not just evolve naturally as is frequently supposed. There have been a series of critiques of this dominant model of economic behavior from scholars throughout the social sciences, who argue that reducing economic behavior to rational and individualistic maximization fails to capture the diversity of what happens in reality (Sen 1996 [1979]; Fiske 1991; Gudeman 2008). “Far more than we ordinarily suppose,” Firth wrote in 1951, capturing the essence of this critique, “economic relations rest on moral foundations” (144: quoted in Sahlins 1996). The economic and the symbolic are not separate, and treating them as such may have very dire consequences (Polanyi 2001).

Karl Polanyi (1977; Polanyi et al. 1957) proposes an alternative interpretation of the ‘economy’, what he terms its substantive meaning. In this formulation, the economy is oriented towards the satisfaction of material needs and wants, or, the system that enables, as Polanyi writes (1977), brute existence. In this sense, economic activity relates to livelihoods—it is the process by which livelihoods are forged. This does not rule out livelihood-making through market structures or calculative rationality, but Polanyi’s substantive conception of the economy is much broader. It recognizes that the process of making a livelihood is not a solitary or decontextualized act. It takes place within and activates social relationships—along with the symbolic meanings upon which those relationships are based—and is situated in physical space as well.

Building upon Polanyi’s embeddedness approach is the idea of the moral economy. This phrase was initially used most prominently by EP Thompson in his analysis of the factors that contributed to the food riots of the eighteenth century in England

(1971; 1991). Thompson argues that we must not think of these mobilizations simply as “spasmodic” episodes of protest due simply to hunger; they are not just, as he writes, “rebellions of the belly” (1991: 186). Rather, he argues that we need to place these riots within the larger societal shifts that take place in eighteenth century England. In particular, Thompson argues, “the men and women in the crowd were informed by the belief that they were defending traditional rights or customs; and in general, that they were supported by the wider consensus of the community” (1991:188). That is, the riots may have been sparked by hunger but were legitimized by what Thompson calls “the moral economy of the poor” which provided them with a consistent view of the social norms, obligations, and proper economic behavior of people within a society (*ibid.*). For Thompson’s English crowd, this view centered on the doctrine of fair price: that it should be “‘unnatural’ that any man should profit from the necessities of others” (1991:253), and that prices *ought* to be regulated so as to protect the poor. That is, the moral economy that EP Thompson outlines appeals to a moral norm—how humans should interact with each other within the economic sphere—that justifies government involvement and protection, and barring this, legitimizes collective action and rebellion.

This idea of the moral economy was extended to peasant studies by James Scott (1976). Scott argues that the morality of peasants is primarily shaped by the primordial goal of reliable subsistence. This goal, and the resulting “subsistence ethic”, leads peasant to minimize risk and susceptibility to disaster rather than to maximize their average return or the efficiency of production (1976: 7). As a result, Scott argues, two moral principles shape peasant ideas of justice and legitimacy: first, the “right to subsistence” as a basic human right, and second, the “norm of reciprocity” as the ethical foundation for interpersonal conduct (1976: 167). The technical and social

arrangements of peasant production, including patterns of reciprocity, communal land holding, and work sharing have evolved to “iron out the ‘ripples that might drown a man’” (1976: 3), that is, reduce risk and ensure at least a basic subsistence. He argues that when peasant livelihoods are undermined by transgressions against the right to subsistence or the norm of reciprocity, this provides the normative justification for defiance, resistance, and rebellion (1976: 189).

Both Thompson and Scott juxtapose the moral economy to the contemporary capitalistic economic system. Thompson points to the rising dominance of the *laissez faire* political economic viewpoint championed by Adam Smith. The new economic organization of society that was based upon this model—which emerged during the eighteenth century—led to the deregulation of prices in England. Similarly, Scott argues that in 20th century Vietnam deepening liberalization of the economy and the accompanying shifts in governance and exchange undermined the peasantry’s patterns of social insurance, infringed upon the norms of reciprocity underlying them, and ultimately violated the moral economy of the peasant—transgressing peasant ideas of justice in the process. In later work as well, moral economy has been closely associated with pre- or non-capitalist societies and as fundamentally incommensurate with capitalist or market society (Sayer 2007, 2000; Arnold 2001).

However, the literature increasingly extends the concept of moral economy in ways that make it helpful for thinking about a diverse set of contemporary societies. Welford (2005), for instance, uses a moral economy framework as a way to conceptualize how ideas and ideologies of legitimate and illegitimate practice—that is, concerns of ethics and justice—are used to define the optimal organization of society and, in particular, to determine how resources are distributed. She suggests that moral

economies express both a set of values as well as the relationships, processes and events through which these values are produced (245). This definition, while certainly based upon the ideas of Thompson and Scott, makes the concept of moral economy more useful for thinking about a range of social systems. In fact moral economic inquiries have targeted multiple groups and outcomes—including landed elites and landless peasants (Wolford 2005), communities in the global North as well as the South (Arnold 2001), urban squatter communities (Wutich 2011), and international social movements (Edelman 2005). Thus, increasingly moral economy describes both an object of study as well as a mode of inquiry oriented to the “study of how economic activities of all kinds are influenced and structured by moral dispositions and norms, and how in turns these norms may be compromised, overridden or reinforced by economic pressures” (Sayer 2006: 78). It reflects earlier ideas regarding the moral or embedded nature of the economy from, among others, Polanyi (1957), the political economists of the Scottish Enlightenment (Sayer 2006) and Aristotle (van Staveren, 2001), and emphasizes ethical concerns as a motivation for economic action. Built into inquiries of moral economy—perhaps, in fact motivating them—is the understanding that economic behavior and institutions are not reducible to self-interested and calculative rational valuation (Sayer 2007). Thus, unlike early uses of the concept, which posited the moral economic ideas as the legitimization for collective mobilization in the face of a “new political economy disinvested of intrusive moral imperatives” (Thompson 1991: 201), increasingly a moral economic approach is used to evaluate the day-to-day economic behavior of people in a variety of settings.

In this dissertation, influenced by Scott (1976), I use moral economy to indicate an economy grounded in an ethic of reciprocity, which profoundly shapes economic opportunities and outcomes. But unlike Scott, I don’t focus on the ways in which this

moral commitment legitimizes or motivates resistance and rebellion, though that is certainly a possibility within the framework I set out here. Rather, I seek to understand how this ethical commitment to reciprocity serves as the ideological basis, what I'm calling the "cultural toolkit" (Swidler 1986; see below), upon which Andean people organize and negotiate their precarious insertion into global systems. This process is not primarily one of resisting, but largely about finding ways to take advantages of opportunities while minimizing negative consequences and overcoming barriers. In this dissertation, then, I use moral economy to emphasize the ways in which Andean ideals and practice are inseparable—indicating how material strategies and possibilities are shaped by the ethical commitments of Andean people. Add to this the feminist political economy approach, with its emphasis on enactment and social reproduction, and we see how these daily practices of reciprocity, in turn, shape the contemporary ideology of reciprocity in Andean communities. This methodological commitment encourages us to connect economic practice and ideology, and to see that the technical operations of the economy are inseparable from social moralities and flows of meaning. That is, ideology and praxis are mutually constituting. Once we begin to think about the economy in this way, it becomes clear that the theories about reciprocity that are outlined above fail to capture the full dynamics of reciprocity institutions.

Taking inspiration from these various perspectives, I argue that reciprocity institutions and practices need to be seen as emerging from three overlapping sets of reasoning, what I call the technical, the symbolic, and the moral. The technical relates to making a living. To some extent it may be described as rational in the calculative and self-interested sense, but there may also be some technical considerations that invoke and ensure the wellbeing of a group over the narrow interest of the individual.

Determination of rationality, in such an instance, may depend on the time horizon of the analysis. Still, a primary motivation underpinning reciprocal livelihood interactions is the technical concern of making a living.

We see that such technical concerns are of utmost importance in the local narratives about *ayni* outlined in Chapter II and discussed at greater length in Chapter IV. These narratives indicate that *ayni* provides a practical solution to the incomplete nature of the market structures they participate in as well as the imperfect set of modern technologies that they have access to. The limited and ill-fitting industrialization of agricultural production, which relies upon technologies developed for different environments and needs, and the resultant degradation of soil fertility and utilization of increasingly marginal lands, has paradoxically increased the need for hand labor. But, paying for high levels of hand labor is expensive and gathering together large enough groups of workers to complete high labor tasks is difficult and fraught with uncertainty in small Andean communities. In response to these challenges, *campesinos* utilize *ayni* as an affordable and reliable mechanism to gather labor in a timely fashion to respond to seasonal production needs. On one hand, this is a purely technical motivation for engaging in *ayni*—*campesinos* need labor, which is not available through the market mechanism, and reciprocal labor sharing provides a solution to this problem.

But the only reason that reciprocal labor sharing provides this technical solution is because of the moral obligation upon which it rests. That is, *ayni* would not be quite so *seguro* if there wasn't a durable shared understanding of and commitment to a set of rules governing how people should interact with each other—in fact, a shared vision of what the world should be like. These norms guide action by designating legitimate

from illegitimate, and inscribe how we should act when the rules have been broken. While the long history of social scientific analysis of reciprocity suggests that it is an important practice in many different social contexts, as was emphasized in Chapter II, in the Andes the morality, or ideology, of reciprocity is particularly salient.

Because the morality of reciprocity is so significant in the rural Andes, it contributes to other livelihood strategies beyond reciprocal labor sharing. These cooperative agricultural practices both reflect and help to reproduce reciprocity institutions.

Mink'a, which I explore in Chapter IV, is one of these practices. Here, in-kind payments for labor are made according to cultural ideas about appropriate payment amounts, social relationships between parties, and in recognition of the subsistence needs of workers. I argue that this reflects a generalized form of reciprocity (Sahlins 1996) whereby a shared subsistence ethic provides for needy members of the community with the understanding that each person or household may themselves be in need at some point.

As this suggests, the technical and moral arguments for engaging in reciprocity are overlapping. On one hand, moral commitments may impinge upon one's technical abilities to construct a livelihood or, in particular, to get ahead or improve upon their economic situation. It may lead to an instance in which the social and individual benefits are directly contradictory. For instance, as is outline in Chapter IV, the *mink'a* payments or the requirements for providing refreshments for work parties may be onerous for each household to take on, limiting their profits from agricultural production. On the other hand, however, the technical solutions that reciprocity provides are only possible in light of the moral foundations that underpin them. That is, the moral and the technical considerations that people take into account regarding

reciprocity decisions can be either contradictory or complimentary—quite possibly in the same time.

These two sets of reasoning are joined by one final overlapping consideration that shapes reciprocity decisions: the symbolic meaning imputed to engagement in reciprocity. This motivation relates to the role of reciprocity in constructing, maintaining, and performing individual and group identity and status. Reciprocity activities provide spaces within which common understandings are forged and executed, and social boundaries are drawn or transgressed. The content and cast of reciprocity interactions reflect—and reveal—hierarchies of power, and may be used to reproduce, shift, or contest this order.

While symbolic considerations emerge in local narratives that frame *ayni* as an indigenous practices (see Chapter II), one of the most striking examples of the symbolic power of reciprocity is how it is used by marginalized groups to gain recognition and become more integrated into the social body of a community. This is discussed in Chapter V, wherein I recount the ways that the much maligned evangelical Christians in Caata explicitly engage in reciprocity as a means to build social ties, demonstrate social and individual worth, and diminish feelings of distrust and suspicion. I suggest that these symbolic concerns indicate that reciprocity practices provide unique spaces of civic engagement and solidarity building, which contributes to the social reproduction of the community as a whole (Brown and Kulcsar 2001; see also Chapters II and IV). This process also shapes the material conditions of Protestants as well, providing livelihood opportunities itself but also making community resources and insurances accessible as well. These symbolic concerns, thus, have very real, and material, consequences, and impact how well, and

how happily, individuals are able to make a living.

These sets of motivations overlap with each other in concordant and discordant ways, impacting strategies of action and how people relate with others. Furthermore, social change, new opportunities and challenges, and shifting spheres of culture and meaning impinge on these motivations in different ways, sometimes conciliatory and sometimes contradictory. These transformations necessitate a constant process of negotiation as people engage in reciprocity activities (or not). While no community is ever static nor perfectly concordant, it is precisely during cycles of significant social upheaval or disputes over resources—what Swidler calls “unsettled” lives—that the negotiations around reciprocity institutions are most important and perceptible because these circumstances cause people to reflect more carefully on their moral, symbolic and technical commitments and needs and seek to articulate them most clearly (cf. Sayer 2000; Wolford 2005; Swidler 1986). I propose that a responsible analysis of the impact of globalization on reciprocity practices must take these three reasonings, technical, symbolic, and moral, into account. Doing so will necessarily highlight the negotiated nature of reciprocity and other economic institutions, reinforcing the vision of reciprocity as a dynamic tradition capable of, in fact, requiring, persistent renovation. The substance of this transformation—in fact, the shape of the technical, symbolic, and moral considerations—is highly particular, responding both to the requirements of the locale and the wider contexts within which it is situated.

RECIPROCITY AS TOOLKIT

I suggest that it is because of the multifunctionality of reciprocity, its technical, moral *and* symbolic relevance, that such institutions persist over time. They persist because they are relevant, but they are relevant because they are also dynamic. Along the way,

they provide the basis for a degree of cultural continuity in a time of significant upheaval and uncertainty. Enacted reciprocity practices—the actual exchanges along with the rituals and shared understandings surrounding them—perpetuate moral and symbolic ideas over time. In this way, the moral order of reciprocity remains part of the common sense of rural life (Swidler 1986).

In this sense, reciprocity institutions are part of the *habitus* of living. Conceptualized by Pierre Bourdieu (1977), the *habitus* is an ethos influenced by past experiences around which people make choices; it generates hypotheses about the world based on past practices that people use to evaluate options and decide on a line of action. It is a key piece of Bourdieu's theory of practice; the *habitus* is “constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions” (2007: 277). This theory avoids treating action as mechanical reaction while not assigning to the actor complete free will based on their “conscious and deliberate intentions” (73). That is, this theory of practice avoids assuming that actions are purely the result of rational calculation, though it may be accompanied by such motivations. Rather, the *habitus* is a socially constituted system of evaluation and motivation, in which “a whole body of wisdom, sayings, commonplaces, ethical precepts... and, at a deeper level, the unconscious principles of the *ethos*... determines ‘reasonable’ and ‘unreasonable’ conduct...” (77). This is an embodied knowledge that creates a sort of habit, or instinct, that influences action. Thus, one's own personal experiences in the past, which are themselves heavily indebted to the social and natural environment in which they take place, become the foundation for action that is both free and regulated—an ever shifting process of regulated improvisation, the practical outcomes of which filter back into the *habitus* of tomorrow. As such, *habitus* reflects an inculcated, embodied learning that is the result of past practices and experiences (Elyachar 2000: 100). It is through practice that past

ideas continue to influence action in the future.

Ann Swidler (2001, 1986) builds a similar argument, suggesting that this embodied knowledge is the substance of culture. Swidler proposes that culture consists of symbolic vehicles of meaning, including beliefs and practices, which provide resources that people use to construct strategies of action. Such strategies are not built from scratch. Rather, as suggested by Bourdieu, people always already have habits, sensibilities, and views of the world that they incorporate into new strategies. These links to the past, these cultural influences, are the resources with which people confront changing circumstances. They provide the “tool kit” or repertoire from which actors select instruments for constructing lines of action (Swidler 1986: 277).

I suggest that reciprocity institutions are an important part of this process. While they are material livelihood strategies, they also reflect cultural knowledge and values and are a conduit through which this knowledge shapes future action. Because reciprocity is constantly renegotiated in practice, remaining responsive to and relevant under shifting conditions, reciprocity institutions are one of the ways that the past structures the present. They provide a particular set of tools or resources that people use as they try to make sense of a social and physical landscape rapidly changing in response to the globalization of cultural and economic systems, increased mobility of people and products, and climate change.

CONCLUSION

The framework that I have developed in this chapter allows me to set out a series of propositions that are examined and elaborated in the remainder of this dissertation:

First, I suggest that reciprocity practices are motivated by three modes of reasoning: technical, symbolic, and moral. These forms are overlapping in messy ways, potentially congruous or contradictory—or perhaps both simultaneously or over time. Any treatment of reciprocity practices on the ground must take all three into account simultaneously. Failure to do so will lead to an impoverished analysis of reciprocity institutions and the impacts that changing landscapes will have on them.

Second, I propose that the enacted nature of reciprocity institutions makes them supremely relevant in the contemporary period—not just as vestiges of the past but as dynamic site-specific and socially appropriate strategies that rural people use to construct their livelihoods within a shifting social and economic landscape. Reciprocity institutions do not simply exist; they persist only through their activation by people who engage in the associated norms and practices within a particular social context. Thus, reciprocity lives on precisely because it is reproduced socially. And this means, of course, that not only do reciprocity institutions persist but they change to match the needs, challenges, and opportunities that rural Andean people face today. This dynamic adaptability is what makes *ayni* continually relevant, and is what underlies my optimism for its potential in the future.

Third, I propose that reciprocity institutions—norms, practices, and networks—provide resources with which indigenous peasants are able to negotiate their experience of globalization more on their own terms. That is, reciprocity arrangements give people and groups location-specific tools with which they shape their myriad interactions within global systems. I suggest that these interactions are not always marked by a politics of resistance; cooperative and non-market strategies are mobilized in order to facilitate access to and integration into global systems as well as

to soothe the disturbances that such interaction tends to create. Reciprocity institutions are one site for the production, in fact, the mutual conditioning, of local people's experiences of the local and the global.

This dissertation is about how these three proposals play out in rural Bolivia. Throughout the chapters, I systematically examine the shifting roles of, motivations for, and consequences of ongoing reciprocity practices as these spaces are increasingly integrated into a set of new global forms. I ask: What do contemporary patterns of reciprocity look like, and what role do they play in rural communities? What are the symbolic, moral and technical considerations that contribute to decisions about reciprocity activity, and how are these considerations affected by greater interaction with global processes and systems? How do rural people operationalize and respond to shifting symbolic, moral and technical considerations, and how are their decisions regarding reciprocity impacted by these shifting considerations? And finally, how do rural people use reciprocity resources to interrogate, accommodate, challenge, or take advantage of the global systems within which they are increasingly incorporated?

In the remainder of this dissertation I use reciprocity practices as a node around which to systematically explore the interactions between local and global levels as indigenous highland Bolivians construct their livelihoods in a rapidly changing world. By formulating reciprocity as an institution based on the regular practices of people, I elevate the agentic possibility of peasants to use resources gleaned from local *habitus* in order to navigate their contemporary—and ever-shifting—reality. While they may have, at best, only marginal impact on the global systems they are increasingly engaging with, they certainly have very significant effect on their own experiences of these global systems. This is not to say that globalization is unilaterally positive—in

many ways Andean people's experiences of globalization are disorienting, disadvantageous, and marked by global hierarchies of power and status—but even highly marginalized people, perhaps especially these groups, have a set of resources with which they negotiate this uneven terrain. They do not simply resist ever-increasing global pressures, but rely on these resources to shape a more promising space for themselves within the global system.

In the next chapter I turn to how this process unfolds in one community that has been deeply integrated into global markets very rapidly over the past three decades, profoundly altering local livelihood patterns and possibilities. I examine how participation in global commodities markets, and the concurrent process of technological modernization, interact with reciprocity institutions. While these processes provide new opportunities for rural people that are both improving their standard of living and slowing longstanding flows of out-migration, they are also fraught with problems that limit prospective benefits. The next chapter tells the story of how people are reinvigorating reciprocity networks as a mechanism to manage these difficulties in order to take advantages of new opportunities provided by the market.

IV

NEGOTIATING A HYBRID ECONOMY: COMBINING MORALITY AND MARKETS

Changing culinary tastes among Northern consumers is creating new opportunities for peasant farmers along the Andean high plain. For those who live in this difficult terrain, where indigenous people historically survived on a strategy that combined the husbandry of llamas with the cultivation of tubers and indigenous grains, the rising global demand for quinoa is profoundly impacting livelihood patterns. Quinoa is a highly nutritious indigenous grain shunned since the conquest as inferior to European crops. It has been cultivated by indigenous people in the region for millennia, largely for their own consumption. The new global market for quinoa has led to the penetration of capitalism into a remote region that had previously relied on small-scale subsistence agriculture and out-migration. In this chapter, I examine the impact of market integration on the moral economy in San Juan de Rosario, along Bolivia's Southern *altiplano*. Unlike Pocona, which was an important supplier to colonial and republican era markets and has since been deeply integrated with regional markets for potatoes, maize, and to an extent, other crops, or Caata, which remains poorly integrated into commodities markets of any form, San Juan is currently being drawn into a new and growing market at an unprecedented speed. It is only over the past three decades that San Juan has had the opportunity to participate in markets other than as labor, and the quinoa market provides unique opportunities for people in the region as it offers a stable and high price buoyed by growing demand but very limited supply (see below). This is in contrast to the market for potatoes, for instance, which is the primary crop in many Andean communities. Oversupply of potatoes has resulted in

chronic low prices, and few opportunities for peasant farmers. Thus, due to the rapidity of the community's integration into global markets and the fact that this process is ongoing, San Juan provides an interesting case with which to examine the impact of the market on reciprocity institutions.

In contrast to those who suggest that increasing integration into global markets tends to cause reciprocal practices to wither and fade, in this chapter I argue that reciprocity institutions provide important sites for the construction of new, hybrid economic spaces. In these hybrid spaces, cooperative and community based economic pursuits coexist with and overlap market-oriented strategies. In fact, as I argue below, reciprocity and other cooperative norms, networks, and activities may even be reinforced and strengthened as rural people increasingly engage with new markets. This is because household reciprocity practices offer a socially and ecologically appropriate resource with which rural people negotiate the uneven terrain of globalization more on their own terms.

As outlined in the previous chapter, as a descriptive element and as an instrument for social and political analysis, moral economy is closely associated with pre-capitalist or non-capitalist societies, and with resistance to markets and defense of non-market modes of interaction (Sayer 2007, 2000; Arnold 2001). Moral economies and markets are generally regarded as incompatible. In the seminal works on moral economies, Thompson (1991) and Scott (1976) both argue that the transition to capitalism undermines patterns of social regulation and insurance within moral economies, infringing upon the norms of reciprocity underlying them, and, ultimately, violating the moral order upon which these economies are based. These authors suggested that this violation provides the normative justification for peasant defiance, resistance and

rebellion (Scott 1976: 189). Even if this does not cause peasant revolution, “Markets are generally regarded as the major force weakening the moral economy, encouraging and sometimes obliging us to act purely in our self-interest—if not immorally, then at least amorally” (Sayer 2000:19). Thus, there is reason to suspect that reciprocity practices will be challenged as farmers in San Juan become increasingly integrated into the expanding quinoa market. After all, the individualizing rationality of the market and what some see as the modern anti-culture of capitalism³² (Hardin 2007) is thought to undermine the communitarian logic and cultural knowledge that are the foundations of cooperative and reciprocal strategies (Scott 1998). On the other hand, production based on reciprocal ties is purported to enable peasants to resist the full commoditization of their social world (Temple 2003; Friedmann 1980). As Jan van der Ploeg (2010) argues, a return to peasant strategies allows contemporary farmers within both developing and developed economies to resist capitalism, creating new peasantries that are able to interact with the market as an opportunity rather than an imperative (see Wood 2009; 1999). These arguments, of course, hark back to the agrarian question of old, as to whether the incursion of capitalist markets into the countryside would push rural people to abandon peasant institutions and assume class relations or if the household cooperative practices of the peasantry ensure their viability (see Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010a, 2010b for reviews of agrarian questions debates).

These perspectives suggest that peasant strategies like reciprocity persist only through exclusion from, or resistance to, the capitalist system. This reproduces dichotomous thinking, between modernity and tradition or indigenous and Western, for instance,

³² This is not the approach taken here. Rather, I see modern capitalism as a contemporary cultural form, grounded in social institutions that were invented over the past centuries as which are reproduced in ritual and other practices.

that masks important processes that challenge colonial and neo-colonial structures of understanding and power (Gupta 1998; see Chapter I). As I outlined in Chapter I, thinking in terms of hybridity rather than such dichotomies is a more helpful approach for examining about how local communities contribute to the way global processes unfold. In San Juan, the increasing interaction of local people with global markets is neither impairing reciprocity networks nor is it met by resistance aimed at defending local traditions. Rather, reciprocity institutions are important sites around which people “‘think through’ the manifestations of the global in the local” (McNeish 2002) and actively negotiate an outcome that mixes local and external knowledges and practices. Thus, rather than seeing the persistence of local, indigenous reciprocity practices as a matter of resistance or exclusion from capitalist and global processes, I suggest that San Juan’s integration into global markets is creating a hybrid economic space whereby the communitarian logic of reciprocity—and the moral values that it reveals—coexist with and even complement market-oriented strategies.

As I show below, people in San Juan continue to use and reproduce cooperative practices of reciprocity while also pursuing opportunities of the market. This is certainly not unique; many people remain connected to moral economies even as they become more deeply embedded within market structures and, at least in part, continue with agricultural production that both lies outside of capitalist rationalities and reproduces traditional and peasant practices (Bebbington 2000; Isakson 2009). This is often explained through the optic of peasant resistance (Scott 1985; van der Ploeg 2010) or else as evidence of further exploitation of the poor in aid of capitalist accumulation (Elyachar 2005). However, in this paper I contend that rural people use ‘traditional’ reciprocity practices to contest their very exclusion from the market. Their ability to take advantage of global quinoa markets is limited by fragmented and

partial markets for labor, credit and insurance, and inappropriate and incomplete industrialization of quinoa production. San Juanenos mobilize reciprocity and other cooperative strategies to patch in the holes of the fragmented and incomplete markets they face, minimizing the risks generated by modern markets and technologies. But, in the process, reciprocity practices and the moral sentiments that they are based upon are increasingly subject to critical reflection and evaluation in light of the individualizing influence of modern systems (Sayer 2000). I suggest that San Juanenos choose to affirm these sentiments and institutions because reciprocity practices provide them with a socially and ecologically appropriate ‘toolkit’ (Swidler 1986) with which they are able to negotiate their uneven incorporation into global capitalistic processes. In so doing, they create a hybrid yet still moral economy within which non-market and market strategies are overlapping and mutually constituting.

QUINOA IN SAN JUAN DE ROSARIO

San Juan is located on the Andean high plain in the southwestern corner of Bolivia. One arrives there on an unpaved road that starts in the small, dusty city of Uyuni, crosses the largest salt flat in the world, and skirts outcroppings of volcanic rock and cacti 20 feet high. Lonely groups of vicuñas and llamas nose around the sparse and scruffy *thola* bushes as the wind hurls sand and dust across the seemingly deserted landscape. This is a forbidding territory along the edges of the Atacama Desert, the driest location on earth. Frigid, high, and dry, the landscape around San Juan poses a unique challenge to large-scale agriculture.

But the people in this area have practiced agriculture as part of a diverse set of

subsistence strategies for as long as 6,000 years³³. Like much of the rest of the Andes, potato cultivation and llama husbandry are important nodes of the local economy, but it is the Andean grain quinoa upon which the local people are dependent for their livelihoods. Quinoa is a highly nutritious grain indigenous to the Andes and, in fact, not grown in any significant way outside of the region. It was a food of considerable cultural and symbolic importance in the Inca Empire, which during its zenith extended through much of the Andean region, including parts of modern day Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina. The empire was based in part on a massive scheme of redistribution, of both people and products, and quinoa brought in from the *altiplano* region was an important symbol of the power of the Inca “god-king” (Wood 1989). In the early years of Spanish control over the region, quinoa was identified as second only to potatoes as a food source for indigenous people in the Andes (McCamant 1992).

After colonization by the Spanish there was very little demand for quinoa until recently. Whether from direct suppression of quinoa due to its symbolic importance to the Inca Empire, the disruption of the complex system of production used to produce quinoa and other varieties, or because of a “culinary colonialism” that eschewed native crops in favor of European foods (Wood 1989; McCamant 1992; Hellin and Higman 2005), quinoa was marginalized as a potential food source by urban European and mestizo populations. This established dietary habits that remain engrained today and quinoa is still considered an inferior food item among urban and middle-class Bolivians. Despite this, quinoa was continuously grown in remote areas by indigenous

³³ Museo Regional de Arqueología y Etnografía de San Juan de Rosario “Kausay Wasi”, created in collaboration between the community of San Juan, Unidad Nacional de Arqueología, the German Embassy, and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit.

people, and with good reason: it is both superlatively nutritious³⁴ and uniquely suited to the region's harsh landscape and climate³⁵. However, its importance outside of these rural villages was severely diminished after the fall of the Inca Empire.

Though undervalued by consumers in the Andes, in the mid-20th century interest in quinoa was peaked among researchers in South America and elsewhere³⁶. In 1948, a UN-sponsored nutrition conference recommended that quinoa could play an important role in improving the nutrition of poverty-stricken highland people in the Andes. By 1975, South American governments and other institutions interested in development, including the US National Academy of Sciences, were promoting quinoa as a way to improve the inadequate diet of *campesinos* in the high Andes. This effort did little to change the engrained habits of urban people, however, where quinoa is still considered an inferior food item—"a third-rate 'Indian' or 'rural' food" (Ballvé 2007).

However, the effort to identify the nutritional superiority of quinoa has awakened interest among an entirely different group of people—consumers in the North. Dubbed

³⁴ The most outstanding of quinoa's impressive nutritional qualities is that it is rich in a very high-quality protein that provides a nearly full set of amino acids. In particular, it is outstandingly high in lysine, which is absent in other grains.

³⁵ Quinoa yields best in dry, semi-desert conditions and is frost resistant. In addition, because of its intolerance to heat and requirements for equal length of day and night during flowering, quinoa does not yield nearly as well under more favorable conditions at lower altitudes and at more northern latitudes. Experiments in the United States and Canada have been promising, but the most sustained effort to find an appropriate variety for Northern American climates has not turned out as well as was hoped. The only commercial grower of quinoa in the United States, White Mountain Farm in Colorado, produced only 75,000 pounds on 60 acres in 2003 (Larsen 2004) and their yields have been widely variable in other years. They have never yielded over 1,000 lbs per acre (they had hoped to yield 3,000 per acre) (ibid), and in 2008 their quinoa crop failed (www.whitemountainfarm.com; accessed 18 July 2009). The amount of quinoa produced outside of the Andes is so low that it does not appear in FAO statistics (FAOSTAT 2009).

³⁶ This section relies on McCamant 1992; see also PROINPA 2004.

a “superfood” (Dobkin 2008), quinoa has even been considered and tested by NASA for inclusion in long-term human space missions (Schlick and Dubenheim 1996). The purported health benefits of quinoa (see Wood 1989) have created demand in the United States, Europe and elsewhere in the North that continues to increase every year. Production of quinoa has responded, with a tripling over the past 30 years. In Bolivia the increase is even greater; from a low point of 6,000 tons produced in 1979, production has quadrupled to 26,601 tons in 2007³⁷. Even with this large increase in supply, producer price for Quinoa has remained stable since 1991. Though data are not available for the period before 1991, people in San Juan tell me that there was no decent price for quinoa—and are very happy with the high, stable price they can now receive.

This increase in worldwide demand has created a unique opportunity for Bolivian *campesinos*. This is especially true for those in the *Salar* region around the Uyuni Salt Flat, where the variety most sought by international consumers is grown (PROINPA 2004; see also Healy 2001; McCamant 1992). The *campesinos* in San Juan are attempting to take full advantage of this opportunity by expanding quinoa production and tapping into export markets. The incorporation into quinoa commodities markets has integrated the community into capitalist forms of interaction at an unprecedented level. But this raises important questions about the viability of indigenous and peasant practices of reciprocity and cooperation. Because marketization has occurred only over the past few decades, this setting provides a particularly fruitful arena in which to explore this dynamic.

SHIFTING PRODUCTION PRACTICES: THE *TAQUIZA* OR THE TRACTOR?

³⁷ In 2007, Bolivia produced 45% of the world supply of quinoa (FAOSTAT 2009a).

Traditional hand planting methods

Quinoa is produced throughout the Andean high plain, from southern Ecuador to the northern regions of Chile and Argentina. However, the central *altiplano*, in Peru and Bolivia, produces the vast majority of quinoa consumed around the world. In much of this region, planting quinoa traditionally involved broadcasting seeds at random then passing a yoke plow or leading animals over the area where the seeds were scattered (PROINPA 2004). Producers then rely on rainfall to germinate seeds. In the *Salar* region, where San Juan is located and where the most desirable quinoa variety is best suited, however, the harsh climate necessitates a different approach to planting. Scarce and uncertain rainfall coupled with abrasive winds that erode and reshape the sandy landscape creates a greater need to protect the moisture in the soil and to minimize wind erosion that could damage or bury quinoa seedlings. As a result, local people have developed particular, site-specific strategies to reduce the risks of crop failure.

In San Juan, producers often seek to disturb the soil as little as possible in order to maximize yields and reduce production risks. They use a hand tool called a *taquiza* to initially carefully brush aside a small area of dry soil on the surface. When they reach the moist soil underneath, they carefully dig a bit further, taking pains not to mix the moist and dry soils. After a pinch of seeds has been deposited, they are covered first with a layer of moist soil and then topped with the dry soil that had been brushed aside. This process is repeated at a distance of roughly one meter in rows another meter wide, taking care not to disturb the crust that develops atop unagitated soil. This method has two advantages. First it makes maximum use of the moisture in the soil, which is necessary for seeds to germinate. Seeds are placed in the most favorable location, either deeper or shallower depending on how rainy it had been in the

previous year and how much the soil has dried out³⁸. Furthermore, the moist soil is never mixed with dry soil or exposed to the drying air and winds. Secondly, this method also minimizes wind erosion by leaving the crust on the soil less disturbed. It also creates an impression where the seeds are planted that can be carefully cleared by hand if the wind does bury the tiny seedlings when they emerge. Thus, this traditional method of planting by hand reduces the risks associated with climatic uncertainty and the difficult landscape.

In San Juan, sowing takes place between August and November. Planting must be carefully timed to take place before the moisture in the soil from the previous year's rains dries up but not too early to risk frost or drying out before the rains come in December. The timing is specific to location since the fields are spread over a large area, in between salt pans, hills and outcroppings of volcanic rocks, and there is a small window of opportunity for planting on each field. This, combined with the fact that managing quinoa production over the season is made easier if it all matures at the same time, leads producers to organize large work parties in order to complete the planting on a single day.

Work parties are also used during the harvest period, which takes place in March and April. The harvest involves two distinct activities: the *arrancada*, when the quinoa stalks are pulled up and gathered in large bundles to dry, and the *trilla*, when the quinoa is threshed. As with planting, timing is important during this period. Waiting too long to pull up the quinoa plants will cause the seed clusters to fracture, lowering

³⁸ The depth of the moisture in the soil is vital information for producers making decisions about which fields to plant and how. They frequently used local measurements of this depth (generally using their own hand) to describe the climate of previous years or to explain production decisions in interviews.

yields due to loss. Threshing, usually done two to three weeks after the *arrancada*, also needs to be done at the right time to minimize loss to birds, mice and other pests.

In comparison with the other field sites studies in this project, the work parties gathered together in San Juan, during the planting season especially, can be quite large. The laborers come from other quinoa-producing households in the village; since quinoa is the primary economic activity in San Juan, virtually every family participates in quinoa production. Work parties are made up of both men and women; even older children or teenagers participate in work parties when school is not in session³⁹. Unlike elsewhere (see Chapters II and VI), in San Juan there is no division of labor on the quinoa fields and thus men and women both participate in the same activities during work parties. Work party hosts recruit labor in the days and weeks before their planting day often with neighborly visits to ‘invite’ others. They hope to secure a commitment, though not everyone who says they will work actually shows up on the designated day. The workers bring their own tools, but otherwise everything they need for the day of labor, including water, food, and other refreshments as well as transportation, is provided by the host (see Chapter II). As is outlined below, it is while gathering labor for work parties during the periods of peak labor need—primarily planting and harvest—that reciprocal labor sharing and other cooperative strategies are most important.

³⁹ Children are generally paid for their labor in cash wages rather than with *ayni*. Teens may be repaid with *ayni* if they are judged equivalent workers as adults. This repayment is generally made to their parents, as teens rarely have their own quinoa fields. More frequently, however, teenagers prefer cash payment to cover school expenses and the other accoutrement of youth. Teenagers often work weekends or when school is not in session, as this type of labor is generally the only way to earn cash wages in San Juan.

The mechanization of production

With the rise of quinoa cultivation over the past three decades, and particularly since the early 1990s, quinoa production has been increasingly mechanized. In the 1960s, Belgian missionaries brought the first tractor to the region, though San Juaneños had limited access to it (Healy 2001). Still, they recognized its utility, and began organizing alternate access to tractors and other technologies. Starting in the mid-1970s, communities in the region began to organize around autochthonous mechanisms to support quinoa production, mechanization, and marketization. For instance, a nearby community formed a successful cooperative oriented toward the industrialization of quinoa production, particularly around marketing and export (now CECAOT, Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives ‘Operation Earth’, see Alfaro and Alba 1999, Healy 2001). CECAOT was instrumental in early efforts to improve processing and find export channels for the grain (Healy 2001). In 1990, San Juan formed its own organization, ACIDEMAC (Multi-active Community Association for Development), which is oriented toward the mechanization and commercialization of quinoa. Each family in San Juan contributed in kind to a common fund that was used to purchase ACIDEMAC’s first tractor. Now ACIDEMAC has three tractors for hire, a truck, and various other pieces of equipment. In addition to this, there are five tractors owned privately in the village, making a total of eight tractors available for hire in San Juan⁴⁰.

The mechanization and marketization of quinoa have proceeded hand in hand and tractorization has promoted the expansion of quinoa as a cash crop (Healy 2001: 163). Tractors are usually used to clear and prepare fields, the most onerous of the

⁴⁰ Incidentally, this number exceeds the village’s needs and at least one of these tractors operates primarily in neighboring villages because there is little need for its services in San Juan.

production activities. This enables farmers to prepare more land, allowing them to expand their production in ways that would otherwise not be possible. Furthermore, particularly during the 1990s and early 2000s, farmers increasingly began using tractors to plant their fields as well. When planting with tractors, an attachment adapted from US agriculture is used. It uses discs to open uniform furrows one meter apart, releases seeds from a hopper at a one meter distance, and then closes the furrow again on the return trip. Tractors are also useful during the *trilla* when passing the heavy machine over the quinoa helps to separate the grains from their stalks, though do not replace all of the necessary labor at this time. Thus, the mechanization of quinoa production has in some instances reduced producer labor needs significantly and has enabled them to expand production to meet the growing demand of the global quinoa market.

By the 2000-2001 season, nearly all quinoa fields that pertained to San Juan were planting by tractor. Tractors are preferred for a number of reasons. Obviously, the tractor reduces the labor needed as well as the physical exertion required of producers. It also gets the job done much more quickly, freeing producers for other livelihood activities. And while it is expensive to hire the machine and its operator, planting by tractor is actually cheaper than planting by hand since the farmer only needs to provide refreshments for one tractor operator, and only for the portion of the day that he is working that field. Providing food for the laborers of a work party (see Chapter II) is one of the most financially draining parts of the agricultural cycle, which is avoided when using a tractor. Marco V. explained:

“The tractor works alone. For example, you have to prepare food for a single person. But with *ayni*, you have to prepare the food for everyone. You always have to serve [food]. In the morning, at mid-day, and the supper... The tractor

has the advantage that you don't spend as much. It's more economical, more economical... And planting with people is more expensive, more expensive.”⁴¹

However, though tractors complete in just a few hours the day's work of 20-30 people, this comes at the cost of poor protection of the moisture in the soil, frequently poor placement of the seeds themselves, and a breaking up of the soil, leaving it susceptible to wind erosion. A PROINPA report (2004) outlines efforts to develop a more effective tool for mechanized sowing, but some *campesinos* in San Juan expressed their disappointment in the mechanized plows that were developed for different conditions and crops. They describe the available technologies as not “appropriate” for the needs and conditions in San Juan. One problem is that the mechanized plow cannot respond to the variable conditions on fields⁴². For example, the way in which the tractor attachment opens the furrows and deposits the seeds can lead to poor germination and yield, since moisture is not always at the same depth even on a single plot, the soil is broken apart, and the moist soil mixed with the dry. This may work fine for years with good weather—adequate rainfall in the preceding year, relatively early and adequate rainfall in the current season, and minimal wind, especially during the germination period— but is problematic in less ideal years. Furthermore, as quinoa production grows to meet rising prices and demand, this expansion has taken place on increasingly marginal fields where soils are more sandy and salty and less protected from the harsh winds that parch and erode the soils and lower the temperature. These marginal lands are much more susceptible to the loss of moisture and erosion that is

⁴¹ “*El tractor solo hace. Por ejemplo, el refrigerio se hace para una sola persona se prepara. Pero para el ayni hay que preparar para todo... Siempre hay que atender. En la mañana, al mediodia, y la cena... El tractor es una ventaja que no se gasta mucho. Mas economico, mas economico. Y del sembrar, con gente es mas gasto. Mas gasto.*”

⁴² See Scott (1998), especially chapter 8, for discussion.

exacerbated by the use of tractors during planting.

The local farmers expressed a desire for the autochthonous development of machines for quinoa production. But, as Scott (1998) points out, mechanization in modern industrial agriculture is substantiated by other forms of industrialization. Crop varieties, for example, are bred to reduce genetic variability (increase uniformity) and otherwise engineered to be “machine-friendly” and easier to grow and harvest mechanically (Scott 1998: 267). There are quinoa breeding and other research programs underway in Bolivia and Peru (PROINPA 2004) but so far have not significantly impacted production methods, at least in San Juan⁴³. Thus, while there are some characteristics of industrial agriculture, production in San Juan does not approximate the type of modern agriculture taking place in the global North.

Though farmers might prefer using tractors, they have come to realize that the industrial tools that they have available to them actually heightens the risk of crop failure. On fields with the best quality soil, and in years with adequate and early rainfall and minimal wind, planting by tractor seems to yield similarly to fields planted by hand. But when the soil is sandy and lacks moisture, when the winds are bad or there is insufficient rains, fields planted by tractor do not germinate as well, and the small seedlings are damaged or buried by the sand hurtled around by the winds, leaving lower yields or the need to replant sections by hand. However, since the weather is difficult to predict in advance, planting by tractor involves a greater risk than planting by hand. Planting by hand using the traditional methods and knowledges

⁴³ There is some concern that industrial production of quinoa for distribution by the market will reduce genetic diversity (Hellin and Higman 2005), though studies suggest that erosion of genetic diversity of quinoa in Bolivia is less than expected for a commercial product (del Castillo et al. 2007).

described above reduces these hazards of climatic uncertainty. One villager explained to me: “If I plant with a tractor, I’m taking a risk. If [the wind] buries it, I have to do it again, with people. And that’s two expenses. That’s why I go with what is more certain”⁴⁴. As Scott’s (1976) description of the moral economy of the peasant suggests, minimizing risk is a primary goal of many San Juaneños as they make production decisions. And producers increasingly see planting by hand as a way to do this.

Different households in San Juan have differing capacities for accepting some degree of risk and uncertainty. For those with alternative sources of income to quinoa production, for instance, planting by tractor is a reasonable risk. Alejandro A. is one of the five farmers in the village who owns (and hires out) his own tractor. He only plants by machine, regardless of the level of rainfall. He says it’s easier for him to take that risk because he’s already made the investment in the tractor and doesn’t want to also invest in human labor. He’s too busy, he says, to be running around accruing *aynis*. For others, the risk is too great. For example, Beatriz V. is a young woman without nearly as many resources as Alejandro. Having experienced bad outcomes in the past, she is not willing to take the risk of mechanized planting. She said: “Others plant with the machine. But not me. Twice I planted by machine. It didn’t give good results. That’s why I don’t want to plant by machine anymore”⁴⁵. Since Beatriz has few livelihood opportunities outside of quinoa production, she is less accepting of risks.

The risks associated with mechanized production seem to be rising over time.

Throughout the 1990s, planting by tractor yielded well and most fields were planted

⁴⁴ “*Si hago con tractor, estoy ariesgando. Si le entierra, tengo que hacer con gente, y son dos gastos. Por eso yo me voy a lo mas seguro.*”

⁴⁵ “*Otros... con machina siembran. Pero yo no. Dos veces he sembrado con machina, No me ha dado resultados. Por eso ya no quiero sembrar con machina.*”

this way. When I first began working in San Juan, in 2000-2001, nearly all fields were planted by tractor. But in the years since then, many San Juaneseños have begun to see their yields fall and increasingly plant solely with hand labor. As Vitoriano C. said: “At first, for us the machines were a relief. But, with time, results also... let’s say, the machines fail. We can’t make sure that all is well. So now, these years, more and more people are planting by hand.”⁴⁶ There are at least three reasons why planting by tractor is becoming less effective. The first has to do with the quality of the new lands that are being converted to quinoa fields. The expansion of quinoa production takes place on increasingly marginal lands since the best land is already in production. Second, the intensification and mechanization of production has also led lands to become degraded. They are less fertile, some argue, and they are more prone to erosion. Estimates of the percentage of the community’s fields that were marginal, and thus required hand labor even in years with otherwise good conditions, ranged from 30 to 40% of the total land in use. The third reason why tractors are less effective has to do with climate change. Some San Juaneseños indicated that drought has become more of a concern over the past decade. For example in the past five years only one season brought sufficient rainfall for a good harvest. During particularly dry years, like in the 2007-2008 season, around 70% of land planted to quinoa was sowed by hand because of the lack of moisture in the soil. Uncertainty is greater under poor conditions like drought and excessive wind, and farmers in San Juan explicitly use hand labor as a mechanism for reducing risk— “planting by hand is more certain than planting by tractor”⁴⁷, they say. Thus, despite mechanization— and partially because of it— there is an increased demand for labor during crucial periods in the production cycle.

⁴⁶ “*A primeros era, para nosotros era un alivio la machina. Pero, resultados tambien con el tiempo, digamos, las machinas fallan. No podemos asegurar bien que está bien. Entonces, es mas, ahora, estos años mas o menos se esta practicando mas este... a manual.*”

⁴⁷ “*Sembrar con mano es mas seguro que el tractor.*”

LABOR SCARCITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Precisely as demand increases in San Juan, labor is quite scarce even though there are few opportunities for employment outside of agriculture. This is partly because San Juan is poorly integrated into Bolivian labor markets and community members rely on emigration to find employment (see Chapter VI for a discussion of the relationship between reciprocity and migration). While some emigrants head east to work in Bolivian cities and towns, by far the majority of San Juaneños who migrate go west or south to Chile and Argentina— and often settle permanently. Nearly every man I interviewed in San Juan had spent significant time working in Chile or Argentina, and many of the women had too. Some people joked that there are more San Juaneños in Calama (Chile) than in San Juan. Before the border crossings became more formal— and expensive—the men and women who had migrated to Calama would travel back and forth regularly, often returning to help with the agricultural chores. However, crossing the border has become more onerous, expensive and uncertain (depending on who is on duty at the border crossing), and frequent crossing reduces one's chance at receiving a coveted work permit. Because of this, now emigrants stay for longer periods, often permanently or until they are ready to settle down with a family and begin farming. Even those who migrate to destinations within Bolivia fail to come back regularly since San Juan is so remote and it can be expensive and time-consuming to return. The difficulty in accessing labor markets, and the need to travel far and across borders to do so, leaves San Juan particularly short of labor. Migration-induced labor scarcity is combined with the fact that labor needs are high for all producers at the same time and they are often highly time-sensitive.

Marco V. is an illustrative example. He is 34 years old, and living in San Juan with his

wife and three children. Though born and raised in San Juan, when I spoke with him he had been living in the village for only four years. He first left San Juan as a teenager, spending five years “coming and going”, as he describes it. Before returning to San Juan, however, Marco spent the previous eleven years in Argentina without returning once. In fact, Marco would have stayed in Argentina—he liked the lifestyle and had established a life for himself and his family—but Argentina’s economic crash combined with the good price of quinoa brought him back home. Many migrants never return.

This labor scarcity is confounded by a scarcity of cash in the community. This is not simply due to poverty; in fact, savings—which are generally made in the form of quinoa—can actually be quite high in the village. Quinoa is often used in the village as an alternative currency⁴⁸. Villagers use quinoa to pay debts to each other, and the few travelling merchants and local shopkeepers gladly accept quinoa in exchange for their items. However, because there is limited access to insurance, most families prefer not to convert their savings into cash to pay for labor. Instead, they hoard quinoa to guarantee that their family has something to eat in case of crop failure, low quinoa prices, or unforeseen events. Furthermore, there is little access to credit, so local producers cannot borrow to finance their labor expenses. This leaves the community cash scarce as well as labor scarce. San Juaneños turn to non-market and cooperative strategies like reciprocal labor sharing as mechanisms to overcome the problems presented by these unreliable markets. These mechanisms are uniquely suited to the particular challenges faced by San Juan. Not only does *ayni* and other cooperative

⁴⁸ But quinoa is not always a simple substitute for cash. Depending on the relationship between the people involved, exchanges involving quinoa can entail their own behavioral norms that diverge from the standard rules of capitalist exchange. *Mink’a* payments, discussed below, are a prime example.

strategies (see below) avoid the expense of paying laborers in cash, but they are explicit strategies for dealing with labor scarcity as well.

As noted above, work parties are seen as a way to reduce the uncertainty that comes with agricultural production in such a severe environment. *Ayni* is also cited as a measure to reduce the uncertainty associated with labor recruitment. Gathering enough people for a work party is cause for considerable worry among quinoa producers in San Juan. The planting months are the busiest season, with all households feeling the squeeze at the same time. With everyone so busy, there frequently does not seem to be as many people as are needed, a concern frequently voiced in interviews. Beatriz, the young woman who always plants by hand, told me: “I don’t know, it doesn’t seem like there are people [who want to work]... Now, at any rate, we [who want to work] are scarce...”⁴⁹ The going wage for a day of labor— Bs. 25, about \$3—is often simply not enough to entice people to leave their own fields behind and work in someone else’s.

But, the obligation underpinning the *ayni* relationship is very strong. When a debt of *ayni* is owed, it is a matter of one’s own personal integrity that it is repaid⁵⁰. “I always remember my [obligation],”⁵¹ Beatriz told me. “I owe *ayni*, so when this person is planting, I just go... I have to go because I owe. It is in my conscience... Meanwhile,

⁴⁹ “No sé, pues, no hay gente parece pero... Ahora al menos escacos estamos.”

⁵⁰ The responsibility for repayment falls on the debtor. If for some reason someone forgets their debt, the person they owe is loathe to remind them. One man said “At various times I didn’t remind them... in all my life. If they forget, that’s just how it is. It just passes like that. And if they ask me to help them at a different time, [I do it]. And they also simply return [the *ayni*].” The system works harmoniously, and participants are afraid to add discord.

⁵¹ “Concientamente estoy recordando mi [obligacion]... Le debo *ayni* entonces cuando esa persona esta sembrando, he ido no mas... Tengo que ir por que le debo. Está en mi conciencia... Mientras cuando uno le debe *ayni* está conciente y no puede ir, esa tambien, en la conciencia mismo, no está tranquilo.”

if someone owes *ayni*... and can't go, in their own conscience, it's not clear." When you are owed *ayni*, you can count on this person to show up for your work party. Because of this, reciprocal labor exchange provides a tool for reducing uncertainty around labor recruitment. As Beatriz explained:

"Your *aynis*, you can count on your *aynis* for sure. Now, I've got five *aynis*. I am certain, certain that these five people will help me. If [they don't owe *ayni*] then its not certain [that they will show up when I need them]. If [I] ask someone to help me, but then maybe someone else is planting, and they could go there instead. People say 'Yes, I'll help you', but sometimes when it's for cash it's not so certain. *Ayni* is always more secure. That's why we do it. We can count on this certainty.... This is how we have more people to be able to work. There's no questioning: 'Will there be [enough] people, or will there not be? What are we going to do?'"⁵²

Given the considerable difficulty in finding labor for work parties, farmers plan ahead to accrue as many '*aynis*', or debts of labor, as they can. It is a very explicit strategy on their part. Even those who do not plan on using hand labor in the current season will work for others to accrue debts of *ayni* for the coming year.

For some, like Alejandro the tractor owner, working in this way is not worth it. *Ayni* takes people away from their own work, and involves hard labor. One man characterized the aversion to participate in *ayni* this way: "I'd rather pay cash than be

⁵² "*Tus aynis, mas seguro cuentas con tus aynis. Ahorita tengo cinco aynis, de seguro, seguro tengo esas cinco personas para que me ayuden. Sino, entonces, no estan seguro. Si le decimos que me ayuden, entonces, si esta sembrando otroa persona, alli se van tambien. Dicen "ya, te voy a ayudar" pero a veces no es tan seguro tambien por paga pero. El ayni mas seguro siempre es, por eso nos ayudamos. Ya contamos con seguridad... Asi tenemos mas gente para poder trabajar. Tampoco no 'va a ver gente, o no va a ver gente, que vamos hacer en esta?'*"

sacrificing every day, killing myself.”⁵³ Others, especially those who have alternative employment, simply do not have the time. But the vast majority of San Juaneños are more like Beatriz; with no other opportunities and little access to cash, for them *ayni* is a critical strategy.

Other Cooperative Practices

Ayni is not the only cooperative practice that Andean peasants use within labor exchanges. As noted in Chapter II, a second significant non-market strategy is *mink’a*, or payment in kind. In San Juan, *mink’a*⁵⁴ is most frequently used during the harvest period, when labor for work parties is paid for with the crop harvested that day⁵⁵. Like during the planting period, the timing of the harvest is of utmost importance, and making sure to have enough laborers for a harvest work party is of significant concern for quinoa producers in San Juan. *Mink’a* helps to solve this problem, as well as some of the other concerns related to poor integration into financial markets.

I classify *mink’a* as a cooperative and non-market mechanism of exchange because payment in kind has a significantly different set of rules than cash payment and it is not equivalent. The amount of in-kind payment is not determined by the price of quinoa but, rather, is set by *costumbre*, or community custom and the relationship between participants in the exchange. The compensation amount for a day of work harvesting quinoa during the *arrancada* is about ten *mark’as*, or armfuls of unthreshed

⁵³ “*Me gustaria pagarme en plata, que estar sacrificandose todo los dias, matandose.*”

⁵⁴ *Mink’a* is a Quechua word that is not regularly used or understood in San Juan, though the practice of exchanging labor for in-kind payment is a regularly used strategy there. However, since it corresponds to the use of *mink’a* in the literature and in the other sites where I base my work, I use the common word of *mink’a* here.

⁵⁵ This is the case in Caata and Pocona as well, but in Caata *mink’a* can refer to any form of payment other than *ayni*, including cash. Other food items, seeds, or fertilizer and manure can be used for payment as well.

quinoa stalks. This is equivalent to around 50 pounds of quinoa or more, which during the time of my fieldwork could be sold for 125 Bolivianos, or about \$16. Similarly, during the *trilla*, workers receive the amount of quinoa that fits into an old oilcan, roughly 25 pounds (Bs. 75 or around \$10). This quinoa is already threshed and winnowed, so no additional work is required. This is significantly higher than the going daily cash wage, which was Bs. 25 for a man (\$3.25) and Bs. 20 for a woman⁵⁶.

Thus, while laborers can convert their earnings from *mink'a* into cash, payment in kind is not the same as market-based wages. The general compensation amounts listed above has not changed in the memory of those who I interviewed, despite the fact that the price of quinoa has risen quite substantially over the past thirty years. However, there is some variability in payment amounts, but this has less to do with the market mechanism than with norms of reciprocity, personal and familial networks and relationships, the effort extended by the worker, and the perceived need of the workers (see below). It also varies according to the yield harvested. In a good year, workers will receive more; in a year with poor yield, they can expect to receive a little bit less. When the yield is particularly good, for instance, workers can garner as much as 90 pounds of cleaned quinoa, the equivalent of nearly \$30. In this way, the boon of a good harvest is distributed throughout the community and the hardships of a bad year are similarly shared. The in-kind payment amounts, then, reflect more of a moral commitment to reciprocity and the subsistence ethic than of the individual rationality of minimizing expenses.

⁵⁶ Interestingly, while the cash wage is higher for men than for women, the in-kind wage—which is based on custom—is usually equivalent. Similarly, the *ayni* exchange does not discriminate between the sexes and a woman may repay a man's *ayni* and vice-versa. These traditional mechanisms resist the deeply engrained discrimination against women that is widespread in Bolivian society.

Like *ayni*, *mink'a* serves as a socially appropriate tool that helps local producers engage with quinoa commodities markets despite the gaps left by their poor integration into other markets. First, such payment in kind helps to solve the problem of labor scarcity, since it enables farmers to 'pay' a much greater wage than their stock of cash would allow, thereby making laboring for others much more attractive for the busy peasants in San Juan. Second, payment in kind is also explicitly understood as an insurance mechanism by San Juanes. Those with little quinoa—those whose crop failed, or who didn't plant because their fields lacked moisture—help with the harvest activities of others and are therewith able to replenish their stores of quinoa⁵⁷. "When we don't have any [planted quinoa] we help those that do so we end up with some," a middle-aged man told me, "It's not much but... at least we have [quinoa] for our own consumption."⁵⁸ It is more advantageous to those without quinoa to seek this kind of arrangement rather than work for cash since the in-kind payment is greater than what they could afford to purchase with the cash wage. Furthermore, producers sometimes adjust payment amounts for those they know are particularly needy.

As this implies, labor arrangements like *ayni* and *mink'a* are multi-functional strategies that both enable production and provide social insurance against disaster. They link moral values and livelihood construction, and reproduce the moral economy through the practices of making a living. As tractors help San Juanes respond to the global demand for quinoa—and its premium price—by enabling them to clear new land and expand production, quinoa production remains highly labor intensive. At the same time, far from suffering from an oversupply of labor (Lewis 1954), histories of

⁵⁷ Mayer (2002) also identified the reliance on *mink'a* as an insurance mechanism used by *campesinos* in Peru.

⁵⁸ "Y cuando no tenemos esa año [sembrado], entonces, nos ayudamos a los que tienen. Entonces igual nos quedamos algo. No mucho, pero... Para consumo ni siquiera, ya hay pue."

migration and fragmented labor markets create an overwhelming labor scarcity in San Juan (see Chapter VI). Cooperative strategies like *ayni* and *mink'a* help San Juaneños to take advantage of the opportunities of the market despite the lack of appropriate industrialization and incomplete labor, credit, and insurance markets.

COMMUNITY PARTICULARITIES

Thus far in this chapter I've argued that San Juaneños' experiences of globalization are uneven: they encounter fragmented and limited markets and negotiate the attraction of ultimately inappropriate or only partially suitable industrial tools for agricultural production. Yet, far from using this cleft as a mechanism for resistance, local people seek to maximize market opportunities. Reciprocity and other cooperative livelihoods arrangements are a key part of their strategy to do so. In San Juan, people use reciprocal labor sharing as a tool to help them fill the gaps left by incomplete markets and imperfect industrialization as well as enable them to expand their production of quinoa for the market. Thus, the traditions of the past provide the tools that people use to construct livelihoods within a dynamic global system. And in doing so, they affirm the moral sentiments of reciprocity, equality, and subsistence as a basic human right. However, this takes place not alongside struggles to resist capitalist processes, but rather precisely as San Juaneños are seeking to become even more closely aligned with markets and market opportunities.

San Juan is certainly not the only place to confront such a fragmented experience of global markets. As Santos argues (2006), globalization is never totalizing or complete, but rather a fractured set of globalizing localities and localizing globalisms (see also Gibson-Graham 1996). People around the world face incomplete markets but don't all respond by re-invigorating non-market and cooperative distribution of resources and

instead are frequently subjected to an increasingly precarious existence (Gill 2000). So why does this, in San Juan, lead to an increased engagement with reciprocity institutions and a strengthening of cooperative economic relationships?

I suggest that there are at least three interrelated factors that operate at both regional and local levels that contribute to the observed outcome in San Juan. First, as noted in Chapter II, reciprocity institutions are historically significant within Andean social organization, making reciprocity a resource that people are familiar with and believe in. More, even, than a technical practice, reciprocity is an ethical commitment within which Andean moral economies are grounded (see Wachtel 1973; Vasquez 1998; Mayer 2002). This history has created a shared understanding and commitment to the rules and obligations of reciprocity institutions, particularly among indigenous peasants in the highlands. Furthermore, reciprocity is also a symbolic mechanism through which indigenous self-identification is expressed. The revitalization and revaluation of indigenous culture and communities over the past decade, with the rise of Evo Morales as the first indigenous president of Bolivia and the increasing significance of ethnicity as a way to mobilize marginalized groups, has generated new interest in reciprocity institutions—which are themselves shifting to match the new context (Weismantel 2006; Wutich 2011). Reciprocity practices fit into shifting discourses about the role and agency of indigenous groups in development and environmental conservation. Thus, reciprocity is an available and culturally relevant resource for people in the rural Andes, particularly within the contemporary political climate.

Second, the unique landscape of the Salar region limits alternatives to quinoa production and curbs the extent to which industrial inputs can substitute for hand

labor. The difficult climate, for which quinoa is uniquely suited, leaves few other livelihood options outside of quinoa production. Yet, as discussed above, tractors are unable to replace the site-specific skill and knowledge of hand labor. Nearly every family in the community produces quinoa, meaning that they each have more or less the same needs and skills as well as the same labor demand. Thus, labor is relatively undifferentiated in San Juan. The few people who dedicate themselves to other pursuits, such as the teachers and the nurse at the health center (some of whom are from San Juan and participate in agriculture themselves), do not participate in *ayni* because they do not experience the same cash constraint but are constrained by time. However, there is a very limited number of people who can earn a substantial amount of cash income outside of agriculture and nearly every family prioritizes quinoa production. This creates a pool of people with largely the same needs and the same skills, which enables reciprocal exchange. In this way, the physical environment shapes the social institutions like reciprocal labor sharing (see Wolford 2004).

Finally, one of the most important local conditions that helps to protect reciprocity arrangements is the fact that, in addition to non-market access to labor, San Juaneños have non-market access to the most important productive resource of all: land. Despite the special protections afforded to indigenous communities through the colonial and republican periods, many communities lost communal access to land as it was usurped, incorporated into haciendas, or privatized (Gotkowitz 2007). The land reform of 1953 ended the hacienda system of peonage, returned usurped property to individual peasants and peasant communities, and extended legal protections for communal control of indigenous lands (Fabricant 2010; Gill 1987). However, unlike others, San Juan and other communities in the region never lost communal access to their land since such remote and marginal areas, which were neither fertile for

agricultural production nor (knowingly) rich in minerals, were left alone (Healy 2001). Thus, as it has been for millennia, land in San Juan is held communally, although individuals and families do possess stable and hereditary use-rights. Neither land itself nor use-rights may be exchanged via market mechanisms. This means that all community members have stable access to this key productive resource, and cannot be dispossessed of it absent an egregious affront to the community. As quinoa production expands onto new lands, community members are free to seek out and identify new fields to lay claims to⁵⁹. The very best lands, with good soils in protected valleys, have been farmed for centuries and passed down in families.

Without the loss of non-market access to such resources, San Juaneños are not forced to act according to the market imperatives of competition, accumulation, and profit maximization (Wood 2009, 1999). For example, producers are not forced to maximise profit by driving down labor costs (and, as discussed above, cannot do this through capital accumulation anyway). These market imperatives are at odds with the norms of reciprocity, which serve to ensure the reproduction of individuals within the community as well as the community itself. Thus, since San Juaneños retain non-market access to the means of production, they are able to engage with the market as an opportunity rather than as a compulsion. However, while local people do not operate under the market imperative, they also don't conform fully to Wood's (and others') version of a peasant economy. San Juaneños neither orient production towards their own subsistence nor make production decisions based on subsistence needs.

They respond primarily to market conditions, shifting production away from their

⁵⁹ The landmass that pertains to the community of San Juan is quite large, but is pocked by hills and outcroppings of volcanic rock and sand and salt flats making the majority not arable. Some of the newly identified fields are at a distance of up to a one-hour's drive by truck or motorcycle.

staple food, potatoes, and expanding the cultivation of quinoa. They are even decreasing their own consumption of quinoa, in part because it is so lucrative but also because their earnings enable them to consume cheaper, more culturally desirable products like rice, wheat, and purchased potatoes. Thus, their market participation is not simply an adjunct to their subsistence production. San Juan's economy is certainly not classically capitalist, but neither is it simply a peasant market. Elements of both coincide within the single system.

SUMMING UP

To summarize, in my study I find that people in San Juan are increasingly turning to non-market and cooperative mechanisms to exchange labor precisely as they expand the production of quinoa for global markets. This is because the industrial tools that they have access to allow them to extend production onto ever more marginal lands but do not replace hand labor in much of the agricultural cycle— leading to an increase in the demand for labor during certain parts of the season. This combines with a high degree of uncertainty regarding access to labor because histories of out-migration have left a low supply of labor in the village, compounded by poor access to credit and insurance markets that make non-market access to labor particularly desirable. A series of factors that are particular to the region contribute to this outcome: reciprocity institutions are strong and clearly defined, the unique landscape limits differentiation, provides few other options for making a living, and minimizes the potential of labor-saving technologies, and retaining non-market access to land allows producers in San Juan greater room to maneuver outside the imperatives of the market.

Thus, I suggest that under certain conditions—when technologies cannot replace

labor, when peasants remain only marginally incorporated into the cash economy, and when alternative institutions are intact and clearly defined, for instance—rural people can turn to traditional and cooperative forms of exchange in order to access and exploit the opportunities afforded by global markets. That is, the case study outlined here suggests that increasing integration into ‘modern’ systems and processes need not, as is often supposed, undermine the moral economy and can potentially invigorate it. Markets, thus, do not necessarily force us to act in immoral and amoral ways; here moralities of reciprocity are reinforced since they substantiate reciprocal labor exchange as a technical resource with which people overcome the obstacles they face in accessing market opportunities. This is particularly true when, as in San Juan, the markets that people engage with are partial, fragmented or uneven. To fill these gaps, San Juaneños rely upon their own non-market institutions, reproducing them through their very engagement with them.

However, as Sayer (2000) suggests outcome is negotiated in a process of critical reflection; no longer able to simply follow the moral conventions of the past, San Juaneños are carefully evaluating their options and choosing to reproduce reciprocity institutions because they are the most appropriate tools for their current needs. Wolford (2005) suggests that it is in moments of conflict that the moral economy becomes most visible. Perhaps this is because during such moments of transition people reflect most carefully upon their strengths and opportunities in light of the challenges and threats they face. Thus, as they negotiate this new hybrid economy, they renew the past, which “becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living” (Bhabha 1994, 10).

Unlike approaches that emphasize peasant agency through resistance (Scott 1985; van

der Ploeg 2010) or those that suggest that social networks of the poor are utilized to further ensnare and exploit marginalized people within capitalist processes (Elyachar 2005), in this paper I argue that rural people use non-market practices to contest their very exclusion from the market. Peasant agency is not necessarily oppositional (see McNeish 2002; Abu-Lughod 1990); the indigenous people in this case study use—and reproduce—what are considered peasant strategies in order to better integrate into and take advantage of markets. Thus, while global linkages do have the potential to destroy rural livelihoods, environments, or disempower rural communities, these outcomes are not inevitable and peasant economies are not necessarily as fragile and powerless as crisis narratives tend to imply (Bebbington 2001). The case presented here offers a third possibility—in addition to failure to integrate and resistance to integration (van der Ploeg 2010)—for understanding the persistence of the peasantry. In a global system characterized by multiplicity, fragmentation and hybridity, non-market peasant practices persist because they offer socially and ecologically appropriate resources that people use to negotiate their experience more on their own terms.

The hybrid economy of San Juan provides evidence of economic diversity within global capitalism. It undermines the dichotomies of colonial science—modern/traditional, capitalist/peasant, indigenous/Western—that postcolonial and feminist political economists seek to explode. San Juan is not an example of a contemporary non-capitalist economy; it is differently capitalistic—a hybrid economic form in which people use the variety of tools they have at their disposal to produce a living. And because these tools are circumscribed by their moral economy, producing a living in this way also contributes to making life just and meaningful.

In the next chapter, I shift from economic globalization to cultural social change to examine how reciprocity institutions and practices are influenced by the Protestant wave that is spreading across Latin America. Though contemporary sociology of religion tends to neglect globalization (Turner 2007), religious change is one of the many ways that rural Bolivians—and others worldwide—encounter globalization in their everyday lives, and it has profound impacts on the shape of rural social networks and the practices that rural people engage in. The evangelical Christianity that is increasingly prevalent in rural Bolivia has been described a “cult of transformation and discontinuity” (Burdick 1993 cited in Robbins 2004). But how does such cultural disjuncture interact with institutions such as reciprocity that rely upon, as outlined in Chapter II, continuity in morals and practice? Like market integration, shifting religious affiliations have the potential to interrupt the longstanding moralities and networks of reciprocity. But, as I explore in Chapter V, reciprocity institutions and reciprocal livelihood activities can also provide resources with which local people negotiate these cataclysmic social shifts, ultimately offering them a way to both reproduce themselves and their community.

V

A Matter of Faith, A Matter of Work: Reciprocity and the Protestant Wave in Highland Bolivia

INTRODUCTION

At around noon on any given Sunday, a small contingent of local residents casually walks together through the town of San Juan de Rosario. Most are women, smartly dressed in the elaborate *pollera* skirts and bowler hats of the Andean highlands. They are returning home from services at the Catholic Church, which sits sun-bleached but well maintained on the edge of town. The women chat quietly as they walk, calling their goodbyes as each one slips behind the high walls of her household compound. Their gentle banter is punctuated by the scrape of their shoes on the dusty dirt roads and the gusts of wind across the high plain. For some, their trip home brings them past by an unassuming building, close to the dirt street, with a sign reading *LOCAL EVANGELICO*—the Evangelical Church.

The Evangelical meetinghouse is an unobtrusive building sandwiched between two family compounds. In contrast to the grandeur of San Juan's Catholic Church, here there is no steeple, no courtyard, no garden or fancy clay tiled roof⁶⁰. It is whitewashed with a fading green trim. Its most notable feature is the large blue speaker above the door, long defunct but which, when working, broadcasted the hymns and sermon of evangelical services for the entire community to hear. Though largely unremarkable, the presence of this evangelical church signals far reaching cultural changes that

⁶⁰ Like almost all other structures in town, the Evangelical Church is roofed with corrugated tin sheets. The only exceptions to this are the clay-tiled Catholic Church and a hotel owned by an outside tourism company.

threaten to unravel the social fabric of close-knit communities like San Juan.

Like in the rest of Latin America, Catholicism has long monopolized the religious experience in Bolivia. The Catholic Church in Latin America has historically been identified with political and economic power, and with social hierarchy (Levine 2009, 123). However, a number of social changes, including the increasing importance of Protestant churches in social experience, has challenged the dominance of the Catholic Church throughout the region. A 'Protestant wave', anchored primarily in the evangelical Christian churches of the United States, is extending across Latin America at an unprecedented rate. Increasing conversion to these new religious forms is leading to significant cultural shifts throughout the region and around the world; it is thought to break up social networks, emphasize individual allegiance to the church and God over community custom, and replace many shared rituals and ethical precepts. This process is exacerbated by the explicitly purist rhetoric of the evangelical Protestant denominations that are the fastest growing in Latin America—a distinctly different approach from the syncretic forms of Catholicism that have dominated Latin American society since the conquest. Not only does such religious change reflect deeper long-term social, cultural and political shifts in Latin America (Levine 2009), but conversion itself involves a radical transformation for converts and their social relationships. Believers break from their past and surrounding social worlds and enforce this break through an ascetic moral code (Robbins 2004: 127). Such rupture is bound to have significant implications for many aspects of social and material life in Latin America.

In this chapter, I emphasize religious fragmentation as part of the broader process of linkage between Andean people and increasingly global economic and cultural

systems, actors, and forms, and I acknowledge that the various strands of global interconnection overlap in sometimes messy ways. This chapter is motivated by the question of how religious change in rural Andean villages interacts with reciprocity and other cooperative strategies. While I recognize the potential for shifting social networks to disrupt reciprocity patterns, I also ask if reciprocity institutions provide people with resources that they can use to negotiate these great social shifts in a similar way that they are used to manage the challenges and opportunities of integration into quinoa markets discussed in the previous chapter. Might reciprocal activities help ameliorate or avoid the deep antagonisms between Catholics and Protestants in rural Bolivia?

In South America as a whole, roughly 25% of the population now adheres to a Protestant denomination, with the growth in Protestant belief occurring almost entirely since the 1960s (Martin 2002). Bolivia is no exception; by 2001 there were over 1.4 million Protestants in a country of 8.9 millions people, roughly 16% of the population (US Dept of State 2009). The number has surely risen since then, as the proportion of people reporting Protestant adherence increased by over half between 1992 and 2001 (Canessa 2000). While the Protestant wave in Latin America is remarkable for its fragmentary nature—for example, the number of distinct groups actively proselytizing in Bolivia⁶¹ by 1990 went well above two hundred (Martin 1990, 225)—the field is dominated by evangelical Christians, with Pentecostals providing much of the more recent expansion⁶².

⁶¹ That were officially registered as required by law.

⁶² In this chapter I do not make an analytical distinction between the Protestant denominations. This follows the practice of the *campesinos* themselves, who understand that there are different sects but for whom the relevant distinction is between Protestant and Catholic religions. All Protestants groups in this study—as is generally the case in rural Bolivia—are characterized by their evangelical,

The spread of evangelical Protestantism in Latin America has brought a considerable degree of strife to the rural countryside. Catholicism has been the dominant religion in Latin America since the conquest, and is strongly present in politics and governance, social organization and stratification, and cultural expression. Religious change creates tensions for the existing rhythm of life. All three villages in this study are marked by antagonism between Catholics and Protestants. The literature suggests religious pluralism in rural communities precipitates a loss in communal solidarity and in fact that “a mixed community is a virtual impossibility for any length of time in these rural settlements” (Canessa 2000: 135; see also Martin 2002: 26). These tensions suggest that religious change is re-shaping social networks in Latin America, which has the potential to destabilize communities, undermine trust and social solidarity and subvert traditional reciprocity practices.

In this chapter, I examine the interaction between reciprocity networks and the process of religious fragmentation. I argue that the effect of the Protestant wave on cooperative networks and practices depends, in part, on the shape and nature of existing practices and relationships. In particular, I highlight alcohol and public drinking as a key factor that structures the interaction between religious pluralism and cooperative activities. Where alcohol consumption is an integral part of work parties, religious antagonisms are deepened and cooperation between groups attenuated. However, where alcohol is not a central part of production activities, I argue that cooperative labor arrangements can actually help to build relationships across groups,

conservative, and ascetic nature. While some literature identifies, in particular, the spread of Pentecostalism as an important juncture within the Protestant wave (see Robbins 2004, for example), the analytical differences between the denominations is rather moot for the arguments I try to make here. This point was made clear during interviews in the field.

soothe antagonisms, develop relationships of recognition and respect, and contribute to community solidarity. This is because work parties—and agricultural production more generally—offers a neutral site where Protestants and Catholics can work together towards common goals.

This suggests that, under certain conditions, cooperative livelihood activities have the potential to ameliorate the social dissonance resulting from religious fragmentation in rural spaces. Where shared economic activity and social norms around cooperation centralize social practices that are contested, criticized, or demonized by Protestant dogma, then boundaries around cooperative networks shift so as to further divide and fragment communities. However, where livelihood pursuits provide neutral spaces that do not rely on disputed activities, cooperative and shared economic practices provide opportunities for recognition and conciliation between antagonistic groups that strengthen ties of solidarity and trust between the adherents of different religions.

CATHOLICISM AND THE PROTESTANT WAVE IN LATIN AMERICA

Travelers to almost anywhere in Latin America can see by the cathedrals on the plaza in nearly every city, town, and village that the Catholic Church is an institution of supreme historic and contemporary importance. Catholicism has been the dominant religion in Latin America since the colonial encounters of the late 15th century. The evangelization of indigenous American peoples began in 1493 with the five priests that accompanied Columbus on his second journey to the New World. The Church took a very active role in the colonization of the Americas; more than simply a religious institution, the Roman Catholic Church was also a political and economic institution that provided the social and intellectual catalyst for the conquest (Greenleaf 1971; Peterson and Vasquez 2008). The mutual aggrandizement of the Church and

Catholic states is reflected in the *Patrinato Real*, or Royal Patronage, a series of agreements between the Catholic Church and the Spanish and Portuguese Catholic monarchs in which the pope ‘gave’ the Americas to Spain and Portugal and was in turn granted religious monopoly in the New World (Peterson and Vasquez 2008). These agreements cemented the closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing relationship between church and state in the Americas.

The dynamics within Europe during the time of the conquest deeply influenced the nature of Latin America religion. The Spanish *Reconquista*, in which Spain’s Catholic leaders ‘reconquered’ the Iberian Peninsula for Roman Catholicism, the Catholic Reformation, and the Inquisition were the backdrop for the colonization of the Americas (Peterson and Vasquez 2008). The *Reconquista* ended in 1492 with the Granada War, which finally established Catholic dominance over Iberia and expelled Muslim and Jewish authority after centuries of struggles. In the colonial period, only Spanish and Portuguese Catholics were permitted to emigrate to the new colonies, and the strict rules and practices outlined in the Inquisition formalized the religion in Spain and her colonies. However, the specific nature of Latin American Catholicism, with its emphasis on saints, shrines, festivals and pilgrimages over official institutions, rituals and doctrines also reflects the ‘folk’ Catholicism that was the dominant religious form in Spain and Portugal at the beginning of the colonial period (Peterson and Vasquez 2008: 56).

The independence movements of the early 19th century—Independence was declared in Bolivia in 1825 after nearly two decades of struggle—challenged Catholic dominance in Latin America, and particularly contested the close ties between church and state. These movements were inspired by the secular Enlightenment ideals of

reason and science, as well as by Enlightenment political movements, including the French and American revolutions. Simón Bolívar, the principal leader of the Independence movement in South America and for whom Bolivia is named, was himself an atheist who was excommunicated by the Catholic Church (Peterson and Vasquez 2009: 131).

These challenges to the Catholic monopoly fed into a crisis in the Church that became increasingly problematic during the latter part of the 18th Century, most notably with the expulsion of the Jesuits from Catholic Latin America. During the period leading up to independence, and then during the republican period, the official position of the Catholic Church in Latin America was significantly weakened. Still, Catholicism remained the official religion in most of the newly independent republics and was the religion practiced by most of the people in Latin America. However, the historical condition of this institutional weakness, in combination with the popular form of Catholic observance that was brought from the Old World during conquest and colonialism, created in Latin American Catholicism a deeply syncretistic religion. For hundreds of years, Andean religion consisted of an amalgamation of Catholic and indigenous beliefs.

While initially religious syncretism in Latin America was thought to be due to incomplete evangelization (i.e. “baptized but not evangelized” [Abercrombie 1998: 109]), most scholars now recognize syncretism as a means for resisting the conquest, retaining pre-colonial beliefs, and transforming them within the new context (Marzal 1996a; Peterson and Vasquez 2008). Religious syncretism in Latin America, Marzal writes, results from the efforts of the indigenous people “to make the Christian message more comprehensible and to conserve certain enduring traces of the

aboriginal religion” (1996a: 18). It is “the inverse process by which those who have been evangelised try to retain vestiges of their own religion, not so much in opposition to the Christians as in reclothing the accepted tokens of Christianity in the appropriate aboriginal religious forms” (*ibid*). This was especially important during the period of institutional weakness of the Catholic Church that occurred in the late colonial and early republican periods. During this time,

Aboriginal religious leaders were obliged to cling to their original religious tradition to redefine their Christianity. This freedom, which they did not have during the first evangelisation, came when these indigenous peoples had already been fundamentally Christianised. Thus the result was not the radical restoration of the original indigenous religions, but rather the ‘Indianisation’ of Christianity (Marzal 1996a: 18).

Marzal (1996b) outlines the contemporary religious forms of the Andean Quechua people of southern Peru, highlighting reciprocity as fundamental for contemporary ethics and as a critical node around which Christian beliefs are integrated and expressed. The unique worldview of the Andean Quechua—incorporating both the celebration of Catholic saints during festivals alongside the rituals of tribute and payment to *Pachamama* —has its roots in both Christian and Andean traditions (*ibid*). Abercrombie (1998) too interprets the sacrifices, offerings, and devotion to saints as a way that rural Andeans rework the Christian Eucharist. He writes, “the qualities and characteristics of ‘Christian’ and ‘Andean’ deities seem to have interpenetrated one another so thoroughly that the contrast seems in some ways vacuous” (110).⁶³

⁶³ Abercrombie calls this interpenetration “interculture” rather than syncretism. This points to the fact that religious hybridity reflect larger cultural hybridity. He also notes that the people in his study relegate certain behaviors to a private setting while engaging in others publicly in part because they understand that their interpretation of

The unique form of Catholicism in Latin America—and especially in places like the Andes where the proportion of indigenous people within the general population remains high—reflects both the history of conquest but also the desire and ability to resist domination. The syncretistic forms⁶⁴ of Catholic religion reflect the ability of the indigenous population to exercise some degree of power over the Spanish colonizers; it is the result of their use of James Scott's (1985) 'weapons of the weak', or everyday forms of resistance. However, while such syncretism reflects resistance, in many ways it is unable to challenge the engrained hierarchies of power of the dominant culture, which are created and/or upheld by the Catholic Church.

Catholicism is deeply implicated in some of the key institutions that perpetuate patriarchy and paternalism in Latin America. The *compadrazco* system of god-parentage is one of these institutions that is highly relevant in rural Bolivia. *Compadrazco* ties are established during Catholic religious rites, including baptism, confirmation and marriage (Gudeman 1972; Van den Berghe 1996). These relationships of mutual respect tie families together in reciprocal exchanges of loyalty, favors, gifts, labor and hospitality (Van den Berghe 1996; Van Vleet 2002). Generally, godparents are chosen according to some advantage they can offer the child or parents, and parents frequently seek out social superiors as *padrinos* (godparents). This has the effect of "establishing paternalistic patron-client ties between persons of quite unequal status" (Van den Berghe 1996: 117). Thus, the *compadrazco* system, like other institutions closely tied to Catholicism, tends to perpetuate social hierarchies and

the interconnection between their 'Andean' and 'Christian' beliefs is unorthodox from an outsider's (or priest's) point of view.

⁶⁴ I emphasize forms plural because the exact nature of religious expression is highly variable throughout Latin America.

stratification, and to undermine or overshadow class or ethnic solidarity (Van Vleet 2002; Van den Berghe 1996).

It is against this backdrop that the Protestant wave in Latin America operates. The current spread of evangelical Protestantism throughout Latin America is unprecedented both in its scope and its speed. Though Catholicism remains the dominant religion, and the statistics clearly place Protestants in the minority of the population, the most dynamic and active religious engagement in Latin America happens in Protestant churches. As Stoll (1993: 1) points out, the majority of active churchgoers are evangelical Protestants. This is because even though the majority of people still call themselves Catholic, relatively few actively participate in church life and Evangelicals have significantly higher participation rates (*ibid*). Though evangelical groups have been practicing in Latin America since the end of the Catholic monopoly that came with independence in most countries (Peterson and Vasquez 2008), this massive shift in religious adherence has largely taken place in the past five decades (Stoll 1993; Martin 1992).

The evangelical churches operating in Latin America include an astounding multiplicity of groups. The longest standing of these churches include the Evangelical Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Baptists. However, more recently the churches with the most dynamic rates of growth are the more conservative evangelical denominations, and in particular Pentecostal and charismatic groups (Martin 2002, 1990; Robbins 2004). In much of Latin America, the Pentecostal groups now make up more than 80% of Protestants, though in the Andean countries the proportion is lower, estimated at around 50% in 2000 (Martin 2002, 1990.) Though Pentecostalism was not necessarily an urban movement in its early days in Latin America (Peterson and

Vasquez 2008) now the proportion of Pentecostals among Latin American protestant churches is highest in urban areas, and in particular in the peripheral cities that have expanded explosively under the strain of rural emigrants.

The fragmentary nature of the Protestant wave is evident in the villages where I completed my fieldwork; there are four different evangelical groups active in these three communities, none of which are present in more than one of the communities. There is one Pentecostal group active in Pocona, an Evangelical Methodist church in San Juan, and in Caata there is both a Church of Christ and a Seventh Day Adventist group. These are the churches that are currently active; groups come and go in rural communities, especially in places with high levels of religious intolerance. The recent combination of two Pentecostal groups in the Pocona valley points to the fluid nature of the Protestant wave in Latin America.

Despite the multiplicity of Protestant groups in Bolivia, they have a high degree of commonality, especially in relation to Catholicism. Like elsewhere in Bolivia, all of the Protestant groups operating within the three villages in my study are evangelical and conservative. They have strong traditional beliefs in God, sin, and redemption, and the central role of personal transformation and salvation through Jesus Christ.⁶⁵ (Stoll 1993: 16). Like others throughout Latin America, all of the Protestant groups in these villages ascribe to an ascetic morality. The ascetic behavior that is most notable, and commented upon by participants in my research, is abstention from drinking alcohol⁶⁶. As I discuss more at length below, since alcohol is frequently a significant

⁶⁵ Often falling under the rubric of being ‘born again’ (Stoll 1993)

⁶⁶ The ascetic morality of most of the evangelical Protestant groups operating in Bolivia prohibits the consumption of drugs and alcohol, among other things. Canessa (2002) suggests that this frequently includes coca, which is a nearly ubiquitous part of

component of social, political and economic life in the rural Andes, abstaining from alcohol creates significant tensions for the Protestants I interviewed. In the rural countryside, adherents to these groups are unilaterally called “*evangélica*”, “*cristiano/a*”, and “*hermano/a*”⁶⁷, and differences between denominations are generally not recognized.

As Levine (2009) notes, the Protestant wave reflects deeper social, economic and political transformations that are forever changing the cultural and physical landscape in Latin America. Conservative evangelical Protestantism has stepped into a void felt by marginalized people who are thrust into and/or seeking entrance into the modern world (Martin 2002). The majority of converts are migrants to cities, the poor, and rural inhabitants “displaced from their own worlds by social change” (Robbins 2004: 123). The new religions offer a spiritual and moral home to those wanting to escape the confining social hierarchies, morality, and the social patterns of Catholicism and the dominant culture.

What attracts converts to these new Evangelical churches? The literature frequently cites deprivation, disorganization, displacement and anomie as fostering their growth (Robbins 2004; Martin 2002). Migration, in particular, is a mechanism that breaks existing ties and displaces people physically, socially and psychically (see Chapter VI). Evangelical Christianity is able to create social relationships anew and offers migrants an atmosphere of hope in a space of few opportunities for uplifting experiences (Robbins 2004). “In this way,” Martin writes, “millions of people are absorbed within a protective social capsule where they acquire new concepts of self

rural experience. In the villages where I completed my fieldwork, however, many *evangélicos* chewed coca while working.

⁶⁷ Evangelical, Christian, or brother/sister.

and new models of initiative and voluntary organization” (1990: 284).

Robbins argues, however, that the displacement and deprivation arguments simplify what is actually taking place. He suggests that the new denominations’ emphasis on evangelization, and their egalitarian logic, distinct social organization, and ecstatic form of ritual life are frequently neglected but important factors attracting converts to Pentecostal and other evangelical Protestant groups. Robbins (2004: 128-129) also argues that the unique dualism of these religious movements—which preserves indigenous ontologies (though demonizes their content) and uses local social language and symbols to talk about past and current social problems—makes them profoundly relevant to their converts (see also Martin 1990).

Evangelical Protestantism is precisely the most appealing in contexts of “institutional deficit” (Robbins 2004: 131, citing Martin 1990). It replaces this void with robust local institutions, and creates opportunities for and even requires participation. Such participation provides a variety of “tools of association” equally to all church members (Robbins 2004: 131), and is an opportunity to develop a new set of skills, including literacy, communication, and leadership skills. The evangelical churches thus provide not only spiritual and moral guidance in a time of tumult, but also impart skills and other tools to empower their members. Martin (1990: 231) argues that Protestant denominations give members a unique “sense of their own selfhood and capacity to choose” and act.

Though some observers deny that the congregational life of evangelical Christians has any potential to effect social change or provide any real alternative to the status quo (Bastian 1992), many others agree that the Protestant wave has significant potential to

transform social experience (Stoll 1993; see, in particular, Martin 1990 and those cited below). The far-reaching social changes brought by conversion provide tools for evangelical Christians to contest dominant relationships of power and privilege (Canessa 2000). For example, some research highlights the ways in which Pentecostalism has the potential to empower women and undo the patriarchy that characterizes much of Latin American society, though replacing it with a different form of patriarchy (Robbins 2004; Brusco 1993). Brusco (1993) argues that evangelicalism reforms gender roles in simple and practical ways, but also is a potential antidote to the ideology of machismo so prevalent throughout Latin America. She suggests that evangelical Protestantism may be a more practical way to help woman than the feminist reform movement (Brusco 1993). Gross argues, however, that the potential for social change is either exaggerated or these changes are ‘collateral’ or unintended consequences of Protestant presence (2003: 479-480).

In the rural Andes, where social hierarchy is closely tied with the *compadrazco* and *cargo*⁶⁸ systems in which evangelical Christians do not participate, the Protestant wave has the potential to destabilize such power relationships. Furthermore, the Protestant wave subverts the dominant national culture in countries like Bolivia where the Catholic Church and the State are closely aligned (Canessa 2000: 143). Breaking the Catholic religious monopoly has contributed to strong antagonisms between Catholics and the evangelical Christians, especially in rural communities.

In some instances, Protestant adherence may improve a family’s material circumstances. On the most basic level, for example, evangelicalism improves

⁶⁸ The *cargo* system involves rotating leadership or social roles that formalizes service and contribution of residents to their community.

household incomes in Colombia by the 20 to 40% that is otherwise consumed in the form of alcohol, usually by the male head of household (Brusco 1993: 147). Other activities, such as gambling, smoking, visiting prostitutes, or keeping women outside of marriage, which are all in line with the *machista* ideology that is pervasive in Latin America, are eliminated in evangelical households. On this basis alone, conversion or adherence has the potential to improve economic conditions for families.

Aside from these savings, Protestant adherence may provide an economic advantage through improvements in skills, such as literacy, communication, and organizational skills (Martin 1990). Some research suggests that people feel that the ascetic morality of Protestants makes them more trustworthy for employers (Robbins 2004; Martin 2002). Others argue that the ethic promoted by the new churches is particularly well suited to the market economy through its promotion of individualism and asceticism⁶⁹ (Canessa 2002: 137). However, though release from social obligations and ascetic behaviors limit the demands on Protestant's income, they are also faced with tithing requirements, which might mitigate this effect.

Overall, these factors are not necessarily enabling new adherents to Protestantism to accumulate significant levels of wealth. This is in part because of the generally tenuous situation on the part of the most evangelical households (Brusco 1993)—which, as noted above, tend to be among the poorer segments of society. Still, the religious shift does help these families ‘hang on’ in an increasingly difficult economic climate (Robbins 2004; see also Brusco 1993).

⁶⁹ Martin writes: “there is a discernible consonance between Pentecostalism and the simultaneous (indeed related) advance of global liberal capitalism” (2002, 15). On the other hand, however, Gross argues that Protestantization and modernization in rural Mexico are parallel but not necessarily congruent processes, and that that the role of Protestantism in modernizing social change is often exaggerated (2003 470, 480).

In this chapter I focus on livelihood strategies rather than economic outcomes, though the two certainly are linked. The underlying problematic I seek to explore here is how the social context shapes how increasing conversion to Protestantism affects social organization within a community. What are the social conditions—in this case the shape and nature of shared livelihood activities—that might help to ameliorate or avoid the deep antagonism between Catholics and Protestants in rural Bolivia? I argue that, in some cases, livelihood activities may provide neutral spaces for adherents of different religious groups to recognize and acknowledge each other as allies, engage in common experiences and build social ties and solidarity across religious divisions.

THE PROTESTANT WAVE, COOPERATIVE NETWORKS, AND COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY IN TWO VILLAGES

In this section, I focus on the experiences in two Andean communities: Pocona and Caata. In both of these communities the tensions between Catholics and Protestants are particularly high, though the hostilities between the two groups have carried very different implications for reciprocity networks and practices. As we shall see, this is closely related to the different ways that each community engages in work parties. In Pocona and Caata, the role of alcohol in shared agricultural work, where reciprocity institutions are enacted, is nearly opposite. In Pocona, which lies in the fertile and temperate Cochabamba valleys, the conditions are particularly well suited for growing the maize from which a fermented corn beer known as *chicha* is made. *Chicha*, which requires no or few external inputs or expensive pieces of equipment, is made locally by women and is widely available throughout the region. On the other hand, in Caata, alcohol is considerably more expensive since it is not made locally and must be purchased from merchants or brought in from the cities hours away. Thus, while

alcohol is certainly present in large quantities for community-sponsored rituals and celebrations, in Caata it rarely if ever figures into the food and drink offered by individual households on the fields during work parties. This is in direct contradistinction to Pocona, where the widely available *chicha* is the primary form of refreshment during work parties. As a result of these differences in the availability and use of alcohol, reciprocity interacts with religious fragmentation in very different ways in these two communities. Whereas in Caata shared work provides a neutral site where both Catholics and Protestants come together to share common goals and experiences, in Pocona work parties are highly charged and serve to further divide the two groups.

“Ningún peón trabaja sin chicha”: Pocona

The main road in Pocona is paved with smooth river stones, making the ride up to the plaza a jostling affair. The village sits at the head of a long, fertile valley that was an important agricultural zone underpinning the rapid growth of Cochabamba city during the colonial period (Larson 1988). The planning and architecture of the village proper reflects this history, and while Pocona remains the political and economic hub of the area, the village is now a decaying shell of its former state and many buildings sit empty and crumbling (see Chapter VI). The current population is around 1,000 inhabitants, and there is a high degree of coming and going among the residents of the village and the nearby agricultural zones that pertain to it. Reflecting its colonial history, the plaza in Pocona sits at the center of town under the watchful eye of the most dominant building in the village: the Catholic Church. This plaza is anchored on three sides by parish buildings, including the parish-run clinic, a boarding house for schoolgirls run by the nuns and funded by the Church, and the priest's residence in addition to the stately church. The Catholic Church dominates the town.

Like elsewhere in Bolivia, the Catholic townspeople in Pocona are highly antagonistic to Protestants. Many Poconeños are fiercely loyal to the Church, and its priests and nuns (past and present). They cite the many public works of the Church as grounds to defend the parish and Church against Protestant intrusion. The head of the village council told me:

In Pocona, we have had the European clergy, and our progress is thanks to them. The [health] center, the boarding school. Also part of the roads, bridges. They are very hardworking people. They come back from vacation with projects. They bring them, they know how to do projects, and provide a little bit of money.... This is why we have been careful [with the evangelical churches]. We don't permit them. There are one or two [evangelical] families. One we allowed to stay who had a bad foot, he was kind of an invalid. But, not without some sort of pressure... There is freedom of religion, but since we have this clergy, why should we marginalize them [the clergy]. Since they do projects, we have to accept them. And we don't allow the [other churches to enter].⁷⁰

In truth, the Catholic Church is, or has been, involved in the provision of many of the basic services the people in Pocona enjoy, including health care, education⁷¹, and the

⁷⁰ *En Pocona, como hemos tenido parrochos Europeos, y, gracias a ellos es progreso. El centro, el internado. Tambien parte de los caminos. Puentes. Ellos son gente trabajadora. Ellos en sus vacaciones iban ya con proyectos. Llevaban aqui... algo de plata, ya hacer obras.... es por eso que nosotros hemos ido cuidando. No permitir. Existe uno, o dos familias. Uno hemos permitido por que estaba mal de los pies. Era medio invalido. ... Pero con, es decir, alguna presión. Hay libertad de cultos, no. Pero como tenemos un Parrocho para que vamos a tratar de marginar. Como hacen obras, hay que no mas aceptar. Pero no dejamos [que entran las iglesias].*

⁷¹ The nuns are very involved in the day-to-day operation of the local school, *Unidad Educativa Santo Domingo*, and the Church contributed financially and strategically to its construction. The nuns also contribute by running a boarding house for girls from

irrigation of farmland⁷². Local people's loyalty to the Catholic Church and defense against religious fragmentation has been a matter of public debate on multiple occasions, with the village council declaring that Protestant churches or any forms of proselytizing are not allowed within the town. They have made no bones about conveying that Protestants are not welcome.

Despite this lack of welcome, Protestant groups have made inroads in the area around Pocona. Evangelizing continues quietly and on the margins—not the public displays that can frequently be seen in plazas throughout Latin America (see Levine 2009). There are few openly Protestant residents within the boundaries of the village itself; I only managed to find and speak with one family who had recently migrated to Pocona. However, in the surrounding settlements there are quite a few openly Protestant families. They participate in services at a Pentecostal church in Laimiña, roughly an hour's walk down the valley.

The church in Laimiña and those further down the valley do attract evangelical proselytizers, who come to Pocona for secular gatherings and holidays. Despite the ban on proselytizing, these evangelists continue their work quietly but fervently. Perhaps because of my marginal status within the community, Pentecostal evangelists openly approached me during public gatherings to discuss the “word of God”. However, they kept a very low-key demeanor, never handing out materials or drawing attention to themselves.

outlying areas whose parents would not otherwise be able to send their daughters to Pocona for secondary school.

⁷² The previous priest organized an irrigation project for much of the agricultural area surrounding Pocona and worked with outside donors to secure funding.

As discussed above, many people are attracted to Protestantism specifically because it provides them support for making changes to their own lives and allows them to contest some forms of power (Canessa 2002). In the Pocona valley, the Pentecostal church in Laimiña provides one of—if not the only—source of support for people trying to deal with alcoholism or break disruptive patterns of alcohol consumption. Juan C.’s story provides an example of someone attracted to the church by the support it offers him to deal with his problem with alcohol. A middle-aged man, Juan converted three months before I spoke with him after excessive alcohol consumption left him physically ill and morally debased. His wife had left him two years prior, taking their daughter with her, due to his *machista* behavior, which he—like Brusco (1993)—associates with drinking. He was getting in fights, losing money, and was so sick, he said, he was about to die. “I almost died,” he said. “Almost. For two weeks, man, I couldn’t even stand.”⁷³ Some *hermanos* came to visit him, knowing of his predicament, and encouraged him to convert. “They said, ‘Hey, brother, what are you doing? Drinking *chicha*, beer. Why do you drink so much?’ they said. And they reminded me of the Lord. They came, and asked me ‘brother, what’s going on?’ And I started along the path”.⁷⁴

When I asked Juan what prompted him to join the evangelical church, he stated unflinchingly that it was his problem of “*alcoholismo*”. While he recognized the divergence in religious doctrine, Juan identified alcohol consumption patterns—and associated behaviors, especially fighting—as the primary difference between Catholics and Protestants. This sentiment was reflected broadly in interviews I completed with

⁷³ *Casi he muerto. Casi... Dos semanas, puche, no pudiera pararme.*

⁷⁴ *Ha dicho ‘oye, hermano. Que estas haciendo? Tomar chicha, cerveca. Por que tomas tanto?’ me dijo, y hacer recordar al señor. Vinia, y me ha dicho ‘hermano, que pasa?’ Y empeze a hacer camino.*

Protestants, both in Pocona and in the other two villages where I completed my fieldwork. Attitudinal divergence about alcohol was the most frequently cited difference between these groups.

Juan C.'s troubles with alcohol reflect cultural practice in Pocona. The valleys of Cochabamba Department in Bolivia are famous (some may say infamous) for their *chicha*, a tangy drink fermented from corn. The drink is ubiquitous during work parties in Pocona, where the gourds that act as the serving vessels for *chicha* begin to make their way hand-to-hand in the early morning. More important than the food that is served, *chicha* is a critical ingredient to any workday. Even after the day is done and the work complete, workers will remain on the fields drinking together until the *chicha* is gone (sometimes even sending a runner to bring more from a *chicharia*⁷⁵ in town). *Chicha* is so important during work parties that I heard the refrain again and again: “*Ningún peón trabaja sin chicha*” (“Nobody works without *chicha*”).⁷⁶ Both men and women drink *chicha*, and both drink to complete inebriation. However, the drunken violence that sometimes accompanies such intoxication is, in line with the *machista* culture, generally limited to men.

In Pocona, as is widely observed throughout the Andes (see, for instance, Abercrombie 1998; Allen 2002; Harvey 1991; Isbell 1978; Van Vleet 2002), alcohol consumption has ritualistic and integrative functions. While it can also be economically (and socially) disruptive, “Drinking is an integral part of community

⁷⁵ *Chicharias* are local establishments, generally in a family's home, that serve primarily *chicha*. A family that makes a big batch of *chicha* will invite patrons into their home or patio by placing a white cloth on a pole in front of the house.

⁷⁶ “*Peón*” is the term used in Pocona (but not everywhere in Bolivia) to describe the laborer who works on somebody else's fields, either for payment in cash, kind, or in return for *ayni*. It is a leftover of the hacienda system.

rituals, and drunkenness is crucial to the sustenance of the spiritual and material world [of] Andeans” (Van Vleet 2002: 573). Sharing alcohol and intoxication is a mechanism by which community boundaries are patrolled. Isbell (1978) outlines, for instance, the importance of participating in—and understanding the norms around—excessive alcohol consumption as a way to gain *entrée* during her fieldwork in the Peruvian highlands. Furthermore, alcohol consumption also feeds into relationships of reciprocity and sociability (Van Vleet 2002: 573). Drinking *chicha* is generally a highly social event in rural Bolivian villages, often following norms of reciprocal sharing similar to the exchange of coca leaves described by Allen (2002; see also Cummins [2002] on rituals of shared drink among the Inca). In Pocona, alcohol consumption is also deeply integrated into agricultural production practices.

There certainly are tensions around the level of and norms concerning alcohol consumption in Pocona. While *chicha* is considered an integral part of work parties, many people I interviewed—both Catholic and *evangélico*— bemoaned the excessive patterns of consumption. Some people speculated that the level of alcohol consumption was higher than it had been for earlier generations, suggesting that contemporary patterns surpass their ritualistic function. In fact, this tension prompted some loyal Catholics to acknowledge the tenets requiring abstention from alcohol as a redeeming characteristic of the Protestant churches. The head of the village council that I cited above, who himself was one of the architects of the ban on Protestant groups and proselytizing in Pocona, volunteered: “The only thing, the *only* thing about the evangelical sects that appeals to me is that they don’t drink. That’s the only thing”.⁷⁷ His sentiment reflects significant concern relating to drinking patterns in

⁷⁷ “*Lo unico, lo unica de los sectas evangélicas que me gusta es que no beben. Es lo unica.*”

Pocona across both religious groups.

Excessive consumption of alcohol during fiestas, rituals or other social gathering often leads to fighting—a destructive behavior that Juan C. admits to engaging in all too often before he converted to Protestantism. However, alcohol is often a problem in agricultural production as well. The omnipresence of *chicha* on the fields during work parties reduces productivity. It even impinges on the functioning of networks of reciprocity and cooperation. People who drink too much the day before are less effective laborers on the next day, sometimes not even showing up or arriving late. While usually interactions involving *ayni* were described as more reliable than other forms of labor exchange⁷⁸, some Poconeños described an increasing lack of faith in reciprocity networks due to drinking. When discussing the obligation of return, one Protestant man said: “Some people are cheaters...They skip. You will see, they just drink *chicha*. For tomorrow, they are going to call in sick.”⁷⁹ This creates a significant problem for reciprocity networks since it stands in the way of the obligatory return of labor, or causes an unequal trade since someone who is “*sano*” (“healthy”) works better than someone who is “*enfermo*” (“sick”).⁸⁰ Both Catholics and Protestants experience the negative effects of excessive alcohol consumption within their community and livelihood activities, and both expressed concern with *chicha* consumption in interviews.

Protestants face an additional problem associated with *chicha*. Alcohol, and the expectation of provision of alcohol for Catholics, creates unequal compensation for a

⁷⁸ Especially in San Juan and Caata, but also frequently in Pocona.

⁷⁹ “*Algunos son trampositos... Van soltar. Va a ver, por ahi no mas chicha van a tomar. Para mañana van a estar mal su salud.*”

⁸⁰ Health and illness are the local euphemisms for sober/able to work and drunk/disabled from alcohol.

day of work. A Protestant does not consume any alcohol when he or she works, but is obligated to provide it for Catholics who come to work on their field, or give them extra wages so that they can purchase it themselves. One *hermano* told me:

The thing is, here in this area, they drink *chicha*. This is something I don't like. I am *Cristiano*. I am *evangélico*. My religion does not permit such things. For this reason, I have to work my fields with my family, or if not them, with my fellow believers, with my *hermanos*. But, I also have Catholics work for me. And I don't buy them *chicha*, they bring it themselves. I give them [extra] money.⁸¹

This undermines the idea of *ayni* as an equal exchange.

As a result, reciprocity networks are being redrawn. As can be seen in the quote in the previous paragraph, Protestants are increasingly choosing to participate in *ayni* only with fellow believers when possible. They have much more faith in fellow *crístianos* to fulfill their *ayni* obligation. One *hermano* told me “[With] the Christians, there is no failure. Why would I lie? We fulfill [our obligation].”⁸² Since each community has only a few Protestant converts, this means that Protestants must go beyond existing community boundaries and forge new reciprocity ties. Where *ayni* networks once encompassed a geographical community, they increasingly are comprised of a religious community—a group that is not geographically bounded in the same way. Increasingly reciprocity networks in Pocona do not bind neighbors, necessarily, but rather bind fellow believers.

⁸¹ “*La cosa que es aquí en el sector, se toman chicha. Así es. Eso tampoco a mí no me gusta. Yo soy cristiano. Así es. Soy evangélico. Entonces mi religión no me permite esas cosas. Eso es. Entonces para eso, tengo que elaborar yo con mi familia o sino con mis creyentes. Con mis hermanos. Pero, hago también los católicos. Trabajan. Yo no le compro chicha, ellos le traen. Yo daba dinero.*”

⁸² “*Los cristianos, no hay falla. Para que? Para que voy a mentir? Nos cumplimos.*”

This is also occurring with other forms of reciprocity and cooperation besides labor exchange. Reciprocity practices in agriculture substantiate networks of trust and cooperation in the community more generally. One way that this is taking place among Protestants in Pocona is by the replacement of the Catholic *compadrazco* networks with new Protestant relationships. I observed the general sharing of goods and services between fellow *hermanos* in a way that mimics the sharing that takes place within the *compadrazco* relationships that are discussed above. For example, when I went to interview a young *evangélico* who didn't have any land of his own, a fellow *hermano* stopped by with a handful of peaches from his own trees. He received a bag of fresh-baked bread in return. Unlike *compradrazco* ties, however, cooperation and reciprocity within this group of *hermanos* does not contribute to social hierarchies in the same way (see above). These networks transgress the class logic of the *compadrazco* system and avoid its patterns of paternalism and dependency.

This shifting terrain of reciprocity and trust relationships not only undermines traditional social hierarchies, but political and geographic hierarchies as well. Pocona has long been the social, economic and political hub of the region, with the townspeople enjoying an elevated status vis-à-vis residents of the outlying areas. As social and economic networks are reoriented outside of town, Pocona's primacy within the region, and that of its residents, is eroded. The Protestant wave is thus changing the social geography of the region, not only reshaping networks but also the spaces within which these networks are forged.

In Pocona, alcohol is a node around which the increasing relevance of evangelical Protestantism interacts with *ayni* networks and norms. Disrupting patterns of alcohol

consumption upsets the customary, ritual, and social organization within communities. The ritual of drinking deeply penetrates livelihood construction and agricultural production practices, and this contributes to—and exemplifies—the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism in rural Bolivia. In Pocona, where alcohol is an integral part of work parties, the ascetic morality of *evangélicos* creates tensions in community-wide networks of reciprocity and communal work. When possible, *evangélicos* prefer to work only with other believers, and networks are being redrawn and boundaries reshaped. However, it is not always possible to work only with other believers, since they are so few and far between. Reciprocity arrangements across religious divisions fail to build trust and solidarity because patterns of alcohol provisioning and consumption decenter the ideal of equality in reciprocity relationships. Thus, while *ayni* remains a technical solution to production problems, the moral and symbolic foundations of reciprocity institutions in Pocona are eroded by patterns of alcohol consumption. In this case, these patterns combine with other antagonisms to reproduce the deep divisions that exist between Catholics and Protestants in the Pocona valley. This leads to the breakdown of social solidarity that is anticipated by the literature (Canessa 2002; Martin 2000).

However, social collapse is not the only possible outcome of the Protestant wave in Bolivia. I turn now to the village of Caata, where I observed a very different result than in Pocona. Here, cooperative livelihood activities actually provided spaces to heal the deep rifts between religious groups.

Religión es una cosa de fe, ayni es una cosa de trabajo: Caata

Caata is perched precariously along the edge of a steep mountain valley, the ribbon of a creek below tumbling down to the sub tropical valleys of the Bolivian Yungus. It is

much higher than Pocona, with small farm plots terraced to make subsistence agriculture possible. Caata has a population of around 900, the households all jammed tightly into a series of small, relatively flat plateaus connected by a warren of footpaths.

Unlike in Pocona, here the Catholic Church as an institution is very weak. The church building sits empty for most of the year, decrepit and without a clergy except on the few Sundays a year when a traveling priest attends mass. It sits atop the highest hill in town, facing a green plaza that children use as a soccer field. This hilltop, with its plaza and church, is physically distant from the real center of town down below, where the school, clinic, municipal buildings, and small shops line yet another plaza. Despite this, the Catholic Church remains present in the lives of Caateños, both through the festivals honoring various saints and as an organizing social category.

On the other hand, however, pre-Colombian Andean structures—both religious and economic—are very strong. Caateños say, in a mixture of Quechua and Spanish: “Our father is the sun. The earth is our mother”.⁸³ Land is owned communally and worked according to strict norms, and there is a high degree of social control over agricultural production practices. The *cargo* system of rotating leadership⁸⁴ is deeply engrained in social organization in Caata. This includes both the representatives to the municipal government as well as the local leadership, which overlaps traditional positions with

⁸³ “*Nuestro padre es Inti... La Pachamama es nuestra madre*”.

⁸⁴ In Caata, each male member of the community must complete at least six different year-long *cargos*, or positions of authority and responsibility. It is one of the ways that the social hierarchy is established. Women also play a role, though largely of support, since it is the family unit that is responsible for completing the *cargo*.

those emerging from the 1952 revolution and subsequent agrarian reform.⁸⁵ These authorities are charged with both religious festivals—the celebration of saints—and an array of agricultural rituals centered around offerings to deities in order to maintain soil fertility and favorable growing conditions. However, though Catholicism does not hold the same sway in Caata as in Pocona, and the Church does not have the same presence, the religious rift is still expressed in terms of division between *Católicos* and *evangélicos*.

Like in Pocona, alcohol is the key node around which differences between Catholics and Protestants are expressed, especially in the eyes of the *evangélicos*. Converts to Protestantism in Caata also recognize the role of the new churches in curbing destructive behavior, especially those relating to excessive alcohol consumption. For example, one 49-year old *hermano* who had converted to Protestantism in mid-life told me:

Before, I drank. I was almost at the point of separating from my wife.
Separating. I would go around hitting my wife. Lots of things, problems,
because of excessive consumption of alcohol. Because of this I decided to
convert to the Lord. Why? Because I spent so much money, so much money.
This is why I thought to repent once and for all.⁸⁶

Many of the Protestants I interviewed identified abstention from alcohol as the only significant dissimilarity between the two groups. One 38-year old *hermano* responded

⁸⁵ For example, the Quechua *Kuraq warayoc*, or Elder Staff-holder, is also called the *Secretario General*, or General Secretary.

⁸⁶ “*Pero antes yo tomaba. Casi yo era a punto de apartarse con mi esposa. Separarse. Entonces yo andaba, yo pegaba a mi esposa. Sí, muchas cosas mas, problemas. Entonces mucho yo excejera en este... alcoholico. Entonces por eso de uno no mas yo me he pensado, yo me he decidido a convertir al señor. Entonces por que? Porque mucha plata he gastado. Mucha plata he gastado. Entonces por eso yo me he pensado... Un dé repente no mas, no?*”

to my questions about differences between religious groups by emphasizing: “We are the just the same. We work our fields. We talk, we laugh. We are just the same... The difference is not great. Just with drinking. Alcohol... That’s the difference. In other respects, there is none.”⁸⁷ Some Protestants even respect traditional customs and rituals—continuing to engage in reciprocity with the land, for instance, by making offerings to place deities—while still remaining committed to the ascetic morality of evangelical Protestantism. Like in Pocona, in Caata the division between Catholics and Protestants is expressed in terms of alcohol and associated tensions rather than religious dogma or ideology.

There are two established Protestant churches in Caata, the Seventh Day Adventist church and the Church of Christ. They are frequently distinguished in Caata with the names *Sabadistas* (Saturdayists) and *Dominguistas* (Sundayists) in reference to their day of worship. In addition to these two groups, there are also some Protestants not affiliated with a local church, like Lorenzo W. who converted to evangelical Methodism during a migration experience, or who are affiliated with a local church only loosely and who don’t attend regularly. As a general rule, the Protestants in town do not participate in either the religious festivals or the agricultural rituals over which the town leaders preside. However, they frequently must negotiate how they are able to fulfill social expectations while at the same time remaining true to their religious beliefs. The Protestants do participate in some leadership roles; because of the social importance allocated to the community *cargo* system it would be nearly impossible to evade such responsibilities. They tend to seek out only certain positions that allow them to avoid the roles and activities that require alcohol consumption and

⁸⁷ “Igual no mas somos. Hacemos chakra. Tambien ya hablamos. Reimos. Igual no mas...La diferencia, no tanto. Solamente la bebida. Trago... Esa era la diferencia. En otra aspecto, no.”

participation in traditional rituals. The School Liaison, *Vocal* (who convenes meetings) and head of the Vigilance Committee (who oversees public works), for example, were positions filled by *evangélistas* when I completed my fieldwork. These are all relatively minor positions of authority within the *cargo* system in Caata.

The first evangelical group—the Seventh Day Adventists, or *Sabadistas*—was founded by a local family that converted after coming into contact with other Protestants in the region. The church was constructed in 1989. They experienced very high levels of antagonism, including threats of physical harm and threats that their homes would be burned. The family stayed, and though the threats were not followed through, they continue to experience ostracism and hostility from many in the village. Participation ebbs and flows, says Sixto C., the group’s leader⁸⁸, but in general there are six or seven families participating.

The second Protestant group, the Church of Christ *Dominguistas*, was formed in the late 1990s, after an evangelism campaign from the Church of Christ brought a group to Caata to proselytize. The community mobilized to chase out the group, but by then some local *campesinos* had already converted and continued to spread the word. The Church of Christ pastor told me that they left him alone because he was from Caata, but that now no external evangelizers are permitted in Caata. Their form of ecstatic observances has also attracted roughly three families—about 20 converts in total. Their enthusiastic singing can be heard throughout the section of town where it is located.

⁸⁸ The Adventists in the community identified Sixto as their pastor, but he refused the title.

The *Sabadistas* and the *Dominguistas* avoid many communal activities since they frequently involve demonized activities. However, they do not seek to retreat from the community, on the contrary, though their participation is limited. One *evangélico* explained:

I don't do many things, the old customs, all that they do, anymore. I don't go one hundred percent now. Why don't I go? Because it's a sin, that's the difference. They are having *fiestas*, they are celebrating this saint, they say, right? I don't go to these. I go... on historical dates. Anniversaries. They have parties for that too. I go to those. Weddings, birthdays, whatever. A lot of things. I go to those. If they invite me, I go. And also, I go to the meetings, the special sessions, the congresses, those things. The one thing I don't go to are those that are adoring idols. And drinking.⁸⁹

As drinking serves a similar ritualistic and integrative role in Caata as in Pocona⁹⁰ (and elsewhere throughout the Andes), the problem is that most of the community events, both religious and economic, involve either idols or drinking, and frequently both.

There are at least two different types of *ayni* exchanges that are important for Caateños. One is reciprocal exchange of labor. This can take place on the fields (in work parties, for example) or in dyadic exchanges closer to home (for example, to

⁸⁹ “*Ya no hago, muchas cosas, las costumbres, en todos que hacen. Ya no voy cien por ciento. Por que yo no voy? Que es diferencia, habia sido pecado. Estan haciendo fiestas, estan festejando esta santo, dicen, no ve. A esos ya no voy. Yo voy... en fechas historicas. Aniversarios. Ahi hacen fiestas. Ahi voy. Matrimonios, cumpleaños, cualqueir. Muchas cosas. Ahi voy. Si me invitan, voy. Y también, yo asisto tambien a los reuniones, las ampleados, los congresos, esos. El unico ya no voy, los que estan adorando a los idolos. Y bebiendo.*”

⁹⁰ Except in agricultural production. This is due both to the expense of alcohol and the communitarian nature of Caata. Agricultural rituals are performed at large community gatherings at the start of the season rather than individually on the fields. See below for more on this point.

help with a specific household chore, like gathering wood or weaving textiles). The second type of *ayni* has to do with the rituals and activities that take place when someone takes on a *cargo*, or leadership position. Serving in a leadership role can involve considerable expense, and one of the ways that Caateños defray these costs is by sharing the burden in a reciprocal fashion. For example, if a *cargo* involves hosting a fiesta or ritual, then friends, kin, and fictive kin (*compadres*) contribute financially or in kind to the activity knowing that when it is their turn to host such an activity, they will be paid back.

For most people in the community these two types of networks are overlapping and mutually reinforcing, but the Protestants in Caata divide the two networks. They selectively choose to participate in reciprocal livelihood activities and relationships while avoiding the social activities and networks in which alcohol is a key component. While some *ayni* networks in Caata incorporate alcohol consumption as a key component and complementary activity to the actual exchange, others—principally those that are activated in livelihood construction—do not centralize alcohol or any other activities avoided by Protestants. Thus, the avoidance of alcohol and idols certainly impacts the shape of reciprocity networks in Caata.

Protestants in Caata participate indiscriminately in the first type of *ayni* exchange, but are significantly more hesitant to participate in the second, because such activities frequently involve alcohol or Catholic religious symbols. For example, the leadership positions change during a festival called *chakra qhokuy*. One way that Caateños honor their incoming leaders (*autoridades*) is through a wild parade on horseback; friends or family will bring a horse to the new leader and show their respect by guiding their horse-mounted friend through town, eventually to gather as a full community on the

soccer field. The reciprocal ‘gifting’ of horse (and related services) creates an *ayni* network, which may overlap and reinforce other types of *ayni* relationships. However, Protestants do not participate in the horseback parade is because it comes with the expectation of excessive drinking.^{91,92}

Protestants avoid participating in such activities even though they are important sites where *ayni* networks and relationships are created and reinforced. Yet, the norms of reciprocity are strong. I spoke with a 42-year old *adventista* man who had been honored with a horse in a previous year and was thus obligated to return the honor. In order to avoid participating in the activities involving alcohol, however, he arranged for a friend⁹³ to complete his obligation to act as the guide for the horse. This illustrates how Protestants in Caata continually negotiate the tensions between their religious beliefs and the community-defined social expectations and responsibilities.

Though the community as a whole has given up on trying to chase the Protestant groups out of town, there is nonetheless a deep and continued antagonism against them. Not only do they not participate in the *fiestas* and festivals, nor serve in many leadership positions, but they are deemed a threat by some who fear a backlash for

⁹¹ The parade, and pre- and post-gatherings, are a bacchanalian display of utter inebriation. Falling, weeping, or urinating on oneself are socially accepted, even expected, behaviors. The *autoridades* frequently fall from horseback and anybody who gets in the way is trampled.

⁹² The wife of a man passing a *cargo* is honored as well, since it is expected that they undertake the charge together. During *chakra qhokuy*, the wives receive loaned ‘gifts’ of the finest textiles, which she must wear one on top of the other. The weight and discomfort of these clothing, in combination with the sheer amount of alcohol that she is expected to consume, leave these women frequently unable to participate in the parade or festivities without an assistant. This assistant—a close female friend or family member—guides and protects the honored women. All of these activities are done reciprocally—contributing to a dense, though gendered, *ayni* network.

⁹³ Through a second *ayni* exchange—promising to provide him with a day of labor.

their lack of participation in production-oriented rituals. For example, the community regularly enacts a variety of rituals aimed at affecting the weather or fertility to the soils. Some community members are concerned that if the entire community doesn't participate in offerings and other ceremonies, then *Pachamama* will be upset and the fields will not produce. One man declared:

We always make offerings to *Pachamama*. This is important. When it rains, we go up the hill [for the ceremony]. Then the sun shines. When it's too sunny, we always go also. This is VERY important. It is very important. Because, if we don't make the offering, nothing will be produced. They [the *hermanos*] don't do it now. They don't make offerings to *Pachamama*, nothing. They don't believe anymore. So, that is what brings division. This makes division.

It's important! If we don't make offerings, it won't produce.⁹⁴

This reflects the importance of reciprocity as an organizing moral principle for Andean people, as discussed in Chapter II. Reciprocity not only organizes social interactions between individuals but also between the people and the land, which is personified in place deities. Thus, there is the concern that religious fragmentation will undermine the Andean moral order, leading to a breakdown in reciprocity between humans and the physical environment.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ “*Siempre pagamos a Pachamama. Eso es importante.... Cuando llueve, sabemos subir a cerro. Entonces solea. Cuando solea mucho, siempre vamos tambien... MUY importante es eso. Esa es muy importante.... Porque si no pagamos, no va producto, nada.... Ellos [hermanos] ya no hacen este... No pagan a Pachamama, nada. Ya no creen ellos... Entonces, eso es donde división. División hace esto... Eso es importante!.... Si no pagamos, ya, ya no, ya no produce producto.*”

⁹⁵ Some suggest that this disarticulation with place deities, and the breakdown of reciprocity between humans and the earth, has the potential to separate humans from the land, leading to less respect for and stewardship of the physical environment. These concerns have entered political discourse and activism in the Andes and beyond; legislation concerned with protecting the “rights of Mother Earth” has been enacted in Bolivia and Ecuador (Vidal 2011). These measures are based on the view that *Pachamama* as an animate being with whom humans engage in reciprocal

Still, both Protestants and others in town do participate in work parties together. While the Protestants tend to seek out other believers socially more than Catholics, there is no distinction in terms of the reciprocity networks around agricultural production. Nearly everyone in town mentioned that religious difference did not matter as far as work parties were concerned. The religious divide is a matter of faith, *ayni* is a matter of work⁹⁶, a *Catolico* told me, and religious difference does not affect how work is done. Sixto C., the head of the Adventist church, said:

For the most part, we participate in *ayni* on the fields... With [church members] and also equally with the people who don't come to our church. It's just the same... We participate just the same. The bible says 'love others as oneself'. There's no reason to distance ourselves. Therefore, we do *ayni* the same with everyone.⁹⁷

This suggests, in fact, that the evangelical Protestants in Caata incorporate the moral sentiments of the bible into their decision making about reciprocity.

This is in large part because work parties in Caata provide unique spaces where people of different religions can build or reinforce social relationships across the divide. Since neither alcohol nor shamanic ritual serve any significant role in shared labor activities

interactions. This is also the point of view taken in political activism around climate justice emerging out of Bolivia in recent years, for examples, in the People's Agreement on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth (see Chapter VII and <http://pwccc.wordpress.com>).

⁹⁶ *Religión es una cosa de fe, ayni es una cosa del trabajo.*

⁹⁷ "Mayormente nosotros, claro en ayni, en la chakra, ya compartimos... Con ellos [adventistas], también con los que no vienen igual. Igual no mas.... Igual nos compartimos. Que dice en la Biblia que 'amar unos a los otros' dice. No hay que alejarse. Entonces, igual nos hacemos."

here⁹⁸, Protestants are willing and happy to participate with their non-Protestant neighbors in their livelihood activities. In fact, some of the Protestants explicitly recognized in interviews that participating in shared agricultural activities builds solidarity across religious lines. For example, the pastor of the Church of Christ in Caata, Mariano F., explained to me that he sees work parties—and in particular reciprocal exchanges, which both demand and build trust—as opportunities to develop relationships with their otherwise hostile neighbors.

In distinction to the other two communities, Caata is characterized by small but very deep networks of reciprocity and cooperation. This develops a high degree of trust within the network, but forms somewhat of a barrier between these groups. However, Mariano and his fellow *Dominguistas* recognize the potential of using *ayni* networks to reach beyond these boundaries. They seek out and build reciprocity relationships widely, including across existing barriers. Mariano told me:

Before, when I was Catholic, I did *ayni* with just my friends. I did *ayni* only with my friends, with my neighbors, with those who I was already getting along well with. Now, however, having become acquainted with the Lord, I do it with everybody. My enemy. The Lord has changed me, no? He has really changed me. That's why, [now] the community, my neighbors know about me.

[They say] “Really, this Christian is trustworthy”.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ This is related to the high degree of community cohesion and control in Caata. While elsewhere in Bolivia (San Juan, for instance—see conclusions to this chapter) fertility rituals may be performed on the field during work parties, in Caata communal rituals, in which both alcohol and non-Christian deities figure prominently, take place collectively before the designated planting times but not on the fields themselves during work parties. Protestants may simply choose to avoid those activities, while still engaging in the actual production effort.

⁹⁹ “*Antes, como cuando yo era catolico, con mis amigos no mas yo hacia ayni. Con mis amigos, con mis vecinos, con los que estoy llevando bien, con ellos no mas hacia aynis. Sin embargo, ahora conociendo al señor, yo hago con todos. Mi enemigo. El*

That is, Mariano is clearly mobilizing reciprocity networks in order to gain recognition and forge ties with the dominant group—a symbolic rather than technical motivation for engaging in reciprocity (see Chapter III).

Not only does Mariano recognize *ayni* arrangements as a way to earn trust and diminish the antagonism in the town towards the Protestant groups, but he sees this as a potential path to gain more converts. He told me “With this, we also win souls. Souls for God. If we help, if we share, if we give, doing *ayni*, that is a way to win for the Lord. Really, [they say] ‘the Christians helped me, they shared with me’.”¹⁰⁰ Thus, the *evangélicos* in Caata explicitly use and expand networks of reciprocity and cooperation as a tool to gain trust and build solidarity with the town’s antagonistic Catholic majority.

This case clearly demonstrates the symbolic and moral considerations that go into reciprocity decisions. In Caata, the marginalized Protestant population see reciprocity as a resource by which to gain recognition and even to subvert the Catholic grip as the primary religion within the community. Here, despite very high degrees of hostility and antagonism, evangelical Christians are finding that shared agricultural activity provides a space in which to build ties with their non-Protestant neighbors without compromising their spiritual and ascetic ideals. This is especially true of reciprocity arrangements, which both demand and build trust between parties. This is only possible, however, because shared work activities and the networks surrounding them

señor me ha cambiado, no. Me ha cambiado mucho. Mucho. Por eso, la comunidad, mis vecinos ya me conocen. ‘Verdaderamente, este Cristiano esta cumpliendo’.”

¹⁰⁰ “*Con esa ganamos tambien almas. Almas para dios. Si ayudamos, si regalamos, si damos, haciendo aynis, entonces con esa ganamos para el señor. A verdaderamente, ‘los cristianos me han ayudado, me han regalado’.*”

are neutral; they do not incorporate activities or practices demonized by the local Protestant groups. In a village where social organization relies heavily on the *cargo* system of leadership, and where related rituals, festivals and *fiestas* are some of the only social outlets, cooperative agricultural production and the networks that surround them provide common ground between Protestant groups and the rest of the community.

CONCLUSION

Like in the rest of Latin America, rural Bolivia is experiencing a Protestant wave that is significantly altering the social landscape—a landscape molded over the past 500 years by the Catholic Church and its attendant institutions. For those attracted to Protestantism, Catholicism is no longer able to satisfy their spiritual and material needs. As outlined in this chapter and elsewhere (Brusco 1993; Canessa 2000; Martin 1990; Robbins 2004; Stoll 1993), converts use religion to contest social norms that they perceive as destructive. Here, I focus in particular on excessive alcohol consumption as a public expression of a suite of destructive behaviors and institutions, including violence and domestic abuse, which are linked to Catholic patriarchy (Brusco 1993). The ascetic norms of Protestantism, then, challenge many institutions that are deeply embedded in Bolivian society.

By challenging ingrained structures, institutions and ways of being, the increasing relevance of Protestantism in rural Bolivia raises a number of tensions. The tremendous antagonism between the groups, and in particular, the hostility on the part of Catholics, reflects the strain that the Protestant wave is putting on rural communities. As I've outlined above, the literature suggests that this religious pluralism in rural communities precipitates a loss in community solidarity, and

indicates, in fact, that communities with a mixed population in terms of religion do not fare well and tend toward one religion or the other (Martin 2002; Canessa 2000).

However, each of the three communities where I completed my fieldwork are mixed, to some extent, in terms of the religion of their members, with differing impacts on community networks and levels of solidarity.

In this chapter, I look specifically at what happens to networks of reciprocity and cooperation in the presence religious plurality. *Ayni* networks—and shared work more generally—rely upon high levels of trust and a deep commitment to collective norms like the morality of reciprocity. However, these networks are also sites for building and reinforcing solidarity, trust, and friendship—the symbolic outcomes discussed in Chapter III. In this context, then, the impact of religious division is unclear. The hostility and resentment between groups may undermine the solidarity and shared norms that *ayni* arrangements rely so heavily upon. On the other hand, however, since they reinforce shared ideas and build relationships, there is real potential for such networks to help overcome community divisions.

In both of the cases outlined in this chapter, religious pluralism has reshaped reciprocity networks. On the one hand, the increasing relevance of Protestantism in the Pocona valley is reforming networks along religious lines or is causing such strain on the norms around reciprocity that the trust between network members itself is undermined. This has tended to reinforce the divisions between religious groups and weaken reliance on cross-religion reciprocity arrangements. On the other hand, however, in Caata cooperative and reciprocal arrangements around shared work actually provide a uniquely neutral space where relationships across the religious divide are constructed and strengthened. This contributes to wider community

solidarity and may help overcome the division and hostility that is based in religious differences, and contributes to the social reproduction of the community itself.

What are the factors contributing to these different outcomes? In this chapter, I have argued that alcohol, and its function within livelihood activities, plays a critical role in determining how religious pluralism interacts with reciprocity networks and activities. As noted above, alcohol serves an important symbolic and integrative function in rural communities throughout the Andes (Abercrombie 1998; Allen 2002; Harvey 1991; Isbell 1978; Van Vleet 2002). There is no exception in any of the three villages where I completed my fieldwork. However, what does differ in these communities is the role of alcohol on the fields during livelihood activities.

In a sense, the two villages I have presented here represent two opposing poles in terms of the centrality of alcohol in agricultural production. On the one hand, in Pocona, alcohol is among the most important elements of work parties. In some senses, as indicated by complaints across the religious spectrum, alcohol consumption even outshines production goals during work parties in Pocona. This itself creates tensions, which are aggravated by existing religious divisions. On the other hand, alcohol has no role at all in the work parties in Caata. The agricultural-related rituals involving the consumption of alcohol take place separately in the community, leaving individual fields and the work parties on them as neutral spaces where *campesinos* of both religions can engage. The outcomes I outline above, in terms of the impact on reciprocity networks and their potential to contribute to cross-religion solidarity and trust, reflect these polar differences in the role of alcohol in production activities.

The attitudes towards and use of alcohol in Pocona and Caata are related to their

geographical location, climate, and integration into markets. Pocona is located in the inter-Andean valleys of Cochabamba Province, where mild conditions are particularly appropriate for growing corn, from which *chicha* is made. While the process of fermenting the drink is time consuming and labor intensive, the corn is grown locally and very few additional market-based inputs are required. Making *chicha* also generates some income for the women who are the primary producers and venders. In Caata, which lies at a significantly higher altitude, corn is not as plentiful or easy to grow and the alcohol that is consumed locally must be purchased from the merchants who bring it at considerable expense from cities hours away. In addition, Caata is a particularly depressed community in terms of its integration into and access to markets and cash resources. Other communities in rural Bolivia may lie somewhere in between the two poles represented by these villages, depending on their own geography and access to resources.

San Juan, the village where this paper begins, is an example of a community that exists on the continuum between the two poles of alcohol use in work parties. Similar to Caata, the climate in San Juan is not conducive to producing corn, or any other crop that is fermented or distilled into an alcoholic drink. However, unlike Caata, alcohol does serve a function on the field during certain production activities, though to a much more limited degree than in Pocona. The start of a workday in San Juan frequently involves a ritual in which a *ch'alla*, or offering of alcohol, is made to Pachamama and other deities or saints. The ritual, called a *q'owa* in the local Quechua language, asks for good weather, strength and skill during planting or other activities, and a plentiful harvest. While some alcohol is consumed during a *q'owa*, it is limited and there is no expectation of excessive consumption. Anybody who prefers to not participate may simply, and without explanation, sit it out without feeling alienated or

estranged. Furthermore, alcohol is consumed only during the morning *q'owa*, and is relatively unimportant in terms of the refreshments and food that are served during a workday.

In San Juan, shared work frequently involves both Catholics and Protestants. Even with the presence of alcohol (and rituals incorporating saints and pre-Colombian deities), work parties provide neutral spaces where networks of trust, solidarity and friendship are forged and fostered across religious lines. This is because the role of alcohol and 'idols' is relatively minor in relation to the productive and social activities that work parties entail. This type of alcohol use, in the form of a ritual offering, is widespread across Bolivia, in both urban and rural settings¹⁰¹. When alcohol consumption is a relatively minor part of shared agricultural activities, and if Protestants or others are able to avoid it easily and without social penalty, then such shared work can provide a neutral space for building social networks and relationships.

Shared work, and especially work parties that activate reciprocity and cooperative networks, create opportunities for individuals to work together and collaborate in the construction of livelihoods. Fostered by the norms and expectation around *ayni* relationships, such mutual aid has the potential to provide unique spaces where cross-group relationships can be built and strengthened. If it actually lives up to this potential, however, depends on the shape and nature of existing production activities and networks. In the cases I explore here, alcohol plays a key role in how reciprocity networks are able to create unifying shared experiences for members of different

¹⁰¹ Ledezma (2003), for example, highlights the *ch'alla* ritual as part of livelihood strategies in the rural valleys of Raqaypampa.

religions, and the extent to which social networks can help soothe the hostility between different religious groups. In distinction to some of the literature that highlights the inevitability of divisions caused by the Protestant wave, I suggest that strong local networks of reciprocity and cooperation have real potential to create neutral spaces where wounds between antagonistic groups may be healed and shared social experiences can help to rebuild feelings of mutuality and trust. That is, reciprocity institutions can provide resources that enable rural people to negotiate and manage the challenges and vicissitudes of global social change.

VI

Like Birds, They Fly:

Migration and Reciprocity as Overlapping Livelihood Strategies

I arrived in Caata for the first time in the manner, I imagine, that people have been arriving in the village for centuries: on foot. Early that morning, I caught a rickety bus from La Paz, which took me as far as Charazani, the hub of the Kallawaya region some eight hours north of La Paz over a rutted asphalt then bumpy dirt road. The bus leaves every morning from the cemetery at 6am sharp, full to the absolute brim with parcels in the cargo areas both below and in a rack on top of the bus, people spilling into the aisle (and sitting on even more bundles), along with the occasional chicken, guinea pig, or piglet. Once I arrived in Charazani, I deposited my belongings in a hostel, and continued on foot—hiking for another three hours up a ridge to arrive in Caata. I could have waited a few days to catch a ride to the village—the bus from La Paz continues up the road twice a week—but I relished the idea of a hike through these Apolobamba mountains, with their startling vistas down into the Amazon basin and condors flying overhead.

One of the first interviews I conducted there was with an elderly man, Don Fernando, who wanted to tell me about what Caata was like when he was a boy. I met with Don Fernando in his house, a dim room with a dirt floor, a narrow bed, and a single chair. Smoke from a fire pit blackened the adobe walls. In three-minute chunks—he delighted in hearing what was being logged on my digital voice recorder—Fernando described the most significant changes that had taken place over the past 70 years. He quickly discarded the cooperative strategies of *ayni* and *mink'a* as a topic for

discussion; they hadn't changed a bit since when he was a boy, he said. What had changed, he emphasized, was travel. "Yes, we traveled before, but by foot. There was no bus,"¹⁰² he told me. They walked for a week to reach La Paz, sleeping in houses along the way, carrying their parcels in a woven *q'epi*¹⁰³ on their back. They traveled by foot down into the valleys below, the tropical Yungus, where they earned cash wages harvesting rice and coffee near Caranavi. Now, however, Caateños can travel by automobile, and the arrival of the "*awtu*", along with the associated roads and bus routes, has been the most important change that Don Fernando has seen over his lifetime.

In this chapter I turn to the movements of people that the arrival of the automobile helped make possible. Like in the previous two chapters, I examine how reciprocity institutions have been impacted by, and in turn impact, rural Andean's experiences with migration. And like in the previous chapters, I explore the ways in which reciprocity institutions are utilized to negotiate the difficulties that migration creates in rural communities and the ways that migratory flows may contribute to, rather than weaken, local networks and patterns of reciprocity and cooperation. Finally, like in the previous chapters, how this story plays out highlights the ways in which reciprocity practices involve a mix of considerations—technical, moral, and symbolic—that combine to make reciprocity a highly relevant tool with which Andean people mediate between local realities and global processes.

The technological shift emphasized by Don Fernando coincided with a series of political and economic changes over the past century or so that pushed indigenous

¹⁰² "*Ñawpaq purisqanku. Chakipi. Mana awtu karqankuchu.*"

¹⁰³ Folded blanket.

people off the land and attracted them to Bolivian's growing cities. As noted in Chapter IV, between 1875 and 1938, when a new constitution was written, indigenous communities lost the special protection for communal property that they had previously benefited from, and thus frequently lost access to their lands (Gotkowitz 2007). Between 1900 and 1950, rural to urban migration had already begun shifting the population of Bolivia. At the turn of the century, 85% of Bolivians lived in rural areas, but by 1950 this percentage had already fallen to 70-80%¹⁰⁴. However, it was only after the 1952 Revolution, which finally ended the *hacienda* system of servitude that tied indigenous residents to large rural estates, that rural to urban migration really took off (Farah and Sánchez 2001). At the time, the focus of development projects was on urban industrialization, and rural areas were poorly integrated into markets, had poor infrastructure, and were excluded from the national economy. This contributed to the flows that by the 1970s left a majority of Bolivians living in urban areas. Now, nearly two-thirds of the population is urban.

Rural Bolivia is shaped by migration. This is particularly salient in the contemporary period, as Bolivia continues to experience, along with the rest of Latin America, high levels of rural to urban migration. Yet, rural Andean people have a long history of mobility (Collins 1988: 27). The pre-colonial strategies of vertical control identified by John Murra (see Chapter II) were predicated upon seasonal movements between ecological zones at different altitudes (Collins 1988). Long-distance trading, child-circulation, massive migrations during the Inca's *Tawantinsuyo* empire, and the *mit'a* labor requirements during the colonial period are all examples of movement of rural Andean people throughout history (Collins 1988; Spedding and Llanos 1999;

¹⁰⁴ The population figures in this paragraph are from Farah and Sánchez (2001) and UN (2010). There is some disagreement in regards to the data.

Spaulding 1984). However, contemporary migration flows are unprecedented, and are uniquely capable of restructuring rural social order.

Migration is intimately linked to the various processes and issues of globalization (King 2000). Contemporary migration inserts rural people into global flows and processes in unparalleled ways, and migration is a tangible way that globalization affects rural communities in the Andes, and, in fact, throughout the world (Menjivar and Agadjanian 2007). Whether seasonal, long-term, or permanent, migration removes individuals from rural communities and has the potential to disrupt the social networks that form the basis for cooperation and reciprocity. However, migrants do often remain important parts of rural families and contribute to household livelihood construction.

In this chapter, I focus on the relationship between migration and reciprocity practices in rural Bolivia. I do not provide a complete overview of the patterns of, motivations for, and consequences of migration—this has been explored extensively in the literature already (see Farah and Sánchez 2001; Bebbington 2000, 1999, 1993; Gray 2009; Isbell 1985; Leinaweaver 2008; Bury 2007; Collins 1988, 1985; and Clark 2009 among other). Rather, here I use a series of snapshots from the three villages where I completed my fieldwork to focus on the interaction between reciprocity and migration strategies, drawing attention to a set of relations that are frequently overlooked in the social scientific literature. A consensus in this literature suggests that migration is a serious threat to indigenous practices, and especially the cooperation that has historically characterized rural Andean communities. However, the snapshots I present in this chapter suggest that migration, like other flows of globalization, does not have a unilateral impact on reciprocity networks and patterns. In fact, the interactions

between reciprocity patterns and migration flows are messy and multiple, and may be more complementary than the literature depicts. In this chapter, I explore this complementarity, arguing 1) that reciprocity again provides a resource that rural people use to accommodate and respond to the challenges brought by migration patterns, and 2) in some circumstances, migration flows may reinforce reciprocity norms or facilitate reciprocity activities. Though I recognize that migration does create unique challenges for rural social networks and institutions, the story I tell in this chapter highlights the multiple considerations underpinning reciprocity institutions, the dynamism and negotiability of reciprocity practices, and the ways that livelihood decisions are never detached from moral and symbolic considerations.

This chapter proceeds as follows. I first consider the literature from the Andes and elsewhere and use it to build the conceptual groundwork that links migration and reciprocity as overlapping livelihood strategies. I then briefly outline the historical and contemporary migration flows in Bolivia, and in Caata, San Juan, and Pocona in particular. Finally, I propose four specific ways in which migration contributes to reciprocity activity before drawing some conclusions and highlighting the theoretical implications of these cases.

OVERLAPPING LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

For both *ayni* and migration, researchers often emphasize their technical contributions to making a living, but both have non-technical—symbolic and moral—implications and motivations as well (see Chapter III). Migration is, at its most basic, simply the movement of people from one area to another. There are many reasons why people migrate, but most migration is framed as an economic decision—made by either households or individuals depending on one’s theoretical perspective. Migration flows

over the past 500 years are linked to changes in world and regional economies, and reflect their shifting needs and opportunities (Massey 1999). People migrate to access resources that contribute to their livelihoods, and they migrate to diversify economic activities and labor allocation (Collins 1985; Massey 1999). Migration, thus, is certainly about making a living, but it is not just a technical solution to economic problems. Migration strategies are, as Leinaweaver writes, “at once technical and moral” (2008: 63), prompted by and also shaping shifting social values and networks.

The migration literature has long noted the importance of social networks, cooperation, and even reciprocity arrangements in migration flows. Migration patterns are influenced by “sets of social ties formed on the basis of kinship, friendship, and common origin”, what Massey calls “migrant networks” (1990: 17). These networks “link migrants and nonmigrants together in a system of reciprocal obligations and expectations” (*ibid*). Such networks, which activate shared norms and ideas, provide a mechanism that contributes to the cumulative nature of migration flows. Studies in the Andes demonstrate how migrants rely on reciprocity ideals or relationships with other migrants as they struggle to establish themselves in their new communities (see Isbell 1985; Allen 2002; and Giorgis 2004). Such migrant networks are a key part of the process of both international and internal migration in the region. Thus, the social networks and context of the sending and receiving communities—and the people and places along the way—strongly shape migration decisions.

While migration is frequently tied to economic need and is interpreted as a sign of the non-viability of the rural sector, it is often part of a larger strategy to build economically feasible livelihoods linked to the rural pursuits of agriculture, livestock husbandry, and craft production (Bebbington 2000, 1999; Espinosa 2009). As

Bebbington (2000) argues, indigenous Andeans frequently leave rural places in part to maintain them. The income earned through migration allows people to invest in rural households, livelihoods, communities, and, in fact, indigenous identity. They do this out of a commitment to rural areas and ways of life, seeking to maintain indigenous identities that are connected to the land—and the attendant cultural forms.

Alternatively, people may migrate out of a desire to subvert or resist the social control of their home community, seeking new ways of thinking or to change their identities (Leinaweaver 2008; de la Cadena 1995). Certainly returning migrants come back to their communities with new ideas, cultural forms, and moral expectations.

Though Andean migration relies on relationships and reciprocity, it is often charged with contributing to the decline and deterioration of rural social networks, culture, and indigenous identity. This discussion goes beyond the ‘loss of human capital’ arguments (Massey 1999) to highlight the ways in which the outflow from rural spaces has wide-reaching cultural and moral implications. Migration removes people from local networks, and many researchers argue that this leads to a deterioration of reciprocity, mutual dependence and solidarity (Suarez 1979; Espinosa 2009; Collins 1988, 1985). Out-migration is perceived as a serious threat to indigenous identity in the Andes, which is closely related to residence in rural areas and the related practices of farming¹⁰⁵ (Bebbington 1993). The claim that migration disturbs social networks and weakens reciprocity norms and practices is made for both long-term migration and seasonal flows.

The breakdown of rural social institutions in the Andean highlands is not an entirely

¹⁰⁵ This was also evident in my own field sites, where migration was of significant concern to many of those who remained in the villages.

new phenomenon, though not all migration flows have been so associated. Collins points to similar patterns of disruption as communities responded to the removal of large numbers of men under the colonial labor tax, or *mit'a* (1988: 26). She argues that the key factor that leads to deterioration of social networks is whether the control over migration patterns is exercised outside the community or outside the hands of the migrants themselves. “Whatever its form,” Collins writes “extralocal control over off-farm work may cause absences that do not permit the maintenance of local productive relationships or the production of food crops” (1988: 27). Collins suggests that what is new in the contemporary period—and particularly concerning—is that the semiproletarianization of rural peoples in the global capitalist economy precipitates the loss of control that these people have over their production practices and related networks. Thus, the global spread of capitalism interacts with migration flows to create unique threats to rural social reproduction.

The literature identifies a number of mechanisms behind the tendency for migration to weaken local reciprocity-based social networks. First, Collins suggests that when parts of a household migrate, even very temporarily, the members that remain behind frequently are incapable of honoring the full range of their obligations to kin and community. They must focus on livelihood activities, she suggests, and hence they do not have the time to work cooperatively or participate in the rituals and ceremonial events that cement extra-household bonds (1985: 295). This is essentially the argument that migration-induced labor scarcity places greater labor demands on remaining individuals who simply do not have time for activities not directly linked to livelihood construction. Second, Collins (1988) also finds that migrant households shift towards developing non-local social networks as they seek new relationships in their host community. This suggests that building migrant networks is not always

compatible with the maintenance of community-level networks. Third, the cash remittances migrants make may also contribute to the weakening of reciprocity networks. These remittances may lead to greater commercialization of agriculture, and a shift from cooperative labor exchange towards paid labor (Gray 2009). Finally, migration experiences may bring an ideological shift that associates traditional structures with barriers to progress (Leinaweaver 2008).

The literature outlined above suggests that though there may be significant cultural and social costs associated with migration (Espinosa 2009), the impact of migration on rural communities is neither as simple nor straightforward as it may seem. While the most frequent—and intuitive—response is that migration destabilizes and undermines reciprocity practices and the social institutions that they are based upon, we see that there are many factors to take into account as we explore the relationship between these two livelihood strategies. In Caata, San Juan, and Pocona, migration patterns have not unilaterally led to the destruction of reciprocity as an economic practice. In fact, I find that reciprocity arrangements are an important part of a dynamic negotiation that rural people make in response to migration-related pressures and opportunities. In this chapter, I explore some of the ways that migration actually contributes to or activates cooperative networks and reciprocal labor sharing. I do not dispute that contemporary migration patterns create profound challenges for rural social institutions, but my fieldwork indicates that reciprocity networks and practices remain relevant—in fact indispensable—as rural people navigate and mediate their own uneven incorporation into the global system. In fact, in this chapter I argue that migration patterns, and additional challenges they bring to rural people, can actually create opportunities for invigorated enactment of reciprocity and other cooperative practices.

GENDER AND MIGRATION

Some of the literature highlights gender as an important factor in the evaluation of the social impacts of migration, and it is an important part of the story I tell in this chapter. Women were largely absent from research on migration before the 1980s, reflecting a general tendency to disregard women's involvement in and contribution to economic, political and social life (Pessar 1999: 54). However, framing the migrant as male or without gender misses important aspects of migration dynamics. The opportunities and constraints faced by potential migrants differ by gender, and migrant networks work differently along gendered lines. Thus, migration flows are themselves gendered; in the villages where I completed my fieldwork, males migrate much more frequently than females and women are often the ones left behind. These gendered patterns of migration are unquestionably important in any account of the ways migration relates to household economic behavior. As it turns out, who goes and who stays impacts how migration affects reciprocity strategies in the villages where I completed my work.

A focus on gender has allowed some researchers to have more nuanced interpretations of the impact of migration on reciprocity arrangements. For instance, while Gray (2009) discovered that migration overall did not strongly impact cooperative labor sharing practices, he found that female migration in particular did actually increase the use of reciprocal labor sharing. This was because, in the site of his research, men were more likely than women to participate in reciprocal arrangements outside of the home, particularly as household consumption needs fell. Menjivar and Agadjanian (2007) centralize gender in their study of how men's migration affects the lives of the women that are left behind in Guatemala and Armenia. They find that with men away, women often become more deeply embedded in relationships of mutual aid, and

increase their reliance upon kin, neighbors or friends, especially to complete tasks that are beyond their ability or that are at odds with the expected gender roles. In Menjivar and Agadjian's study, this increased reliance on cooperation ceased when men returned. This indicates that reciprocity may be one way that women who remain behind deal with the unique difficulties created by male migration—an issue that will be taken up at great length below.

MIGRATION FLOWS IN BOLIVIA

Rural to urban migration is the primary form of migration in the Bolivian highlands. While such flows were significant even before the Revolution, the Agrarian Reform ironically accelerated out-migration from rural areas. The Agrarian Reform ended the *hacienda* system of rural servitude, essentially freeing rural people who had been legally bound to the land. In some instances, indigenous communities received collective rights to land, but in others estates were to be divided into small plots and redistributed to peasants who would gain full ownership rights (Gotkowitz 2007). However, the division of large estates and redistribution of land was a slow process, and a number of factors made constructing a livelihood a supremely difficult task for those who did receive land. Agricultural productivity remained low, there was no rural industrial development upon which to base an agricultural transformation, and lack of infrastructure and transportation limited access to markets—a problem previously solved by the resources of the *hacienda's patrón* (Farah and Sánchez 2001). Rural poverty in this period was particularly high, and remains so today. In the 1950s, roughly 80% of the rural population was living under conditions of basic subsistence, or worse (*ibid*). These factors pushed rural people off the land, and were accompanied by the pull of urban industrial development that was in full swing from the 1950s until the 1970s.

From the 1970s and on, however, inter-regional and inter-departmental migration oriented toward rural destinations was stimulated by government policies encouraging agricultural ‘colonization’ of the lowland and Chapare regions (Nijenhuis 2010). Such migration to rural agricultural zones became increasingly relevant, especially after the total economic collapse of the early 1980s, and under the resultant structural adjustment programs that privatized state-run businesses and industries and led to the closure of highland mines (Healy 1997). In addition to migration for permanent settlement, seasonal and circular migrations took place and increased at this time as more of the lowlands were cleared for agricultural production (Nijenhuis 2010).

Also over the past few decades, migration to international destinations has increased substantially (Nijenhuis 2010; Farah and Sánchez 2001). Significant international flows began in the 1980s, and were primarily oriented to three countries: the United States, Argentina, and Brazil (Nijenhuis 2010). Now, however, international destinations for Bolivian migrants are much more diverse, including more South American neighbors of Bolivia as well as new areas of North America and Europe. Spain is a relatively new and increasingly popular destination. The number of Bolivians in Spain is reported to have increased dramatically from 6,000 to almost 300,000 in 2008 alone (*ibid*).

Accurate estimates of the number of Bolivians living outside of Bolivia are notoriously hard to come by. Official government estimates indicate that only 0.1% of Bolivians lived abroad in 2001, but estimates based on data from receiving countries suggest that roughly 2.5 million Bolivians are involved in international migration, or 25% of the country’s entire population (Nijenhuis 2010: 70). International migration is

certainly a significant source of income for Bolivians who remain behind, as well; in 2008 official remittances accounted for 8% of GDP (Nijenhuis 2010: 71).

In addition to rural-to-urban, internal agricultural, and international migration, a small but growing proportion of migrants are attracted to the potential found in Bolivia's mines. As noted above, mining was an important sector in Bolivia before the 1980s but after national enterprises were privatized under the structural adjustment of the mid-1990s, the mines were closed and miners displaced to Bolivian cities and underpopulated lowlands. At the same time, however, like many countries in Latin America, Bolivia has increasingly opened up to foreign investment, including by transnational mining corporations (see Bury 2007). Large transnational mining operations have created new processes of migration throughout the Andes (*ibid*). This is particularly relevant to residents of South-western Bolivia (where San Juan is located) as this is the most resource-rich region of the country.

All three of the villages where I completed my research participated, to some degree, in rural-to-urban, rural-to-rural, and international migration flows¹⁰⁶. However, geographical and other factors shape the directionality and timing of migration patterns of each community in unique ways. For instance, both Caata and Pocona are located in inter-Andean valley zones very near to highly productive lowland agricultural zones. This is reflected in the greater reliance among residence in these two communities upon seasonal regional flows connected with the agricultural production cycle. On the other hand, San Juan is located in a border area, closer, in fact, to Chile than to highly productive zones within Bolivia. This influences local

¹⁰⁶ Mining migration was undertaken by some residents in my three field sites, especially San Juan, but with much lower frequency than the other three forms of migration.

resident's migration decisions, and people in San Juan are more likely to migrate internationally, to Calama, Chile or northern Argentina, than internally. The difficulty with crossing the border also leads to fewer return visits among migrants from San Juan. Thus, the particularities of each community shape migration patterns in each village, which affect local cooperative networks in different ways.

Where rural people migrate and how long they stay both potentially affect cooperative activities in the sending community in a variety of ways. These two aspects of migration patterns, destination and timing, overlap of course. For instance, the migrants from San Juan who go over the border to Chile and especially those who travel from Pocona to Spain engage in longer-term migrations. They may intend to come back (some never do, of course) but they certainly will have a more difficult time returning for regular agricultural activities or village rituals. This is in comparison to the Caateños who travel to harvest rice for two weeks each March, who otherwise are deeply engaged in local agricultural production. These two examples impact social networks and activities in the home community in very different ways. International migrants, and to a lesser extent migrants to cities, do not participate in the regular activities in the sending communities. Their family members who remain behind do not rely upon them to fulfill social obligations. Furthermore, destination also affects remittances, which Gray (2009) suggests could be used to pay for labor and therefore contributes to the commercialization of agriculture and which may limit reciprocity activity. Finally, destination certainly influences the ideological and moral changes that migrants may undergo. Clearly, not all migratory flows impact cooperative networks and activities in the same way; in fact, some of these flows may have profoundly different effects.

A second factor that is also key to understanding the interplay between migration and cooperative strategies is who the migrants are. Two important characteristics, gender and age, structure migration. While female migration is becoming increasingly common in rural Bolivia (see Farah and Sánchez 2002), the majority of migrants from Caata, San Juan, and Pocona are men. This is certainly not exhaustive, as women, children¹⁰⁷, and entire families migrate as well, but there is a discernibly gendered pattern to who goes and who is left behind. Gender matters here because there is a distinctly gendered division of labor in the highland Andes, which is often described as household gender complementarity (Isbell 1976, 1978; Harris 1978, 1980; Paulson 2003). The displacement of either males or females through migration potentially disrupts production strategies based upon such gendered patterns.

Age is important as well, since there is a clear pattern of youth out-migration during the teenage years as young people finish or abandon their schooling and leave to either continue their education and improve their skills (see Leinaweaver 2008) or seek some form of employment. Some of these young people return to their natal village, frequently after they have married and have a family (see below). However, the loss of young people from the villages has left a hollowed out feeling. One elderly Poconeño, for instance, described the village as “*silencio. No hay juventud*” (silent, without youth). However, unlike gender, the out-migration of young people has less potential to disrupt livelihood production in rural Bolivia because young people are not fully integrated into livelihood strategies until they are older and married.

¹⁰⁷ Child circulation is a strategy used in the Andes whereby children are sent to live with relatives, fictive kin, or friends in (generally) urban areas and work to “improve themselves” and the economic and moral prospects for their families and communities (Leinaweaver 2008).

In fact, marriage is one of the important components in the story I want to tell about migration and reciprocity. In the next section of this chapter, I turn to constructing a new narrative, one that problematizes the classic story about migration and rural community networks, solidarity, and cooperation. Marriage—and more specifically the attendant gender roles and expectations—is an important part of the story (as we shall see) because it houses not only the tensions created by migration but also the nexus around which creative renegotiations are made that in the end have the potential to invigorate reciprocity practices.

MIGRATION AND RECIPROCITY

In this chapter, I seek to complicate the story that has emerged through a general consensus in the Andean studies literature about the impact of migration on local cultural institutions like reciprocity. Like others, I recognize that new and heightened migration flows provide unique challenges to rural sending communities. These flows certainly do place stress on existing community networks of reciprocity and cooperation. However, in this chapter I suggest that migration also contributes to and activates some reciprocity relationships, albeit in new and negotiated ways.

Reciprocity and cooperative arrangements help rural people soothe the social disruption of migration, and migration compels these people to rethink and reconstruct reciprocity networks so that they remain a relevant resource.

Based on my *in situ* fieldwork, I propose four key ways that migration and reciprocity are overlapping and mutually contributing livelihood strategies. First, as argued in Chapter IV, reciprocity arrangements help rural people deal with the labor scarcity caused by migration. Second, reciprocity helps rural people overcome the gendered bias of migration patterns by enabling them to access specific types of labor. This is

important since patterned migration flows deprive some rural households of certain types of labor *in addition* to the challenges presented by general labor scarcity. Third, I suggest that remittances may contribute to cooperative labor by providing the funds with which families are able to pay the costs associated with hosting a work party. Finally, I propose that regional migration can contribute to the strength of reciprocity norms among rural residents through the regular re-enactment of reciprocity and cooperative arrangements across community boundaries—reinforcing reciprocity as a shared belief and practice throughout the Andes. The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to fleshing out each of these four proposals in turn.

Like birds, they fly: Silent villages and the crisis of labor scarcity

Vacant houses, walls crumbling with chains locking shut the front doors, are the visible scars left by migration. The villages feel empty, especially to the elderly who remember the bustling communities of their childhood. Now, people tell me, “Pocona is silent... All around here it’s silent. There aren’t a lot of people. Everyone leaves, to Spain, to Cochabamba.”¹⁰⁸ Mariana, a 79-year old woman from Pocona, describes the change in the village she knew as a girl. Born in Pocona, Mariana lived there all her life, farming together with her late husband who passed away only a few years before we spoke. They raised their twelve children there, though none of the seven still living reside in the village. Mariana’s blue eyes are clouded with age and her fingers gnarled with tales of a hard-working life. Pocona was “more crowded” before, she remembers.

There were more people. We had lawyers, and judges, those sorts of authorities... Not now, though. The people have all gone, to Spain, to Italy, even to Buenos Aires, Argentina or the United States. Like birds, they fly, as if

¹⁰⁸ “*Silencio es Pocona... Silencio todos esas partes. No hay harta gente. A España, Cochabamba, todos se van.*”

they had wings. Every day, every day, every month, they go off. They go looking... they go off to earn money.

This creates a quandary for those who stay behind and continue to work the land. As was outlined in Chapter IV, out-migration has left a scarcity of labor, and farmers have difficulty finding enough workers during planting and harvest times. As Mariana went on to say: “There are no workers now. Who’s going to do the work? There were more laborers before. Now, there are no young men who will help us [in the fields]”¹⁰⁹.

This story of labor scarcity was repeated in each of the villages where I completed my fieldwork, bemoaned by the young and old alike. Beatriz, the young woman from San Juan who we met in Chapter IV, told me: “it seems like there are no people”¹¹⁰ who want to work. This lack of labor brings to farmers a significant degree of stress and uncertainty. Beatriz says that they worry: “Will there be [enough] people, or will there not be? What are we going to do?”¹¹¹ *Campesinos* scurry among their neighbors, seeking promises that they will come help them during their work parties. But, even when these neighbors say yes, Beatriz said “If [I] ask someone to help me, but then maybe someone else is planting, and they could go there instead. People say ‘Yes, I’ll help you’, but sometimes when it’s for cash it’s not so certain.”¹¹² That is, the market

¹⁰⁹ “*Mas concurrido era pues. Mas habia gente. Aqui habia abogados, juez, autoridades. Ahora ya no pues. Han ido a España, a Italia, hasta Buenos Aires, Argentina, o Estados Unidos. Como pajaritos, vuela pues, como tiene las. A buscar... Han ido a ganar dinero...No hay peones. Quien va a hacer? Mas antes habia. Ya no hay jovenes quien nos va a ayudar.*”

¹¹⁰ “*No hay gente parece*”

¹¹¹ “*va a ver gente, o no va a ver gente, que vamos hacer en esta?*”

¹¹² “*Si le decimos que me ayuden, entonces, si esta sembrando otroa persona, alli se van tambien. Dicen "ya, te voy a ayudar" pero a veces no es tan seguro tambien por paga pero.*”

is unable to provide a workable solution to the problem of labor scarcity.

Gathering workers in these communities is difficult because nearly everyone who remains there continues to work their own lands. However, frequently they do this work without the household labor—the sons and daughters, or even husbands—that traditionally made up the bulk of a work party. So now, everyone is busy, struggling to keep their own fields producing. And, since “the work of the field is never finished”¹¹³, farmers are busy even when they are not undertaking a work party on their own fields.

Market-based strategies are not effective at amassing the necessary labor, especially the numbers required for a work party. However, cooperative forms, and above all reciprocal exchanges, do work, and rural people rely on reciprocal labor exchange (*ayni*) as an explicit strategy for minimizing uncertainty and gathering the necessary labor. As I note in Chapter II, I heard the refrain “*ayni es mas seguro*” (*ayni* is more secure) again and again in all three villages. Beatriz told me:

Your *aynis*, you can count on your *aynis* for sure. Now, I’ve got five *aynis*. I am certain, certain that these five people will help me... *Ayni* is always more secure. *That’s why we do it*. We can count on this certainty.... This is how we have more people to be able to work.¹¹⁴

Mariana, too, told me that she thought *ayni* was more relevant today than before.

When I asked if *ayni* remained an important strategy for people in Pocona, she said:

¹¹³ “*El hacer chakra nunca no se acaba*”.

¹¹⁴ “*Tus aynis, mas seguro cuentas con tus aynis. Ahorita tengo cinco aynis, de seguro, seguro tengo esas cinco personas para que me ayuden... El ayni mas seguro siempre es, por eso nos ayudamos. Ya contamos con seguridad... Asi tenemos mas gente para poder trabajar. Tampoco no ‘va a ver gente, o no va a ver gente, que vamos hacer en esta?’*”

Yes, yes. It's important. *Ayni* is more secure! It's more secure. This is because there are no workers. Who is going to do the work?... It's because, sowing takes a lot of work. It's a big process. Therefore, you plant using *ayni*. Today, someone is going to come plant [for you]. Tomorrow, or four days or five days or seven, a week. So, they work a week for you. A whole week they will work for you. And then, you are going to show up for their work party. You *have* to show up.¹¹⁵

As Mariana suggests, the reason that *ayni* is more reliable has to do with the shared moral understandings regarding the obligation of reciprocal exchange. The following conversation, from an interview I completed with a 47-year old man from Caata, shows just how strong these norms are—and that they are understood explicitly by the *campesinos*.

Raul: [*Ayni*] is necessary for working the fields. That's why we always proceed with *ayni*. That's why, for the most part, we always plant with *ayni*... It's always *ayni*, for the most part, for planting, in this community. Always *ayni*...

Marygold: And is there is always confidence in them, the *aynis*?

R: Yes, it is for sure [*seguro*]...

M: And do they forget sometimes?

R: No, no. No. It is sacred! It's sacred. It's certain. That's why it's *ayni*!¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ “*Sí, sí. Importante es. Por que no hay peones. Quien va a hacer?... Es que, la siembra pues grande es. Seimbras, entonces en ayni. Hoy día, va a cabar. Mañana, o cuatro días o cinco días o siete días, una semana. Entonces, para vos también una semana va a trabajar pues. Una semana para vos va a trabajar. Y también, vas a venir. Tienes que venir.*”

¹¹⁶ RW: *Es necesario, esa a trabajar chakra. Entonces con ayni siempre avanzamos también. Pore so, mayormente, siembra con ayni siempre... Mayormente ayni siempre, todo siembra, en esta comunidad. Ayni siempre.*

MW: *Y siempre hay confianza con ellos, los aynis?*

RW: *Si, eso es seguro...*

Raul indicates that it is precisely this moral certitude—in the obligation of return—that makes *ayni ayni*.

There are other strategies that can improve the certainty that a worker will show up for work parties. For example, payment in advance will create a feeling of obligation. This is especially true with payment in kind (*producto*) because such payments enter into the realm of traditional cooperative strategies (this form of exchange, called *mink'a*, was discussed in Chapter IV). But, advanced payment is still a risky move, since the norms around such exchanges are not as strong as with *ayni* and a farmer risks losing the payment in addition to not having enough workers. This mechanism is used to greatest effect in Pocona, which is the most fully integrated into the market system. But even here this strategy is used selectively, only with a small network of a farmer's most trusted relationships. In general, a *campesino* might go door-to-door asking for a commitment to work in his or her work party the following day, but only those that owe *ayni* feel the greatest sense of obligation to show up. Others may have more pressing concerns, like work on their own fields, for instance. Thus, because people have more confidence the people will show up with *ayni*, "*ayni is better*"¹¹⁷ than other forms of exchange.

Because "*ayni is more sure*", many people rely on reciprocal labor exchange as an explicit strategy for dealing with migration-induced labor scarcity. Thus, migration actually contributes to the strength and relevance of reciprocity networks. Integration of these three communities into the cash economy has led to a limited commercialization of rural labor markets, but this economic system does not provide

MW: *Y a veces se olvidan?*

RW: *No, no. No, eso es sagrado ya. Sagrado ya es. Es seguro. Por eso es ayni!*

¹¹⁷ *Ayni es mejor.*

rural people with the resources to ensure that their labor needs are met. *Ayni* gives them such a tool, and is thus a uniquely appropriate strategy to meet the contemporary challenges of rural Bolivia.

Gender complementarity and missing men: shifting reciprocity institutions to access male labor

A second way that migration fosters reciprocal exchange is through the creative use of reciprocity institutions to access particular types of labor no longer available within the household. This outcome is based upon the gendered division of labor, which is itself closely associated with norms around marriage and social obligation. Frequently, access to resources—both land and reciprocity networks—is predicated upon the ideal of gender complementarity. But migration threatens to undermine these practices in the communities where I completed my fieldwork because migrating men frequently leave women behind to take care of the household. As I demonstrate, however, women use reciprocity arrangements in creative ways to access male labor, which is an important part of livelihood construction in these rural villages. Before I get to this point, however, I first need to describe these gendered patterns and why they are so engrained in rural Andean life. I focus on the community of Caata to make these claims, but, as the wider literature on the Andes suggests, these dynamics are common to much of the rural Andes.

Marriage is an institution of social and economic importance throughout the Andes. Anthropologists have long identified gender complementarity as a defining feature of rural Andean life (Isbell 1976, 1978; Harris 1978, 1980; Paulson 2003). Isbell (1976) suggests that traditional Andean life involved an interplay of synthesis and antithesis

between masculine and feminine elements. Marriage unifies the two essential parts¹¹⁸, bringing families together in a relationship of symmetrical interdependence and equality. Similarly, Harris (1978; 1980) proposes that the *chachawarmi*¹¹⁹, or married couple, is the basic unit of traditional Andean economic life. Within the *chachawarmi* pair, Harris argues, there is a complementarity and equality between the members—at least within the private sphere of the household economy. A gendered division of labor reflects this idea of complementarity within Andean marriage.¹²⁰

Livelihoods in the rural Andes involve a series of gendered practices based upon ideas about masculine and feminine roles (Paulson 2003). Paulson (2003: 246) writes: “Different activities, spaces, and knowledge are nominally feminine or masculine, while in practice men and women collaborate at specific points within these domains”. A stable union between a man and a woman is generally considered essential for livelihood construction in Caata, and elsewhere in the Andes. In general, women are charged with the domestic realm, and with food preparation and storage in particular. Men, on the other hand, are responsible for agricultural production (see Weismantel 1988; Paulson 2003). However, in Caata and elsewhere in the rural Andes, these spheres frequently overlap. Not only do women provide some of the physical labor on the fields, and they also are responsible for some of the most important elements that go into production.

The women’s task of food preparation and storage makes them responsible for a

¹¹⁸ “*La otra mitad esencial*” (the essential other half) is indispensable in order to form the whole (Isbell 1976: 37).

¹¹⁹ Literally, man-woman in Aymara, the language among the Laymis of Harris’ research. The equivalent word in Quechua is “*qhariwarmi*”, but here I use Harris’ term since it is the word most recognized in the literature.

¹²⁰ See below for a critique of the complementarity argument.

number of key production activities. In Caata, where the economy is largely subsistence based, families rely upon food stores called a *pirwa*. This pantry is the exclusive domain of the women who manage it; a husband cannot even touch *pirwa* items unless his wife asks him to. The female role of *pirwa* management influences women's roles in agricultural production in a number of ways. First, women are tasked with providing all of the food and refreshments during work parties, which, as I noted in Chapter II, is an essential element of such cooperative exchanges. Second, women often manage in-kind payments to laborers since these are frequently made from *pirwa* stores. Third, women are also in charge of storing, selecting, and preparing seeds for planting. Finally, women are also responsible for managing livestock, which contributes to agriculture through the production of manure. Thus, agricultural production in Caata is expected to require the input and effort of both men and women.

The local method for planting potatoes in Caata is an illustrative example of gender complementarity in agricultural production. Caateños still plant with the *chakitajlla*, a digging tool often described as the Andean foot plow. Whereas many parts of the Andes have shifted to planting potatoes with tractor or oxen, the steep mountainside where Caata is perched, and the small size of the terraced parcels makes these technologies unsuitable. The *chakitajlla* is handled by men, but they work closely in pairs with women. As the man digs with the foot plow to loosen the soil, the woman stoops to place the seed potatoes deep underneath the raised clods of earth. Ostensibly, the work with the *chakitajlla* is more physically demanding, but women must carry large sacks of seed potatoes on their front and bend repetitively—a highly taxing

activity¹²¹.

Women will take up masculine activities and men will perform feminine tasks if there is absolute need to. Men will prepare food, for example, though only privately for themselves or young children. Similarly, some women proudly told me during interviews that they can handle tools like the *chakitajlla*, but they never identified planting potatoes, or a public work party, as an instance in which they had used it. This illustrates, however, the expected gender complementarity in agriculture. When potatoes are planted, the norms around gendered practices are very durable. The male-female work pair during the planting of potatoes matches the household ideal of *chachawarmi*.

Even still, the gender complementarity proposals have been critiqued on multiple grounds (see, especially, Arnold's (1997) collected volume *Más Allá del Silencio: Las fronteras de género en los Andes*). Embodied practices frequently deviate from the expected work roles. Spedding (1997) emphasizes that the gendered division of labor is an ideal that structures behaviors when labor from both men and women are available, but that households frequently lack one or the other. In this case, we find that the other half is not always so 'essential', and that the women, in particular, are able to construct livelihoods without a male partner. The title of Spedding's (1997) contribution to the above volume declares: "This woman doesn't need a man".¹²² In

¹²¹ Marisol de la Cadena (1995) notes that women's labor is frequently framed by Andean people as less physically challenging but that women's work can be highly physical, though often in different ways (such as stooping rather than using a tool). De la Cadena suggests that this is one of the ways that Andean society undervalues women's contributions and reproduces gender inequalities.

¹²² In addition to arguments that women can make it on their own, critics note that the emphasis within the literature on complementarity tends to mask the unequal power dynamic within the *chachawarmi* pair. This issue is raised in recognition, especially,

Caata, however, gender complementarity remains not only an ideal, but the socially sanctioned and institutionalized norm.

For these reasons, marriage marks an important rite of passage in Andean life. It indicates the elevation to adulthood as a fully participating and productive member of society (Isbell 1976, 1978). Harris suggests, in fact, that in the Andes “the married couple is the embodiment of society itself” (1980: 90). In Caata, marriage is the first step towards becoming integrated into the community as a full member with all its associated rights and privileges—including resources, status, and networks. For example, marriage is necessary in order to “affiliate” with the community of Caata—a formal process whereby a man is inscribed into community rolls. Acting as a representative of the household, a man seeking affiliation must take on and complete an initial period of public service, called a *cargo* (see Chapter V), in addition to passing several other *cargos* over the course of his lifetime. Affiliation is necessary to access community held lands, among other resources. Marriage and affiliation are also prerequisites for participation in reciprocity networks as well. You must have a stable presence in the community to be considered a reliable candidate for reciprocity arrangements, and both marriage and affiliation are signs of such stability.

Marriage is an important component of affiliation because the responsibilities of affiliation are predicated upon the gender complementarity discussed above.

Community service—passing a *cargo* or serving as a community leader—is ostensibly taken on by the male heads of households, but it is a significant undertaking that requires the efforts of both members of the married couple. For instance, hospitality is

of widespread reports from anthropologists about domestic abuse—violence in precisely the location that is supposed to be marked by equality. See Mayer (2003).

an important aspect of many *cargos*, which generally falls upon the women. Taken together, marriage and affiliation are overlapping processes that act as the gatekeepers of community resources, including access to land and incorporation into reciprocity networks.

Migration is clearly a force that threatens to disrupt these patterns. Affiliation—and access to land—depends on the fulfillment of service duties, which migration makes difficult to complete. Similarly, access to reciprocity networks requires both presence in the community as well as formal affiliation, and the accompanying expectations. Without stable access to land, there is no need to participate in reciprocal labor exchange. *Ayni* itself is difficult to complete if both parts of the *chachawarmi* pair are not present for the work party. However, while migration complicates access to land and labor, it does not necessarily unravel reciprocity networks. On one hand, the women that remain behind continue to utilize reciprocal arrangements in their regular livelihood activities. The pasture of livestock, for instance, is one of the most common arenas for reciprocal labor exchange among women. Furthermore, these women continue to obey the obligation of return for *aynis* used during work parties that their normally absent husbands are present for. In Caata, significant undertakings—like planting and harvest—generally prompt a return trip for migrants, if even for the single day of work. Women are responsible for the debts accrued during these work parties. However, though men may return for such important undertakings, there are other activities throughout the season that are traditionally thought of as male tasks. Women who remain behind can use money from remittances to access such male labor, or, as I argue here, the gendered patterns of migration can actually lead to new forms of reciprocal exchange as women without male partners in the village forge new networks and arrangements in order to access the very resource—male labor—that

was traditionally present in rural households. That is, the women who remain behind use reciprocity arrangements in creative ways to overcome the burden of male migration, which helps keep reciprocity strategies and networks relevant within the changing village economy.

The exchanges between Doña Esther and Don Pablo provide an example of this very dynamic. On my first visit to Pablo's house, Esther was sitting in his patio, weaving. At first I thought they were related, since Esther was there during a number of the visits I made to Don Pablo's home. Esther's four children ran through the house, blending in with Pablo's own children. We all took refuge from the night's chill by the warm fire in the kitchen, and Doña Esther and her children ate together with Pablo's family on the occasions that I was there for a meal.

I had already met Doña Esther before I saw her in Pablo's patio. I knew that her husband worked outside of the community, with the national park service, and that though he returned for the most important agricultural activities—the work parties for sowing and harvesting, for example—he was absent for most of the year. Esther told me how she used *ayni* to help her get all the necessary work done. When I asked her which activities she uses *ayni* for, she responded: “All of them. Whatever it is, we just use *ayni*. Even pasturing [the sheep]. Everything. It's pure *ayni*.”¹²³ Though her husband was there for the actual work party, it was Esther's job to return the three *ayni* debts that were accrued that day—both male and female¹²⁴.

¹²³ “*Todo. Lo que sea, ayni no mas. Hasta pastorear, de todo. Puro ayni es.*”

¹²⁴ During the most recent work party, only the women asked for *ayni*. This is not particularly surprising, given that women are often under a greater labor crunch than men, especially if their partner's have migrated. However, Doña Esther insisted that she can and has done *ayni* with men as well.

Doña Esther and Don Pablo are in fact not related, not by blood or marital ties anyway. They have a longstanding reciprocity arrangement that enables Doña Esther to access Don Pablo's male labor, and sometimes, the labor of Pablo's male children. This arrangement works particularly well because of the unique needs placed on Pablo's family by these growing sons. For example, during my fieldwork, one of Pablo's sons was expected to graduate from secondary school soon and needed a new poncho for the ceremonies and related activities. The region is known for its beautiful and intricate weavings, which require an immense amount of time and effort on the part of the women who weave them. The ponchos for young graduates are expected to be particularly extravagant. Pablo's wife, Roberta, quite simply did not have the time to finish the graduation poncho on time. Thus, their household had the particular need for women's labor, which Esther provided. Doña Esther, on the other hand, had a general need for male labor, which Pablo's family happened to be relatively abundant in. Thus, this arrangement was beneficial to both families, who each had a need to access a particular type of labor that was relatively scarce within their own household.

While *ayni* was most typically the exchange of equal services (usually, a day of labor on the fields), I noted in all communities that reciprocity arrangements were sometimes used to access resources that a family did not already have. For instance, in San Juan work party hosts could contract with another *campesino* to gain access to a vehicle for the work party. That was worth three days of labor in return. In Pocona, one of the tractor operators exchanged an hour of tractor work for a day of hand labor on his own fields. In both Caata and Pocona, peasants who brought an animal to the work party (a cow to pull a plow, for instance) were repaid with two days of labor: one for the animal and one for the human. Thus, people use reciprocity to access resources they don't otherwise have access to. However, migration creates a new need—for

male labor—that villagers use traditional practices to meet.

I propose, then, that one way that reciprocity networks and migration strategies overlap is through the use of networks to access resources, goods and services not available within the household. This is directly related to the gendered division of labor—which itself is tied to local norms and expectation around marriage, what it means to be a productive adult, and community obligation. It is precisely because livelihood construction is simultaneously moral, symbolic and technical that these two economic strategies are thus linked. Viewing the economy in this way, then, exposes how fully embedded it is in the cultural and social meaning-making of life in the rural Andes.

Remittances and the expense of ayni exchanges

In his book on household economies in the Andes, long time student of reciprocity Enrique Mayer highlights the expense of participating in reciprocal labor exchange. “Reciprocal relationships in the Andes,” he writes “represent an expensive currency,” that some peasants simply cannot afford (2002: 37, 38). This is because of the non-production aspects of work parties: the food, drink, coca and other refreshments that I discuss in Chapter II. Mayer quotes the oral history of Gregorio Condori Mamani, a poor Quechua-speaking man who ended up in Cusco, who says: “When you swap *ayni* favors, you have to put your heart into it, and when they come to help you, you have got to treat them right.... That is why being the host of a work party in the fields is a lot like sponsoring a small *cargo*. It is expensive” (Valderrama *et. al.* 1996: 44). Mayer suggests that this expense of hosting a work party is prohibitive to some rural people.

Some of the peasants in my field sites acknowledged that the expense of providing refreshments was one of the down sides of *ayni* arrangements. As outlined in Chapter IV, in San Juan, for example, the expense contributes to decisions to hire tractors to plant quinoa even though planting by hand was less risky. In Caata, there are some individuals who are too poor to engage in reciprocity, since not only could they not provide the adequate refreshments but their lands were so small that they did not need the return labor. These people, rather, worked for payment in kind and earned a meager living in this way. As this indicates, some peasants do not participate in reciprocal labor exchange because of the associated expenses.

Remittances from household members who have migrated are an important source of cash that *campesinos* use to pay for refreshments during work parties. Cash is necessary, because some of what is given to workers is not produced by the hosts of the work party themselves. Alcohol and coca, for example, which are both frequently provided by work party hosts, must be purchased with cash. Thus, the expense of a work party is not simply one that can be borne by the household *pirwa*, but, rather, requires cash for purchased items.

But, cash can be hard to come by, especially in Caata where livelihoods are built around subsistence. In these instances, remittances from migrants, or cash earned during short- term seasonal migrations, are significant resources that underwrite reciprocity exchanges. This is one of the ways that migration enables investments in rural livelihoods (see Bebbington 2000).

Regional migration and shared norms of reciprocity and cooperation

Finally, I propose that regional migration patterns can contribute to a shared

commitment to reciprocity ideals and practices. As villagers migrate seasonally — sometimes just as far as a neighboring village, sometimes further away to the semi-tropical zones of the Yungus or the Chapare — they often participate in cooperative or reciprocal activities and thereby enact and reproduce such institutions. These exchanges are not always strictly *ayni*; they don't generally take the form of reciprocal exchanges of labor described in Chapter II and elsewhere in this dissertation. But, as I suggest below, temporary regional migration does frequently rely upon and exercise the ethic of reciprocity and the shared understandings about how we should interact in our world that those norms reflect.

As I sat on a field one afternoon in Pocona, interviewing Elián about the agricultural cycle, his children ran up, shouting that their *primos* had arrived. “Cousin” is a term used quite frequently in Bolivia to indicate a close family friend, someone with fictive kinship ties, or, who is closely bound to a family through reciprocity networks. Soon, we saw a young pair leading a heavily laden donkey toward us. The couple had walked down from Vacas, a community further up the valley about 8 hours by foot. They had come to trade fish from the high lakes for corn and potatoes. The highland communities near Vacas have only one growing season per year, and to complement the products from that season, people from Vacas travel down to the Pocona valley to barter or work in exchange for staple food items to bring back. These exchange interactions are grounded in generations-old relationships of reciprocity, and the norms surrounding them are based upon and reproduce the morality of reciprocity.

Strong norms around reciprocity and cooperation endure, as I argued in this chapter and elsewhere in this dissertation, largely because cooperative and reciprocal practices remain highly relevant and regularly re-enacted. These norms are embodied in the

work that rural people do as they construct their livelihoods. This is all predicated upon practice; without regularly rehearsing—and reinforcing—the rules, they would likely wither away like so many of the other traditions. However, as I’ve noted elsewhere, this does not mean that these norms remain unchanged from some hypothetical primordial state. Rather, they are negotiated over time, shifted by the people who use reciprocity in order to keep it a relevant tool.

But this does not happen simply in the micro-climes of individual relationships. As many others have noted, reciprocity and cooperation are a defining characteristic across the Andean region—even in the contemporary period (Mayer 2003). The strength of the norms around cooperation at the regional level reinforces durable practices at the village level. In this section, I propose that seasonal migration flows are an important part of how reciprocity norms are perpetuated throughout the region.

John Murra, and the many Andeanists influenced by his work, used Polanyian reciprocity and redistribution to describe how rural people were able to exploit the multiple climates of the Andean slopes to successfully construct vibrant, non-geographically bounded, communities, ethnic groups, and empires (Chapter II). During the colonial period, however, these large systems of reciprocity and redistribution were undermined. Communities were ‘reduced’ into single geographic centers that were more easily controlled and taxed (Mayer 2003; Spalding 1984). While redistribution mechanisms were undercut (see Chapter II), reciprocity institutions survived this period but were reduced to local networks and dyadic relationships.

Contemporary migration, however, provides spaces where reciprocity norms are

reinforced at a regional level. This is in contrast to much of the literature that suggests that ideologies of reciprocity are weakened when removed from its original context in rural communities. Many authors have described how cooperative ideals are reinterpreted and utilized in migration destinations, especially by new migrants from rural areas (Isbell 1978; Giorgis 2007). However, these ideas are quickly subordinated to new modes of behavior learned in urban areas (Allen 2002). Contact with urban and international spaces weakens these ideals through an ideological shift that diminishes rural knowledge and practices (Leineaweaver 2008). Thus, this literature suggests that while reciprocity may be an initial tool for new migrants to urban areas, these institutions are quickly replaced by other modes of interaction.

I propose, however, that regional rural migration flows contribute to the construction—or reconstruction, as it may be—of reciprocity and cooperation ideals in a way that contributes to the strength of networks and norms in rural communities. When migration activities include interactions based upon an ethic of reciprocity and cooperation, I argue, they reproduce these norms at a regional level and contribute to their strength and relevance in every day life. Of course, the type and direction of these flows is of utmost importance. I identify a series of temporary, seasonal, and regional patterns that utilize reciprocity networks and morality, hence reproducing these institutions and (re-)forging a common moral understanding throughout the region. These reciprocity arrangements are reminiscent of Murra's verticality, a mechanism for exploiting multiple ecological niches in the Andes without becoming reliant—and dependent—upon the market.

Regional flows predicated upon reciprocity moralities were most prevalent in Pocona. Pocona, as I have mentioned before, is a village nestled in a series of valleys in the

Department of Cochabamba. There is a great degree of ecological variation within a relatively small region, easily accessible through roads and footpaths. Barter exchanges, like those that took place between Elián and the couple from Vacas, are one way that this ecological variation is exploited outside of the market (see Mayer 2002 for a discussion of such exchanges in Peru). Elián and his family hosted the Vacas couple, sharing news of their respective families and discussing regional and national politics. The fish brought down from Vacas was presented as a gift, and the trip down the mountain as a cordial visit to friends. But, as I observed when I returned the next day, the donkey was more heavily weighted down for the trip back up the hill with the corn, potatoes, and other food items that could be grown even in the cooler season in Pocona. Elián and his wife described how the visit was performed regularly each year during this time, and was essential for the subsistence of the people in Vacas. At the same time, it tied the couple and their family to Elián's household such that should Elián ever need help—extra labor, foodstuffs during a bad year—the Vacas family was obligated to do whatever they could. While this exchange may be described as barter, it is far removed from the anonymous barter that might be performed in a marketplace. It is an exchange steeped in regular social relationships, built upon an understanding of reciprocity as the underlying moral order.

A second example of regional migration patterns in Pocona is the temporary flows around the potato harvest. Potatoes are a primary crop in Pocona and in all the surrounding valleys, and like throughout Bolivia are a staple of the local diet. They are cheap—you don't get much when you sell your crop, but you also don't have to pay much to buy enough to eat. However, rather than purchase potatoes on the market, many local peasants instead engage in cooperative labor arrangements to provision their stores. Because of the nature of the landscape and climate, each community

plants and harvests their potatoes at a slightly different time during the year. To take advantage of this—and, as Mayer (2003) points out, to smooth their labor needs over the year—some men migrate for short periods in order to work the harvest in other communities. Like most migration, these trips are based on social networks. These short-term migrants are hosted by individual families in the harvesting community—given a place to sleep and food as part of the payment for work received—and are paid in kind or in a combination of potatoes and cash. This is another mechanism that people use to gather together enough labor for production activities, since the migrants who sleep in your house and eat your food are again “*mas seguro*”, and are certain to show up to your work party. The result is a remuneration amount significantly greater (if it were converted to cash) than the going cash wage amount. Such arrangements are a form of *mink’a*, and are predicated upon the norm of reciprocity (see Chapter IV).

These short migrations are based on specific and generalized relationships that are built and reciprocated over years of back and forth labor exchanges. Peasants sometimes undertake these exchanges with a particular family or set of people, but not always. Instead, this system is generalized over the entire region and is beneficial to all those involved. The host amasses labor to work during his potato harvest, and does not have to expend his limited cash to pay their wages. The workers receive potatoes to bring home to the family pantry, again without spending their limited cash and in greater quantities than they could otherwise afford. Unlike with market exchanges, there is no race to the bottom—in fact, payment amounts and work efforts are negotiated based on the norms of reciprocal sharing rather than a logic of competitive self-maximization.

Don Emilio, my host in Caata, described a similar phenomenon. When I first spoke to

Emilio for my fieldwork, he had just returned from two weeks in the Yungus near Caranavi. Caateños get to Caranavi on a bus that follows the steep descent of the highland creeks as they collect into a river that eventually flows into the Amazon basin. Emilio went to the Yungus with a group of eight other local men to harvest rice. They all go to the same *finca*¹²⁵ every year at the same time, and every year they return with the literal fruits of their labor. They are paid piecemeal in kind; for every five bags of rice harvested, they receive one. This gives them the potential to earn roughly 100 pounds of rice every day and a half—equivalent to 150 Bolivianos a day. This is in comparison to the 15 or 20 Bolivianos they could earn—if they could find work—in the village. However, they do not sell this rice for cash. The vast majority of it is brought home to the household *pirwa*¹²⁶—enabling extra-market livelihood construction for Caateños.

While the owners of the rice *fincas* never travel upriver to Caata for work (unlike the regional patterns around Pocona), this labor exchange is an extra-market interaction that defies the competitive logic of capitalist systems. Caateños use networks that are built up over time to access these opportunities (like Massey’s migrant networks), and they develop longstanding relationships of cooperation that bring them benefits above and beyond what can be accessed through the market mechanism. And, interestingly, it is precisely the technological advances—the automobile—that contributed so greatly to the increase in migration flows that enables Caateños to more fully benefit from this cooperative exchange by bringing the harvested rice back to their household stores. Like the exchanges around Pocona, this pattern contributes to building—and enacting—regional norms around cooperative economic strategies.

¹²⁵ Estate.

¹²⁶ A small amount is sold to pay for transportation.

I suggest, then, that some regional migration flows contribute to local systems of reciprocity by providing extra-local sites for the enactment of cooperative norms. It widens the villagers' experiences with cooperative arrangements, giving them additional examples of forms that cooperative exchanges can take. It also allows local people to construct livelihoods outside of the market imperative. Not only does this help keep such traditional practices relevant, but it also can provide tools that rural people draw upon as they continually renegotiate their own hybrid experiences within the global economy.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I've tried to complicate the received ideas about the relationship between migration and reciprocity practices in rural spaces. Migration is generally expected to weaken these networks, and undermine rural social cohesion and rituals. While I do not contest that new, deepening, and changing migration flows create novel challenges for rural social organization, my fieldwork in Bolivia leads me to question the notion that migration has such a unidirectional effect. In this chapter, I propose four ways that migration and reciprocity are overlapping and mutually contributing livelihood strategies. Not only does reciprocity contribute to migration (as suggested by Massey's [1999] migrant networks), but migration patterns—and the challenges they raise for rural people—create new spaces for reciprocity practices and economic exchange that takes place outside of the market imperative. That is, rather than migration strictly weakening reciprocity network and norms, rural people continue to turn to reciprocity practices as a mechanism for contesting and soothing the perturbations resulting from migration. Furthermore, migration can also contribute positive resources—financial and ideological, for example—that contribute to

cooperative and reciprocal practices.

Let's return, briefly, to the mechanisms behind the link between migration and weakening reciprocity practices that are identified in the literature. The first, suggested by Collins (1985), is that labor scarcity causes remaining household members to have no time for extra-livelihood activities like obligations to kin and community, working cooperatively, or participating in the rituals that cement wider community solidarity. My research suggests that this is not a full picture of what is going on in the rural communities where I completed my research. The fatal assumption here is that livelihood activities are somehow distinct from the ritual, social, and cooperative activities that build social cohesion. As I argue in Chapter III and outline above, livelihoods are not separable at all from these activities; livelihood construction is deeply enmeshed with the moral and symbolic concerns that go into the social reproduction of communities, culture, and identity.

Second, the literature suggests that remittances from migration can contribute to the commercialization of agriculture and lead rural people to rely less on reciprocal labor exchange and more on payment for labor in cash. This suggests that reciprocal exchange and market-based exchange are substantively the same, differentiated only by the form of payment. Temple (2001) contests this point, arguing that there is something very unique that reciprocal exchanges offer above and beyond what is offered by market exchange, what she calls "human value". While I agree with Temple (see Chapter III), I also argue that reciprocal labor exchange offers something else—something very practical—that market exchanges cannot: certainty. Thus, even if remittances provide the monetary resources within which rural people can purchase labor, they do not necessarily do so because reciprocal labor exchange is less risky.

However, I suggest that these same remittances help enable peasants to undertake work parties because it gives them the financial resources with which to pay for the refreshments that are an essential part of any work party in rural Bolivia. Thus, the technical motivation for reciprocity—increased certainty—limits the commercializing tendency of cash remittances from migration.

Finally, two other mechanisms cited in the literature—that migrants place more emphasis on developing social networks in destinations at the expense of relationships at home, and that migration contributes to an ideological shift away from traditional knowledge and customs—are also called into question by my research. Of course, this depends entirely on the type of migration flows, but my fourth proposition suggests that regional migration need not have these effects. In fact, some regional flows may contribute to an ideological strengthening of reciprocity norms. When rural people's migration patterns enact shared values around reciprocity and cooperation, these norms are reinforced.

The greatest change in Don Fernando's life, the arrival of the automobile, facilitates the migration flows of rural Bolivians, potentially inserting people more and more into the market mechanism. However, though migration certainly has the potential to contribute to the proletarianization of the rural sector and oversee the break up of cooperative patterns and non-market forms of exchange and livelihood construction, in this chapter I suggest that it can also enact and activate reciprocity institutions and help people avoid becoming dependent upon the market imperative. Reciprocity is a resource that people use to accommodate the challenges that migration brings—the loss of labor and certain types of labor in particular—and some migration patterns can also reinforce reciprocity norms and activate reciprocity institutions. While rural-to-

urban migration is the dominant story reported in the literature, there is still high levels of seasonal and regional migration—potentially unobserved—that is facilitated by the ease of movement that roads and transportation brings. In fact, the automobile not only helps people migrate seasonally, but helps them expand their ability to undertake *mink'a* type exchanges which pay in-kind. And certainly, as is shown with the different experiences of Don Fernando and Emilio across 50 years in Caata, ease of transportation has expanded these non-market forms of exchange over this century.

Both migration and cooperation are fully steeped within the social context of the community—not only taking their cues from the local culture, but in fact shaping social organization. Reciprocity remains a salient organizing ideal precisely because it continues to be an enacted and embodied practice—renegotiated, yes, but astoundingly stable as well. In this chapter, I identify some of the ways that reciprocity networks and practices have been shaped by migration, but also how the stresses of migration—and incorporation into global processes more generally— have created new opportunities to exercise cooperative strategies.

VII

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation is about the cooperative livelihood practices of indigenous peasants in highland Bolivia within a context of unprecedented, yet uneven, interaction with global systems and processes. But, more importantly, is about the interactions between the local and the global, examining how local institutions that are grounded in culture, history and landscape are a key mechanism through which people think through, take advantage of, contest, and cope with the forces of globalization that have increasingly come to dominate their lives. I focus on the practices of reciprocal labor exchange as a window onto how this interaction takes place, “following” reciprocity interactions as a way to think about how Andean people are envisioning and constructing socially and environmentally progressive models of globalization.

Ultimately, in this dissertation I argue, in contrast to both intuition and a significant body of social scientific literature, that peasant reciprocity practices are not subordinated to modern forms of interaction as indigenous communities increasingly engage with systems and processes that reflect liberal ideals of universalism, individualism, efficiency, and profit. In fact, I suggest that reciprocity institutions provide local people with a socially and ecologically appropriate cultural “toolkit” with which they are able to negotiate their fragmented, uneven, and contradictory experiences with global systems. These resources help Andean people both to access and take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization, as well as to mitigate or overcome some of the potential challenges and harms of global social change. As rural people engage reciprocity institutions, furthermore, they bring their experiences

of globalization more in line with the local rhythms of life, Andean ethical commitments, as well as underlying and nascent forms of indigenous self-identification. In this process, participation in reciprocity exchanges contributes to the social reproduction of rural communities, providing sites for civic engagement and the enactment of shared goals and values as well as forging stronger social networks and feelings of solidarity and trust. As I argue in the preceding pages, reciprocity remains a significant institutional nexus around which Andean economic and social lives proceed even within an era of rapid and unparalleled social change.

Reciprocity institutions remain so significant in the Andes, I argue, for two interconnected reasons. First, reciprocity practices are undertaken for wide variety of reasons as people use reciprocity to pursue an array of objectives. In Chapter III I categorize these motivations as technical, moral, and symbolic, and suggested that these sets of reasoning are overlapping in both harmonious and discordant ways. The technical motivations are those related to fulfilling the technical requirements of livelihood production; moral considerations are those related to the underlying ethic for how people should engage with the wider social and material world; and symbolic considerations are related to individual and group identity and how people present themselves in the world. In the final half of this dissertation, I outline the material ways in which these overlapping considerations are invoked as people confront various flows of globalization. The technical motivation, understandably, emerges as a key consideration for engaging in reciprocity practices—quite simply reciprocity is so useful because it is the most appropriate and expedient way to pursue agricultural production and to gather the necessary labor together. However, as is explored throughout this dissertation but most directly in the discussions of quinoa producers in San Juan in Chapter IV, the primary reason that reciprocity offers such an apt

technical solution is because of the ethical agreement and symbolic meanings that it represents. “*Ayni es mas seguro*” (reciprocity is more certain), as the dominant narrative around reciprocity practices insists, precisely because of the shared moral understanding that underpins it. Similarly, the symbolic considerations that people make as they engage in reciprocity also reflect both technical and moral concerns; this can be seen in Caata, for instance, when Protestants undertake reciprocity interactions both as a means to gain recognition and forge social ties as well as a technical solution to labor needs. Overall, in this dissertation I argue that reciprocity is a technical success because of the underlying moral agreement, with both also contributing to the symbolic field of self and group identity.

Secondly, I suggest that reciprocity is—and remains—an historically significant practice because it is enacted within and shaped by its contemporary context. It is only through such enactment that reciprocity institutions are reproduced socially. And as it is enacted within specific social and material realities it must respond to these shifting circumstances in order to remain appropriate. As is outlined in Chapter II, this leads to both an ideological continuity over time, but also a process of continual transformation. In this way, reciprocity institutions are constantly renovated to suit the needs and conditions of the contemporary period. Thus, far from a static vestige of the past, Andean reciprocity is continually remade, which makes it such a long-lasting yet highly appropriate institution for the contemporary environment.

Indeed, Andean reciprocity institutions are taking on a new role as indigenous individuals, groups and social movements in Bolivia have become unexpected leaders in alternative global politics. This process is closely connected to the shift away from Marxist modes of organizing and a rise of identity politics based on ethnicity. In

Bolivia, this is most apparent with the ascent of Evo Morales. Morales, who was elected in 2005, is Bolivia's first indigenous president despite an indigenous population of over 60%. He is the leader of the *Movimiento al Socialismo*, Bolivia's socialist party, as well as the leader of Bolivia's coca grower's union. Morales' ascent was propelled by a wave of overlapping social movements, from the coca grower's movement against the drug war, to urban movements protesting the privatization of natural resources like gas and water, and the indigenous and poor people's movements against the state violence and neoliberal policies of former Bolivian leadership—movements which coalesced around the critique of neoliberal economic policies applied to Bolivia by external states and institutions. Over the past decade, these movements have increasingly incorporated indigenous concepts and claims into their critique of and resistance to what they see as the hegemony of Western and Northern empires. They juxtapose an indigenous “culture of life” with neoliberal capitalism's “culture of death” (Morales 2005), and use the practices and social organization of indigenous communities as a model for alternatives to capitalism that are more socially and ecologically sustainable.

The socialism of Evo Morales, and others within these new social movements, is not the classically Marxist variety. Morales's vice president, Alvaro Garcia Linera, is a staunch Marxist but argues that Marxist socialism is not possible in the agricultural and “family” society of Bolivia. Rather, Morales suggests that indigenous peasant communities, where land is held communally, provide “an economic model based on solidarity, reciprocity, community and consensus” (Evo Morales quoted in Dieterich 2006). Thus, Morales promotes what he calls a communitarian socialism based on indigenous principles of reciprocity, solidarity, and “respecting Mother Earth, the *Pachamama*” (*ibid.*)—all fully in line with the normative morality of reciprocity

discussed above in Chapter II.

These ideas are increasingly influential across a range of social movements in Bolivia, Latin America, and ever more at a global scale as well. For instance, Evo Morales and other Bolivian representatives are becoming more prominent within the United Nations framework, impacting, for instance, the direction of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and using indigenous frameworks as outspoken critics of UN climate negotiations. Another example of the ways in which indigenous ontologies have become embedded in key resistant movement struggles is with the People's Agreement on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth. This agreement, which emerged from an international conference of over 30,000 people from civic society groups and more than 30 governments, affirmed indigenous "knowledge, wisdom, and ancestral practices" and proposed an anti-capitalist economic model based on harmony, balance, complementarity, solidarity, and equality (World People's Conference 2010). Other movements in Bolivia, such as the Landless Movement that occupies and seeks access to underutilized land in eastern Bolivian lowlands, explicitly adopt highland indigenous practices including *ayni* as a means to organize occupation settlements despite the fact that the occupiers are generally not indigenous (Fabricant 2010). With the revitalization and revaluation of indigeneity in Bolivia, where indigenous peoples were long persecuted and indigenous identity subordinated to class and nation building projects, reciprocity and other livelihood practices of the indigenous peasants in highland communities have emerged as important organizing concepts within resistance politics (see Albro 2006).

This trend is precisely what makes a study of reciprocity institutions in highland communities so pertinent in today's world. This valorization of indigenous practices

indicates an important turn in resistance politics—a post-structuralist shift away from a politics of epic struggle between universal or totalizing forces and towards a politics of possibility, particularity, and situated, embodied interactions. It recognizes alternative knowledges, looking outside of the modern Western system for solutions to the problems that this system has created. And it values people, the social relationships and symbolic interactions between them, and the resources and landscapes with and within which these interactions take place.

Yet, there is also a hazard in the transfer of ideas about local commitments and practices away from their embodied and embedded contexts in rural communities—particularly at the analytical level. Indigenous peoples have turned to self-essentializing performances of identity and culture as tools to garner recognition and to gain access to resources and protections now available through state and international bodies. Indigenous social movements in Bolivia, as noted, similarly use such strategies as they build their models for alternative futures—drawing a link, for instance, between indigeneity and stewardship of the land and communities as well as to equality and harmony. And while the increasing valorization of indigenous modes, institutions, and practices and the related application of indigenous ideas in new arenas of struggle represents an anti-colonial and anti-racist turn in how indigenous peoples are perceived, it also paints a picture of indigeneity that reproduces essentialist notions about these groups. This is particularly true if the concepts and categories we use to talk about such ideas and interactions frame them in ways that fail to recognize their shifting nature. Furthermore, there is a tendency within this process to romanticize indigenous institutions as harmonious, egalitarian, and democratic, when in fact—as I point out in Chapter II—there can also be a high degree of inequality, exploitation, and social control within such systems. Thus, while essentialist and romantic

conceptualizations of indigenous institutions and communities may be part of a useful strategy of some groups and movements, they can also obscure some of the most important facets of these institutions.

This is why critical social scientific research into the everyday practices by which indigenous people in Bolivia are engaging in and reproducing indigenous institutions and knowledges—particularly in light of processes that ostensibly would challenge these practices—is so pressing. In this dissertation, I have examined several different global processes that have each been linked with both the deterioration of indigenous ways of being and to the loss of non-market, peasant, and cooperative modes of interaction. But, by interrogating the actual mechanisms of interaction between these two sets of forces—the global and the local—I am able to unravel some of the subtle and unseen ways through which local people manage the contradictions and conflicts that are most obvious to outside observers. In the process, indigenous institutions like reciprocity—in fact the very category of “indigenous”—are re-imagined in ways that acknowledge and highlight their dynamism, and the agentic powers of everyday practices. Thus, a close focus on reciprocity institutions both provides a way to think about the interaction between the local and the global—a contribution to how we view the possibilities of globalization—as well as provides us with ways to conceptualize indigenous practices and commitments in non-essentializing ways.

This raises interesting avenues for future research. As indigenous forms of organization and social interaction are increasingly present in social movement both dialogically and within practice, there is little understanding of how they are operationalized within this new context. What, precisely, is meant by reciprocity within social movement rhetorics, and what, exactly, is the proposed role of

reciprocity within these environments? As this dissertation points out, reciprocity works because of an underlying understanding of, commitment to, and performance of its rules in regular, embodied social interactions. But how can we imagine such institutions to work when removed from the very (direct) relationships upon which they are based? That is, if reciprocity institutions do not simply exist outside of our social reproduction of them, then how can they function when removed from these embodied contexts? And how will this impact the role of reciprocity and other indigenous institutions within these new contexts? As Fabricant (2010) notes, discursive strategies that mobilize romantic notions of indigenous communities have been effective movement-building devices, but how these strategies play out can involve a struggle between the collective as an ideological force and the practices of self-interested individuals. The work presented in this dissertation, too, suggests that reciprocity institutions are reproduced through the interplay of ideology and praxis; but it is not clear in which ways reciprocity is, or even can be, put into practice within such movements. On the other hand, however, as Andean reciprocity institutions have shifted over time given the new demands and new contexts within which they are enacted, it will be interesting to see how, or how well, these ideals can be renovated to meet the goals of these movements. These questions call for more research into how reciprocity institutions are integrated into social movements and claims-making that mobilize ideas from, but ultimately transcend, indigenous highland communities.

Furthermore, as indigenous institutions like reciprocity do become increasingly prominent in the portrayals of indigeneity within social movements and elsewhere—and as indigeneity itself is increasingly valued and honored—this has potential to impact livelihood strategies and other daily practices within indigenous communities. Thus, a potential continuation of the research outlined in this dissertation is a project

that examines the ways in which shifting ideas about indigeneity and ethnicity in Bolivia influence how rural people construct both their own self-identity and their material livelihoods. As I seek to make clear throughout this dissertation, such symbolic considerations are closely connected with how livelihood construction proceeds.

This brings us to a second key theme explored in this dissertation: the importance of how the economy itself is conceptualized. This is particularly significant for the research described in this dissertation since reciprocal labor sharing is generally framed as an economic mechanism (Spedding and Llanos 1999). As the stories from San Juan, Caata, and Pocona demonstrate, people make economic decisions for a variety of reasons. Their economic opportunities and prospects are circumscribed by social relationships and cultural norms and expectations. This comes out particularly strongly in the discussion of religious change in Chapter V, where I explore the potential of religious fragmentation to disrupt livelihood practices and reshape reciprocity networks depending on the nature of reciprocity institutions. There is no way to unlink the economy from the social and cultural institutions within the Andean highlands—or, I venture, in any site worldwide. Conceptually disembedding the economy from the wider social institutions within which it takes place leads us to miss some of the key factors impinging on how it transpires. This means, of course, that we would be unable to appreciate the importance of reciprocity as a dynamic institution with which rural people face global social change.

So, what *does* the research outlined in this dissertation tell us about the process of globalization? A primary finding is that local reciprocity institutions are a significant mediating factor in *campesino*'s interactions with the three forms of globalization

examined here. This implies that people are able to shape their own experiences of globalization on their own terms, using tools that are locally relevant and responsive to local concerns. On the one hand this leads to a situation in which the local and the global act together to constitute the outcomes that people can expect. On the other hand, this suggests that these outcomes are themselves hybrid—a negotiation between the global and the local, the universal and the particular. In this dissertation, I argue that reciprocity plays a key part in how this negotiation happens in Andean communities; in other communities and settings other local institutions are likely to emerge as significant.

Second, these results give cause to reframe the question: rather than thinking about a process of globalization, we must contemplate processes and globalizations plural (see Santos 2006). If globalization is negotiated *in situ*, using local institutions and practices, then globalization itself cannot be thought of as a universal or universalizing process (Tsing 2004). And this, of course, offers hope for developing alternatives to the globalization that has hurt so many around the world, of constructing global futures that are more socially and ecologically appropriate and that are imagined in response to the needs of people and communities rather than as socially, culturally, and morally unmoored. Ultimately, in the pages of this dissertation is an optimism: a hope for diversity within an ever more closely connected world; a hope for the agentic powers of even the most marginalized of people; a hope for alternatives to the imperative and exploitation of the capitalist system; and hope for a more socially just and ecologically sustainable future.

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