

(RE)FASHIONING THE SELF: DRESS, ECONOMY, AND IDENTITY AMONG THE SAKAKA OF NORTHERN POTOSÍ, BOLIVIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes distinctions in dress styles for the purpose of examining the complexity of ethnic and class identity in northern Potosí, Bolivia, and the ways that people move between the categories of Indian and white. Based on ethnographic fieldwork between 1986-1989 among the Sakaka ethnic group (population 22,000), the author argues that the creation and use of new styles of "traditional" ethnic dress in the 1980s expressed an increasingly self-conscious choice in favor of asserting a specific identity, as Sakaka Indians, in ethnically diverse and polarized Bolivia. The 1980s were a moment of transition in the Andean "ethnic" textile economy. Socioeconomic transformations in this system pushed peasants into the market in ways that appeared to lead to the extinction of ethnic dress. A shift to factory-made dress seemed likely due to "modernization," proletarianization, homogenization of local cultural differences, and loss of traditional textile technology and knowledge caused by rural-to-urban migration. Sakaka textile production became grounded on money earned in the coca-cocaine economy. Young migrants used earnings from seasonal migration to Bolivia's Chapare region to buy Western-style factory-made clothing, but they also purchased factory-spun synthetic-fiber yarns, with which they created handmade, locally-styled "traditional" Andean dress. Within the cross-cutting parameters of social identity of gender, class, race, and ethnicity, fashion enters in various ways. Dress remains a major creative focus for many Andeans, in which people invest substantial resources of time, materials, money, and labor. As people create and wear cloth, they also make statements about themselves. Cloth remains a principal medium through which identity is expressed and symbolized worldwide. Textiles are not a fixed semiotic code, but these codes do communicate. Sakaka fashion their dress using diverse materials from varied sources, into many styles that help them construct not one "essential" but rather multiple, and modern, Sakaka identities.

Key words: Bolivia, coca, identity, Sakaka, dress, northern Potosí, cloth, Sacaca.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza diferencias en estilos de vestimenta con el propósito de examinar la complejidad de la identidad étnica y de clase en el norte de Potosí, Bolivia y, las maneras como la gente se mueve entre las categorías de indio y blanco. Sobre la base del trabajo etnográfico realizado entre 1986 y 1989 entre el grupo étnico sakaka (población 22.000), se argumenta que la creación y uso de nuevos estilos de vestimenta étnica "tradicional" en los años ochentas muestran un incremento en la elección de adscribirse conscientemente a una identidad específica como indio sakaka, en el étnicamente diverso y polarizado Bolivia.

Los ochentas fueron un momento de transición en la economía textil "étnica" andina. Las transformaciones socioeconómicas en este sistema empujaron a los campesinos a meterse en el sistema de mercado, de manera tal que se pensó que esto llevaría a la extinción de la vestimenta étnica. El cambio hacia la vestimenta hecha de fábrica parecía como consecuencia de la "modernización", proletarización, homogenización de las diferencias culturales locales y la pérdida de la tecnología y conocimientos de la textilera tradicional, causados por la inmigración rural urbana. La producción de tejidos sakaka pasó a depender del dinero obtenido en la economía de la coca-cocaína. Jóvenes inmigrantes usaron las ganancias obtenidas de migraciones estacionales hacia la región Chapare de Bolivia, para comprar ropa de fábrica de estilo occidental; pero al mismo tiempo compraron también madejas hiladas de fábricas, de fibra sintética, con las cuales crearon vestimenta hecha a mano de estilo local andino "tradicional".

Dentro de los parámetros que cruzan la identidad social de género, clase, raza y etnicidad, la moda entra de varias maneras. La vestimenta se mantiene como un gran foco creativo para muchos andinos en la cual, la

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gente invierte importantes recursos de tiempo, materiales, dinero y trabajo. En la medida que la gente crea y usa su ropa se define a sí mismos. La vestimenta se mantiene como un medio importante a través de la cual la identidad es expresada y simbolizada mundialmente. Los sakaka diseñan su vestimenta usando materiales diversos de distintas fuentes y con muchos estilos que les ayudan a construir no sólo una identidad sakaka "esencial" sino más bien una identidad múltiple y moderna.

Palabras claves: Bolivia, coca, identidad, Sakaka, traje, norte Potosí, vestimenta, Sacaca.

Almost immediately upon one of her return trips home in 1989 from the Chapare (Bolivia's principal coca-growing region; Leons and Sanabria 1997), a young unmarried Sakaka woman in the community where I was living set up her loom to weave a new overskirt (*aqsu*) for an upcoming festival. Juana (names here are pseudonyms) was stylishly dressed that day in the latest factory-made Cochabamba-style *pollera* (full pleated skirt) and sweater set (Figure 1: the young woman on the left wears similar clothing). Like many young Sakaka, Juana alternated between wearing factory-made and handmade clothing (Figure 1: young woman on the right). Juana's new textile on the loom featured brilliantly-hued images of leaping lions and flowers in the latest Northern Potosí fashion, contrasted against a shiny black ground. Her new overskirt, woven of exuberantly-colored synthetic-fiber yarns (*lanas*), would make a striking combination with her handmade synthetic-fiber long black dress (*aymilla*), whose embroidered details were characteristic of her ethnic group² (Figure 1: right; Figure 2: all three young women wear similar dresses). The overskirt, which is worn only with the long dress, was starting to go out of fashion among Juana's generation, but her dress and overskirt were on the cutting edge of modern "traditional" Sakaka fashion, filled as they were with currently-fashionable images woven in synthetic-fiber yarns. Juana purchased those yarns with money she obtained by working in the Chapare as a cook.

Most of the time, many or nearly all the members of most of Bolivia's large indigenous ethnic groups, such as the nearly 21,000 people of Sakaka *ayllu* of Northern Potosí, continue to wear a distinctive daily dress (Figures 1, 2, 3). Such dress nationally and internationally is emblematic of the Sakaka's separate, and to many inferior, identity as Indians. To the wearers, perhaps fundamentally, such dress marks a division between clothed indigenous humans (*runa*) and naked foreign outsiders (*q'ara*). (This interpretation coincides with hegemonic non-Indian evaluations of Indian separateness, but reverses the hierarchy).

Dress remains a major creative focus for many Andeans, in which people invest substantial resources of time, materials, money, and labor, with the secondary effect that as people create and wear cloth, they also make statements about themselves. This article concentrates on Sakaka dress in relation to issues of identity, since cloth remains a principal medium through which identity is expressed and symbolized, in the Andes as elsewhere. Other indicators of identity, which I do not address here, include residence, language(s), religious practices, music, and medical practices.

This article is based on research done during a two-year period in the late 1980s (1987-1989) when I lived in the Sakaka region, carrying out ethnographic fieldwork. My primary research interest was the production and uses of cloth by contemporary *runa* (the Quechua term for people who define themselves as indigenous,³ in the context of macro-economic processes (regional, national, international) that affected the lives of rural people such as the Sakaka (Zorn 1997a). This was just after the height of the *coca*/cocaine boom, and prior to the neoliberal reforms (dating from 1993) that were intended, in part, to re-create Bolivia as a multi-ethnic, postmodern state.

The 1980s were a moment of transition in the Andean "ethnic"⁴ textile economy, when Sakaka textile production became grounded on proceeds from the *coca* economy. This occurred because by the 1980s the Sakaka fashion system⁵ (including "traditional" textile production) had become increasingly dependent on the market⁶. A shift by young Sakaka to



Figure 1. Two young women, from Sakaka ayllu, pose in the central plaza of the town of Sacaca on a Sunday market day. Photo by E. Zorn, 1988.



Figure 2. Three young women, wearing Sakaka "ethnic" dress, sing in the Samkha *ayllu* folklore festival. Photo by E. Zorn, April 1989.



Figure 3. Two young men, wearing Sakaka “ethnic” dress, play *charango* in the Samkha *ayllu* folklore festival. Photo by E. Zorn, April 1989.

factory-made dress, which many Andeans now wear instead of handmade dress, might have been expected due to “modernization”, a general process of proletarianization, homogenization of local cultural differences, and loss of traditional textile technology and knowledge caused by rural-to-urban migration. However, money earned in the Chapare was not used only to buy Western-style factory-made clothing. Somewhat surprisingly, during the *coca* boom young Sakaka also used earnings from the Chapare to purchase factory-spun synthetic-fiber yarns with which they created handmade, locally-styled “traditional” Andean cloth (Zorn 1977a, 1977b).

In the late 1980s, the vast majority of Sakaka wore some style (“genre”) of “ethnic” dress, on a daily basis, though this is less and less common for rural Andeans. This dress identifies them generally as Indian, a highly charged term. In the Northern Potosí region, Sakaka *runa*, and non-*runa* with whom they come in contact personally, or know of indirectly (second-hand, via newspapers or, less often, television), wear a variety of styles or types of dress, whose distinctions fall along a continuum based on the dichotomy of Indian versus non-Indian. In the textile literature, these dress styles are referred to as “ethnic,” versus “cosmopolitan” or “Western” (below).

Bolivian society is highly polarized in terms of race and ethnic identity. This enormously complex reality opposes "Indian" and "*mestizo*" ("mixed-race") or "white" in an all too well known destructive and painful historical (Abercrombie 1991) opposition, full of hierarchy, hatred, suspicion, exploitation, desire, and resistance. Like many anthropologists, while I believe that there is no such biological reality as race, I certainly will not deny its existence discursively and materially (Poole 1997). The hyper-idealized dichotomy of Indian and white or *mestizo* is reproduced, and contested, daily in Bolivia through multiple oppositions. These include orality versus literacy (*mestizos* possess the power of writing; Roncalla 1997); Quechua or Aymara versus Spanish (even though many people are multilingual, the exalted Spanish of Castilla still holds hegemonic sway); and hamlet versus town or city (*mestizos* or whites live in the "civilized" civitas). The body, through phenotypical variation, continues to play a defining role.

Since, as Terry Turner points out, "the body surface is the symbolic stage upon which the drama of socialization is enacted" (1980: 112), it is not surprising that many social distinctions involve dress, which along with language and residence is a prime marker of what anthropologists have called "ethnicity." Andeans such as the Sakaka selectively choose and use (i.e., appropriate) technologies, materials, practices, and images to represent themselves, with fine distinctions, as belonging or aspiring to the statuses of *runa* (Andean); *cholita/cholo* (urban Indian); or *mestiza/o* (person of mixed-blood); *Boliviana/o* (Bolivian)⁷. The Sakaka also use dress to define themselves in contrast to other neighboring indigenous Andeans. For women, such social differences are crystallized in the distinction between wearing the *aqsu* (handmade woman's overskirt) and *aymilla* (long full dress), or sweater set and *pollera* (full pleated skirt), versus *vestido* (woman's factory-made fitted dress). To dress is to be: "*de pollera*" (Indian or *cholita*) versus "*de vestido*" (*mestiza* or white).

Inspired by the monumental analysis of style and class in Bourdieu's imposing study (1984), this article examines styles of dress used by the Sakaka people in the 1980s, in the context of a general discussion of Bolivian ethnic and class identity. I begin with background information on the region and on Sakaka ayllu. I then discuss ethnic identity in Bolivia, before turning to the Sakaka textile system (specifically, dress styles in the 1980s), including recent, significant transformations in the system's political economy. My primary concern is to analyze distinctions in dress styles ("genres") as a lens for viewing the complexity of ethnic and class identity in Northern Potosí, Bolivia, and the ways in which people move between the seemingly fixed categories of Indian and white.

NORTHERN POTOSÍ

Northern Potosí, or "Nortepotosí," is both a geographical and cultural region, which is famous within Bolivia as the heart of "traditional" indigenous highland culture. The region's extreme poverty is revealed by its unenviable position as worst in virtually any series of indicators of quality of life. The Map of Poverty prepared by Bolivia's Ministry of Human Development (*Ministerio de Desarrollo Humano* 1993) shows that Alonso de Ibañez province, the heart of Sakaka territory, is one of eleven Potosí provinces with a population that is 98 percent impoverished. Only one—half of one percent of this population have their "basic needs satisfied".

On a map the Northern Potosí region appears as a spur projecting up on the eastern side of the Department of Potosí, bordered by the Departments of Cochabamba to the north, Oruro to the west, and Chuquisaca (Sucre) to the east; the rest of Potosí lies to the south. The city of Potosí, capital of Potosí Department, once was renowned as the fabulously wealthy city of colonial America, whose fabled mountain of silver supported the largest city in the world at the time, and financed Spanish hegemony for more than a century: this enormous wealth was based on Indian labor.

The Northern Potosí region continues to be home to both peasants and miners (Harris and Albo 1986). Many of Bolivia's largest indigenous ethnic groups (*ayllus*), including the Sakaka, can be found in, or border, Northern Potosí, including the Macha, Laymi, Jukumani, Chayantaka, Pukwata, and Sakaka. These *ayllus* formed part of extensive pre-Columbian Aymara nations (ethnic groups), federations, and confederations (Platt 1982)⁸. The contemporary Sakaka roughly correspond to the "first" nation of the pre-Columbian Charka federation, which was a member of the Aymara-speaking Charka-Qaraqara confederation; this confederation pre-dated the Inka invasion of the region (Abercrombie 1998; Espinoza Soriano 1969; Memorial de Charcas n.d.). The Sakaka, descendants of a warrior nation, are proud of their fighting abilities in the contemporary ritual battles (*tinkus*) that are ubiquitous to the Northern Potosí region.

THE SAKAKA

With more than 21,000 members, Sakaka (spelled with a "k") is one of Bolivia's largest ethnic groups (Zorn 1997a). Sakaka call themselves *runa*, a Quechua word for people⁹. *Runa* conceptually contrast this classification with *q'ara*, or non-Indians (in Quechua *q'ara* literally means peeled, like an animal hide that is worn bare; this is a pejorative term implying "non-human"). Contemporary Sakaka territory roughly corresponds to Alonso de Ibañez province in Northern Potosí; *ayllu* lands extend slightly to the east of the province into the Northern Potosí valleys. While Sakaka *ayllu* has maintained a great degree of unity historically with respect to control over at least a significant percentage of its pre-colonial territory, at the same time Sakaka *ayllu* has fragmented more than the other major Northern Potosí *ayllus*.

Sakaka *ayllu* is composed of minor *ayllus* that function through the practices of their members (Abercrombie 1998; Izko 1992; Zorn 1997a). These minor *ayllus* have become increasingly important in day-to-day life, eclipsing the "maximal" Sakaka *ayllu* as functioning socio-political units (following Platt's (1976) terminology for *ayllu* structure based on the Macha ethnic group; also see Harris and Velasco 1997). Neither Sakaka *ayllu* nor its two "major" "upper" and "lower" moieties (*Hanansaya* or *Aransaya* and *Hurinsaya*) have elected officials in this century (Bustamante 1985; Velasco 1997)¹⁰. My research agrees with Velasco (1997), who notes that contemporary Sakaka *runa* generally consider themselves as belonging to their local, minor *ayllus*, and especially to the minor *ayllu*'s moieties (major/minor, or upper/lower), rather than to the maximal Sakaka *ayllu*, though people refer to where they come from as "Sakaka".

Despite the ongoing fragmentation of the maximal Sakaka *ayllu*, I argue that the Sakaka still constitute an ethnic group and function as a maximal *ayllu* for the following reasons. The Sakaka still: (1) control a common territory (though this no longer includes the valley fraction to the east); (2) are overwhelmingly endogamous (they marry among themselves at a level higher than ninety percent); (3) share a particular festival-ritual cycle; (4) compose and perform a distinctive sub-style of northern Potosí music; and (5) wear a distinctive, identifiable style of clothing (a sub-type of the regional Northern Potosí style), which proclaims their identity to the textile-literate. (It is likely that the Sakaka also use distinctive medical practices, but I did not study this). Also, minor *ayllu* authorities still meet weekly in the town of Sacaca with state authorities (Velasco 1995; Zorn 1997a).

The capital of Alonso de Ibañez province, which is the colonial town of Sacaca (spelled with a "c") formed as a reduction, today is a sleepy town populated year-round by only some 900-1,000 people, though its population may quadruple during important festivals. (Sacaca's population was approximately 6,000 prior to Bolivia's Agrarian Reform; Lucio Montesinos, personal communication, 1988). Nearly all *Sacaqueños* (people from the town)

classify themselves as *vecinos*, a term which literally means “townsperson” and refers to *mestizos*, or non-Indians, who are higher in social status than Indians. *Runa* and *vecinos* live in mutually dependent, and generally bitter relations. The province has three other small towns, also populated primarily by *vecinos*. Once a stop along the important silver route between Sucre and Cusco, Sacaca a green oasis amidst eroded pink and brown hills is connected by a dirt road to the city of Oruro, six hours away in the dry season. Since the mid-1980s, rickety buses and new and old trucks travel thrice weekly between Sacaca and Oruro.

The region’s people, both *runa* and *vecino*, are monolingual, bilingual or trilingual in Quechua, Aymara, and/or Spanish¹¹. Former Aymara speakers, approximately half the Sakaka now speak Quechua as their first language. Many Sakaka (especially men) also speak some Spanish, which they learned in school, in the army, or in the Chapare. Primarily peasant farmers, the Sakaka live in approximately five hundred communities scattered at three to four thousand meters (9,900-13,220 feet) above sea level. Sakaka territory ranges from the upper *puna* (high grasslands), through lower *puna*, down to intermontane valleys. A community may be composed of more than one hamlet (*estancia* or *ranchu*); hamlets contain as few as four or five or as many as sixty households. Typical hamlet size is fifteen households, with an average population of 75 people (5.5/household).

The Sakaka today are impoverished subsistence farmers, cultivating primarily potatoes, broad beans, and wheat. Many raise small herds of sheep. Some have cattle, and a few small livestock; a few herd *llamas*. Fields are not irrigated, their lands are severely eroded, and farming is subject to frequent frosts and periodic hailstorms. The Sakaka, like other Northern Potosí *runa*, are among the poorest in a poverty-stricken nation; many experience the typical indices of extreme poverty, including poor nutrition, low life expectancy, and high infant and maternal mortality (UNICEF 1989). Hamlets lack potable running water, sewer systems, electricity, irrigation, roads, and transportation. None of the Sakaka homes, hand-built with stones and adobe bricks, have lights, sinks, bathrooms, heat, or other modern conveniences. Very few Sakaka are literate, and then only in Spanish. Few girls go to school, and very few *runa* have attended school beyond the first primary grades; to do so they must travel to the town of Sacaca, as do many Sakaka children who live relatively close (a league’s distance) to the town.

In contrast to other south-central Andean highland regions, indigenous ethnic groups in Northern Potosí and southern Cochabamba still hold title to sizeable territories, and their social organizations (the *ayllu*) are much larger than those of other *ayllus* or communities. Just to the northwest of the Sakaka live the Kirkawi (known as the “Bolívar” after the town of that name, or formerly as the Quirquiavi), an ethnic group of Quechua-speakers in Arque province, Cochabamba. The Sakaka and the Kirkawi share a general Northern Potosí culture but do not intermarry. They have fought over boundaries for centuries, and their border remains a site for intermittent conflict (Izko 1992).

Kirkawi and Sakaka dress is very similar, but it appears that a variety of subtle stylistic features differentiate their textiles and mark the group’s separate ethnic identities. These features include use (or not) of an embroidered headshawl, woven and knitted images, width of hat brim, and embroidery style, among others. The so-called “Bolívar” have been described as having a unique textile style called *kurti* (Gisbert, Arze, and Cajias 1987, especially Figs. 229, 231), characterized by use of double-headed serpents. In the late 1980s both the Kirkawi and the Sakaka used that term for a weave structure (warp-faced double cloth; Zorn 1997a), which I suspect the Sakaka learned from the Kirkawi.

MONETARIZATION IN THE SAKAKA ECONOMY

As in the “ethnic” economy of the Laymi *ayllu* described by Harris (1987), today most Sakaka products circulate through the economy of their *ayllu* using forms of non-monetary

exchange¹². The Sakaka barter with members of other ethnic groups and with *mestizo* townspeople to obtain products from outside the Sakaka ethnic group, including salt, foodstuffs from the valleys such as corn and fruit, and wood for agricultural and weaving tools. The Sakaka also need cash to obtain certain basic necessities they cannot acquire by barter; these include matches, kerosene, and sugar, some agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and pesticides, and an increasing percentage of items of dress and textile inputs. *Fiesta* expenses also greatly increase the need for cash (Velasco 1995).

Cash, however, is extremely hard to come by. The Sakaka barter or occasionally sell agricultural produce, or a sheep, in the town of Sacaca; the few “wealthy” Sakaka may commercialize surplus produce (usually potatoes) in Oruro or even La Paz. Some Sakaka obtain money by selling heirloom textiles (below; Zorn 1990). Agricultural labor in the town of Sacaca provides a way to earn cash, yet 1989 wages in the town of Sacaca paid only a dollar a day: food prices were comparable to the U.S.¹³. For the Sakaka, then, opportunities to work for money are extremely limited; therefore, temporary migration out of the region has always been important. Unlike members of other Northern Potosí ethnic groups such as the Jukumani (Godoy 1990), very few Sakaka work in the region’s mines. The Sakaka more often obtain cash by seasonal work in Bolivian cities as porters (men) and low-end resellers of produce such as limes (usually, young women); women sometimes peel potatoes in markets, wash clothes (in urban homes) or, less commonly, beg on city streets (usually, elderly women). Such migration became an important survival strategy after the extreme devastation to crops and livestock caused by the drought of 1983-84. This migration strategy has also influenced images woven in contemporary Sakaka textiles (Velasco 1995). The Sakaka formerly obtained cash through seasonal migration to Bolivia’s agricultural regions (especially Santa Cruz), but by the late 1980s their major source for cash was the *coca* economy in the Chapare, where young peasants such as the Sakaka work as simple wage laborers (Leons and Sanabria 1997; Sanabria 1993; Zorn 1997b).

IDENTITY IN BOLIVIAN SOCIETY

I noted that daily wear of a distinctive ideally handmade style of dress marks the wearer’s identity as *runa*. Is *runa* identity fixed? I believe that people at any specific moment are completely clear about their identity, as compared to others around them and to any other potential identity they could assume, represent, and/or display. Over time, however, any such identity may change: a point that was perfectly clear to local users of cloth and observers, though far less obvious to me.

By identity I mean one’s status in society, as determined by the intersection of the well-known parameters of gender, race, and class, as well as of age. The definition of status depends in great part on situation and on social class: that is, on socio-economics. For example, a member of a small town’s middle class may be seen as poor by the urban elite, but as wealthy by rural Andeans. In Bolivia and Peru the terms and concepts of class, race, and ethnicity are used in many ways. I use ethnicity to define a localized group identity, and ethnic group (a social category) as a shorthand for *ayllu* in the case of the Sakaka. In the contemporary south-central Andes, the categories of class, race, and ethnicity often are conflated, or used interchangeably, and certainly inconsistently. The categories tend to slide into one another highland Indians (an ethnic group), often considered a race, usually are members of the peasant class. Non-Indians, though they may be peasants or workers, often are believed to belong to a separate race and a higher class, and so on¹⁴. Ethnicity also is gendered, as de la Cadena (1995) shows for a community near Cuzco, Peru.

If dress codes Sakaka identity, what is it coding? As I previously noted, the primary social opposition in much of Andean society is between *runa* (Indian) and *q’ara* (non-Indian, white, from the *runa* point of view), mediated by the intermediate groups of *cholos*/

cholitas and *mestizos/mestizas* (Tomoeda and Milliones 1992). At the top of Bolivia's social hierarchy are people who define themselves as creoles (*criollos*, originally a colonial term for the children of Spaniards born in the New World), or as Spanish, white, or Bolivian¹⁵. Members of the elite wear a national variant or imported Western-style dress, though men or women may use *ponchos* (worn by male *runa*) to symbolize Bolivianess. Next in status, and sometimes overlapping with the elite, are *mestizos/mestizas*. To de-politicize class identity, many or most non-Indians refer to themselves as *mestizos*, a Spanish word meaning "mixed blood" (referring to a mix of Spanish and Indian), though they identify themselves as Bolivians¹⁶. Saying one is "*mestizo*" implies or imagines a middle-class which in reality exists in ever-dwindling numbers. Like the elite, *mestizos* also wear variants of Western dress.

Bolivia has the highest percentage in Latin America of *runa*. In Bolivia to be Indian is usually to be poor and discriminated against by both *mestizos* and *criollos*. The category of *runa* - even highland *runa* - is not, however, homogeneous or necessarily life-long. There are, perhaps obviously, rich *runa* and poor *runa*, urban *runa* and rural *runa*. Though social mobility is extremely limited and I am not aware of reliable statistics, my impression is that in rural areas such as Northern Potosí a percentage of *ayllu* members regularly change status and cease being *runa*.

The first step in upward mobility from *runa* status is to become *cholita/cholo* (urban Indians). This transformation occurs in a (limited) number of ways (Zorn n.d.b). The usual route for Sakaka *ayllu* members is to marry a townspeople, move to the town (of Sacaca), change one's dress (Zorn n.d.a), stop weaving, and learn to speak Spanish, along with other changes in practices. A Sakaka *runa* woman changes her woven overskirt (*aqsu*) and woven full black dress (Figure 1: woman on the right; Figure 2) for a *pollera* and sweater set (Figure 1: woman on the left). The children of former *runa*, if born and raised in the town of Sacaca, would for the most part be considered *cholo/cholita* or, in certain circumstances, townspeople (*vecinos*). In Northern Potosí, and probably throughout much of the south-central Andes, all inter—class ("interracial") marriages that I knew of occurred between peasant women and townsmen.

Other routes for changing status from *runa* to urban Indian or person of mixed-blood also involve a change of residence such as a move to the mines, where one learns Spanish, wears factory-made dress, and becomes "*civilizado*" (civilized, the term universally used in highland Bolivia for this transformation. Long-term residence in the Chapare, or Cochabamba, now can be a route for making the same change. Peasants in the Lake Titicaca area typically move to El Alto, the capital's satellite city, where they (or more likely their children) become *cholos/cholitas*. The social category, or class, of *cholo/cholita* overlaps *mestizos* and Indians. (I translate *cholita/cholo* as urban Andean (urban "Indian"), as do, I think, most people who would consider themselves members of that group).

Cholos usually wear a variant of Western-style dress, perhaps with a distinctive hat, and may use a scarf, knit cap, and/or *poncho*. Small details, such as using (or not) a hat, wearing a watch, or carrying a newspaper, can symbolize and differentiate urban from rural Andeans (Albó et al. 1983: 35—36). *Cholitas* are renowned for their particular style of dress, including a shaped felt hat, such as the bowler, several full-pleated skirts, sweater sets, an apron, a mantle, and jewelry (Ackerman 1991; de Sahonero 1987). Distinctive dress is important in defining this group; *mestiza* townswomen also wear *polleras* and bowler hats, but typically of less costly materials (Figure 4: older woman at right). Even relatively well—off *cholitas* and *cholos*, some of whom through their commercial activities manage a relatively large amount of money, remain discriminated against by members of Bolivia's elite and middle classes. Strong social and economic pressures exist in the city to abandon the *pollera* or, in a few cases, to retain it (Albó et al. 1983: 21 ff.). Members of this group, which has grown enormously as a result of migration to cities, especially La Paz, have been



Figure 4. A young man, playing *charango*, and two young women singers, perform in the Samkha ayllu folklore festival. Photo by E. Zorn, April 1989.

heavily recruited and mobilized in Bolivia's recently-formed political party CONDEPA (*Conciencia de Patria*, or Conscience of the Nation) (Archondo 1991). CONDEPA's party member "Comadre" Remedios (Loza) stunned the Bolivian nation in the late 1980s by continuing to wear *polleras* (to dress "*de pollera*") while serving as an elected representative in La Paz¹⁷.

THE SAKAKA TEXTILE SYSTEM CLOTH IN THE ANDES

The Andean region is heir to one of the world's greatest textile traditions, which has continued, with spatial and temporal variations, for 5,000 years. Many have marvelled at the extraordinary complexity and beauty of Andean cloth, which has been commercialized

extensively, usually to the detriment of the historical record and Andean patrimony. Textiles were crucial to ancient Andeans—they were the single most important medium, encoding meaning and wealth, in multiple ways that it is difficult for us to appreciate today (Murra 1962). Textiles continue to fulfill many of these roles today. Following the Spanish invasion, cloth no longer was produced by and for the elite, but local traditions continued, forming the direct precursor to contemporary Andean cloth production.

Cloth is, however, a supremely time consuming medium in which to encode meaning and wealth. Even today, a patterned narrow belt may require a week to weave, and a patterned shawl, such as those worn by the young women in Figures 1, 2, 4, and 5 (two women on the left) requires two to four weeks of 10-hour-a-day labor, for six days/week. An elaborately patterned *poncho* may require three to six months of concentrated daily work, apart from the labor of yarn preparation, which is easily double that of time spent weaving.



Figure 5. Women in the central plaza of the town of Sacaca on a Sunday market day. Photo by E. Zorn, 1989.

Among the Sakaka, cloth plays the following roles, which I will summarize briefly before discussing cloth in relation to Bolivian, and then Sakaka, dress and identity. Sakaka cloth functions as: (1) as a paramount sign in the representation—and construction—of identity in its manifold forms (below); (2) a communicative system, with meanings and values that textiles, taken as a whole, evoke, express and constitute for their wearers; and (3) the most important Andean expressive visual medium (“art”); (4) cloth also functions poetically, that is, in ways in which the textile refers to itself. (In addition to song, I think of cloth as a form of Andean poetry); (5) Cloth has a significant economic function, including (the embodiment of) wealth, whether displayed in public, stored in homes, or inherited; (6) cloth has a profoundly religious function, which actually permeates the process of creation of certain kinds of cloth, (As we know, religion cannot be compartmentalized into one sphere within the highly religious Andean society); (7) cloth retains limited military functions; (8) the international handicraft industry, including local tourism, has provided another function for cloth in the Andes, though not necessarily for Andean cloth; this industry requires products that frequently bear little resemblance to locally-made cloth; (9) cloth plays an

important role in the international market for ethnic art and antiquities, which all but the dealers themselves would agree is to the great detriment of Andean society; (10) finally, the international fine arts market provides a potential outlet for high-quality, expensive merchandise. It remains to be seen whether Andean textiles may return income to their producers similar to the gains that other ethnic artists (for example, North American Navajo weavers) sometimes are able to earn: (Cereceda et al. 1993; Dávalos et al. 1992).

Fashion and distinctions in dress remain important in marking and symbolizing both individual and group identity, whether claimed or applied, at multiple levels: individual; international, national, regional, ethnic-group, and community; ethnic, racial, class, and gendered; and, finally, human/non-human. The Sakaka “function”, as I previously noted, as an *ayllu* by wearing a distinctive identifiable (sub-)style of clothing, which proclaims their identity to the highly textile-literate (Figures 2, 3, 4: right, 5: left). Dress styles symbolize and code the Sakaka’s varied experiences, and mark and help “construct” their positions of social status, achieved or aspired, in late twentieth-century Bolivian society¹⁸.

The number of dress styles appears to have increased considerably in the past fifty years, probably as a consequence of the growth of industrial textile production. Each dress style has its own gender, class, ethnic, and/or racial meanings. Dress also varies by generation and by region. Speaking most generally, if, as I noted, the range of styles is conceptualized as a continuum, then handmade dress is at one end, and factory-made Western style dress is at the other.

DRESS IN BOLIVIA

Andeans such as the Sakaka, as I have noted, selectively appropriate technologies, materials, and images to represent themselves, with fine distinctions, as belonging or aspiring to the statuses within Bolivian society of *runa* (indigenous Andean); *cholita/cholo* (urban Indian); or *mestiza/o* (person of mixed-blood); *Boliviana/o* (Bolivian). The Sakaka dress as whites only in parody, in costumed dances, or when town godparents of a wedding outfit the couple, for one day, in rented Western-style dress (below). Sakaka also use dress to define themselves in relation to other neighboring ethnic groups. Not all Sakaka, however, wear “Sakaka” dress all the time (Zorn 1994). Like members of other large indigenous Bolivian ethnic groups, the Sakaka wear (or strategically deploy) many styles of clothing. In a nation such as Bolivia with deep racism towards its indigenous population, the decision to wear one style of dress or another is enormously significant- constrained, of course, by multiple factors, including economics.

Sakaka women weave most of the textiles that mark Sakaka ethnicity, though men also produce textiles. Within the sexual division of labor men make certain textiles (usually those such as pants, skirts, shirts, and dresses, which are derived from Spanish peasant-style garments) and women others (such as *coca* purses, belts, shawls, and *ponchos*, which are derived from Andean-style garments). In most of Peru and Bolivia women weave on the Andean-type continuous-warp loom, and men on the Spanish-type treadle loom. Andean “reciprocity” and “complementarity” in textile production is such that it takes textiles made by both men and women to clothe an individual (Zorn 1997a).

Dress styles are difficult to describe with precision because, somewhat like Saussurean distinctions between *langue* and *parole*, idealized general rules vary in day-to-day practice. Furthermore, styles and names for dress styles are cross-cutting sign systems that vary regionally and socio-economically. A garment such as the full-pleated skirt (*pollera*) that Juana sometimes wears (Figures 1, 4: left), which indexes urban Indian (*cholita*) status (Mendoza 1992; Paredes-Candia 1992; de Sahonero 1987), may —depending on a variety of factors such as cut, material, and place of manufacture— polysemously signal higher

status vis a vis a rural Indian, or lower status vis a vis a *mestizo* city dweller. The ironies of this signaling, however, include the fact that the generically indigenous factory-made *polle- ra* costs less than handmade ethnic dress, while the more expensive variations of *polleras* cost more sometimes far more than factory-made, working-class Western-style dress.

Since terms such as handmade and factory-made are key to understanding certain distinctions in Bolivian dress, it will be useful to define them before examining dress among the Sakaka. The term **handmade** (handwoven, handspun) refers to garments made completely by the user and/or a family member (or sweetheart), including the processes of spinning the yarn, weaving the fabric, and sewing the finished garment; handwoven garments are made inside the ethnic group. The designation of **cottage-industry-made** refers to garments or fabric handmade outside the ethnic group, in indigenous communities, small towns, or provincial cities in rural regions. Lastly, **factory-made** (factory-woven, factory-spun, or industrially-manufactured) refers to yarns, fabrics, or garments made in factories of varying dimensions, using heavy machinery: factories are located in large cities. (Large cottage industries and small factories overlap in scale, though technology differs.)

Thus, varying combinations of handwoven, cottage-industry woven, or factory-made dress express, among many attributes, aesthetic preference, identity, social status (lower-class *runa* vs. upwardly mobile *cholita/cholo* dress), and claims to economic prosperity. Cosmopolitan dress requires cash to buy, but ethnic dress, because of its many components, costs far more than cheap Western-style dress.

DRESS AMONG THE SAKAKA

The Sakaka make two major distinctions in dress, between what in the literature is described as Western or cosmopolitan, and traditional or ethnic dress¹⁹. The Sakaka call the former “civil *p’acha*” (civil, or civilized, or civilian dress), the latter “*runa p’acha*” (human, or Indian dress)²⁰. Western-style dress is industrially-manufactured; “traditional” or “ethnic” dress incorporates items of clothing made in several ways. The core of the “most traditional” ethnic dress consists of garments handwoven by users and their families or *ayllu* neighbors. However, one of the ironies of this system is that some essential items of ethnic dress are made in cottage industries located outside the local ethnic group. For the Sakaka, these items include the “typical” Northern-Potosí-style white felt hat and rubber-tire sandals, worn by the young people in Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (all except the older woman on the right, wearing shoes), as well as the embroidered black skirts and jackets that inspired Sakaka’s “new” traditional style (Figures 2, 3, 4: right; below).

Cosmopolitan dress is a cheap variant of the dress worn by much of Bolivian society who self-identify as *mestizos*. Distinctions in materials, cut, and style index specific class and regional identities. The Sakaka variant of cosmopolitan dress is roughly equivalent to working-class (*mestizo*) dress, though some items, such as cheap baseball caps, have come to index peasant status. Cosmopolitan dress is worn only by Sakaka men. This gendered difference is not unique to the Sakaka; women worldwide are more likely than men to wear some variant of ethnic dress (Barnes and Eicher 1992a). Cosmopolitan dress for Bolivian male peasants such as the Sakaka consists of cheap industrially-manufactured synthetic-fiber clothing, including some kind of baseball cap, a tailored shirt, a sweater or zippered jacket, pants, a leather belt, and sneakers, with or without socks.

Whereas cosmopolitan dress is worn by both working class (*mestizo*) and urban Andean (*cholo*) males (the latter working-class or peasant), the styles of working class (*mestiza*) and urban Andean women (*cholitas*) usually differ, sometimes significantly so. Working-class women are likely to wear cosmopolitan-style dresses, or blouses and skirts, or even pants, considered a quintessentially male garment, whereas urban Andean women (*cholitas*) usually

wear regional variants of ethnic dress, whose sine qua non is the *pollera*, in its nearly infinite varieties. In Figures 1 and 4, the young women on the left wear generically-indigenous urban Indian (*cholita*) style *polleras*; in Figure 4, the young woman on the right wears a cottage-industry woven, Northern-Potosí “ethnic” style *pollera*. *Cholita* dress varies regionally (i.e., La Paz vs. Cochabamba), indexing often substantial class differences between wealthy *cholitas* (epitomized by the elegantly dressed *Comadre Remedios*) and poor *cholitas*, the latter usually living in the countryside. In Figure 5, photographed in the town of Sacaca’s plaza on Sunday market day, the older woman on the right, who probably works as a vendor, wears rural *cholita* dress, including the bowler hat so characteristic of Bolivia and parts of southern Peru. The two girls on the right wear *cholita*-style skirts and sweaters, but these are combined with handwoven markers of Sakaka ethnicity, including a white hat, braids with hair ties, and a mantle (below).

Ethnic dress, or *runa p’acha*, for the Sakaka encompasses (mostly) locally handwoven garments, based on a mix of pre-Columbian and Spanish peasant-derived styles, as can be clearly seen in all the Figures. Women wear a long pleated black dress, embroidered at cuff and hem, called an *aymilla* (Figure 1: right; Figure 2). A woman’s ensemble includes one or more handwoven shawls, a white felt hat, multiple braids with hair ties, one or more belts, an overskirt (like that woven by Juana), and rubber-tire sandals. This long dress (Figure 2) and, especially, the overskirt, symbolizes a *runa* identity in many Bolivian regions, especially Northern Potosí. The shift from the long dress and overskirt (Figure 2) to some type of pleated skirt (Figures 1, 2, 4: left) symbolizes modernity and an urban orientation except in the case of young Sakaka who have developed a “new traditional” style which symbolizes a “modern” Sakaka identity (Figures 2, 3). Sakaka male ethnic dress consists of handwoven and embroidered tailored clothing (pants, vest, jacket), worn over a factory-made shirt, as well as a handmade *poncho*, knit cap, hatbands, and a *coca*-leaf purse, and a cottage-industry-made white felt hat, and rubber-tire sandals (Figure 3). The men’s elaborate embroidery of the men in Figure 3 characterizes Sakaka’s new style of ethnic dress: earlier styles were far simpler.

I have sought to place the enormous number of variations in dress that I saw while living in Northern Potosí into groups, somewhat akin to genres²¹. I believe that these groupings reflect Sakaka categories, and not just my impositions. As other anthropologists have argued, the process of creating types and groups runs the risk of imposing categories that may be based on serious misunderstandings, but they also may be structured in such a way as to reveal culturally-constructed, socially valid categories (Ries 1997).

In the late 1980s the range of Sakaka dress styles included seven types. The Quechua terms that describe them are semantically rich, such as “*ñawpa muda*,” from *nawpa*, old or prior or ancient (Quechua) and *muda*, fashion (*moda*, Spanish), but I will not undertake that analysis here, other than to re-emphasize the opposition between types 1-6, which are sub-categories of the broad genre of *runa* (Indian, ethnic) dress, in opposition to type 7, which is part of the broad genre of *q’ara* (non-Indian, white or *mestizo*) dress. I would like to emphasize that my analysis here focuses on dress styles taken as a whole, leaving apart the semiotic analysis of individual garments, such as the *awayu* (but see Velasco 1995; Zorn 1997a).

SAKAKA DRESS STYLES IN THE 1980S

1. Handwoven “classic traditional” Sakaka dress - old-fashioned Indian/ethnic dress (*ñawpa muda runa p’acha*: literally, old-fashioned *runa* dress) (Figures 6, 7: right). This style is worn primarily by middle-aged and elderly Sakaka, teenagers from poorer families, and small children whose parents, especially mothers, are particularly interested in weaving. *Ayllu* members on the eastern edge of Sakaka territory rarely wear this style, because of their warmer climate and because they dress more like their valley neighbors. Thus “classic”

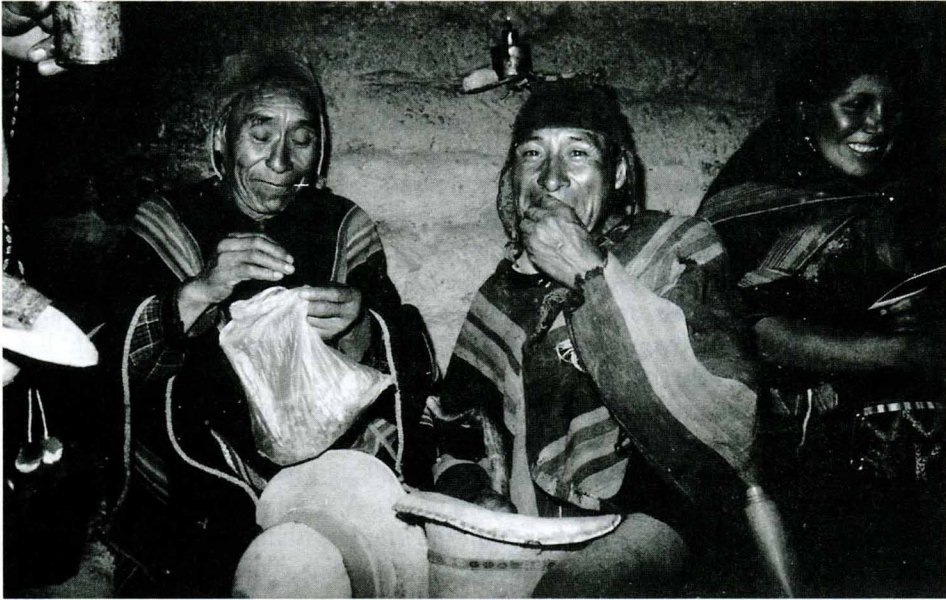


Figure 6. Older Sakaka men chew *coca* leaf, inside a home in the evening. Photo by E. Zorn, 1989.

Sakaka dress is typically worn by *ayllu* members in the highland central, western, and southern parts of Sakaka territory.

Sakaka women's "classic traditional" dress is characterized and symbolized by the handwoven *aqsu* (overskirt), *aymilla* (full long dress), and *awayu* (mantle, or *lliclla* in Quechua) (Figure 7: women at left). Men's dress is characterized by handwoven pants, vest and jacket, and symbolized by the handwoven *poncho* (Figures 6, 7: right). In this style embroidery is simple and restricted to narrow bands. An important aesthetic feature is that images (woven and knitted) are enclosed in separate "boxes" (Figure 2: left; Figure 5: left), which some authors have likened to Inka *tukapu* (Gisbert et al. 1987: 200ff., Figs. 211, 213, 217). (The



Figure 7. Members of a Sakaka hamlet celebrate a festival; the sponsors dance on the left, while a panpipe ensemble plays music on the right. Photo by E. Zorn, 1989.

Sakaka do not, to my knowledge, use this term) This feature is shared by many Llallagua-San Pedro textiles, and contrasts with the “*kurti*” style described for the Kirkawi (above).

The makers of this classic traditional dress are, like all Sakaka, indigenous peasant farmers and herders. They live and work in a primarily subsistence and barter domestic economy with limited market transactions and restricted access to cash. Because of relative poverty, generation, or fashion preference, they handspin and handweave their clothing from sheep wool or *llama* or *alpaca* fiber obtained from their own animals or from barter with the increasingly rare travelling herders, some of whom still bring camelid fiber as they cross Sakaka territory on the herders’ annual trips from the Oruro or La Paz highlands to the eastern valleys for corn.

As I noted, the Sakaka do not make all items of their “traditional” dress; components made outside the *ayllu* that must be purchased, or bartered for, include sandals made from recycled rubber-tires, and white felt hats (Figures 1-5, 7). Made by regional artisans, both items are crafted with subtle differences that vary systematically by ethnic group. While, for example, all Northern Potosí white peasant hats may appear the same, the Kirkawi (neighbors to the Sakaka) prefer a slightly narrower hat brim. Single artisans or workshops seem to produce variants for *ayllu*-specific consumption, which are sold throughout the region by itinerant artisans at fairs. Use of this classic or traditional Sakaka dress is diminishing, due to the loss of Sakaka heirloom textiles as models, and to the breakdown of the agro-pastoral economy. Velasco (1995) notes that elderly women who are temporary migrants to the cities still wear this style.

2. Handwoven “modern traditional” Sakaka dress- new fashion “modern” ethnic dress (*musuq muda runa píacha*: literally, new-style *runa* dress) (Figures 2, 3). This style, also called *runa p’acha*, or *muda* (fashionable, from the Spanish word *moda*), is worn primarily by Sakaka teenagers, and by middle-aged people who are more fashion-conscious and/or better off financially than wearers of the previous style. This is the “new” Sakaka style that I analyzed previously (Zorn 1990); Juana’s overskirt belongs to this style. Women’s dress still is characterized and symbolized by the handwoven overskirt, full long dress, and mantle. Men wear handwoven pants, vests, and jackets, combined with second-hand factory-made Western-style shirts. Women’s dresses, heavily embroidered at the hem and cuffs (Figure 2), and men’s clothing (Figure 3), are embroidered by men on sewing machines. Sakaka who dress in this style buy white hats and rubber-tire sandals made outside the *ayllu*, as do the wearers of the previous sub-style. Unlike “classic” traditional dress, this style is produced using factory-made materials, and incorporates significant aesthetic changes, including color, image, and aesthetic devices (below; Velasco 1995; Zorn 1997a).

“Modern traditional” textiles are plyed (re-spun) and handwoven from factory-spun synthetic polyester yarns (*lanas*), which the Sakaka purchase in small increments from vendors in the town of Sacaca, or in larger quantities bought retail or sometimes wholesale in the larger cities of Oruro and Cochabamba. They also obtain yarns by bartering old textiles (Zorn 1990; below). The most fashionable dominant colors in 1987-1989 were lime green, called *verde lechuga* (lettuce green), or *limonada* (lemonade); lime green replaced white, which was fashionable in the mid-1980s (and in southern Peru: Femenías 1997.) There are many reasons for using factory-spun yarns; in general, time saved spinning is invested in weaving and in embroidery (Zorn 1997a). Aesthetic changes in this style, which I analyze elsewhere in detail (Zorn 1990, 1994), include new images (motorcycles, helicopters), new aesthetic devices (gradated rather than solid-block color divisions between warp-patterned weave stripes), and new weave structures (warp-faced double cloth and supplementary weft, warp-patterned weave) (Figure 2: woman on the left; Zorn 1990: Figures 1, 3). Garments in this sub-style often imitate the style I describe next (style 3). The Sakaka who buy factory-spun yarns generally have greater access to cash, which they obtain outside the *ayllu* and mostly outside the province (below). The makers and wearers of this style typically are young, unmarried teenagers or

people in their twenties, since they are the most likely to migrate, and to invest in sumptuary items (older, married Sakaka usually invest in land or animals: Zorn 1997b).

3. **Cottage-industry-woven “modern traditional” Indian dress-** new fashion “modern” ethnic dress (*muda*, or *runa p’acha*: literally, fashion, or *runa* dress) (Figure 4: right). This style, also called *muda* and *runa p’acha*, may be worn by the Sakaka teenagers and older people I just referred to. Nearly all the items of dress in this style are made outside the *ayllu*, by a cottage industry that appears to have developed in the early 1980s. Cottage-produced garments for women include the full long dress, a skirt (which is a non-traditional item, since Northern Potosí *runa* women “traditionally” wear dresses, not skirts and blouses); garments for men include jackets, vests, and scarves. These cottage-woven “ready-to-wear” garments are woven and embroidered in a regional Northern Potosí peasant style. This small industry is centered around Llallagua, Potosí, an increasingly abandoned city near Bolivia’s great mines, though my preliminary impression is that most producers work in their rural hamlets.

Although this style appears quite different from Sakaka handwoven dress (style 2), this visual impression is based on only a few garments -the woman’s skirt and the man’s vest, which are the best-sellers of the industry (or at least the most frequently purchased by the Sakaka) (Figure 3: plaid jacket of man on the left). The fashionable ready-to-wear synthetic-fiber “traditional” garments of this style are woven from factory-spun synthetic polyester yarns (the same as those used for style 2). Individual garments are elaborately embroidered on treadle sewing machines by male members of this regional cottage industry (still unresearched); its main producers are members of the Laymi ethnic group, who sell to the Sakaka and people from other Northern Potosí *ayllus*.

Urbanites who wish to (re-)present themselves as Indians (typically indexed as coming from Nortepotosí) typically wear these clothes for masked dances (Abercrombie 1992), performed as far away as Peru, or for elementary school patriotic parades. The style of this industry’s elaborate embroidery changes frequently, which is why I characterize its production as an indigenous fashion industry. Garment cost depends in part on the complexity and size of embroidered motifs.

As I have noted, there is a sexual division of labor in the production of Andean cloth, and each sex requires textiles made by the other sex to be completely clothed. The shift in this style takes place in the male realm of textile production; garments formerly made by men in the household are purchased from men who produce in a cottage industry. On the other hand, while certain male-made textiles are available from the Llallagua cottage industry, others -the overskirt, mantle, hatband (Figures 2, 3, 8), *poncho*, and handknit cap (Figure 6)- continue to be handmade. All of these handmade textiles are produced by women (factory-made mantles also can be purchased; below).

The Sakaka who wear this style of “modern traditional” dress made in Llallagua therefore mix hand- and cottage-made garments, with most handmade garments made by women and most cottage-manufactured garments made by men. The handmade garments -especially the mantle, hatband, and handknit cap- mark the user’s *ayllu*-specific identity when combined with factory-woven cloth in pan-Bolivian-peasant or working-class styles (Figure 1: left; Figure 4: woman at left). Like textiles produced by females, styles of embroidery by men also can mark *ayllu*-specific identity (Figure 3). A Sakaka woman’s shift from full dress and overskirt to a skirt and blouse or sweater set, and a Sakaka man’s shift from handmade to cottage-made jacket and vest, symbolize modernity, fashion, and greater relative wealth.

4. **Hand- and cottage-industry woven “modern traditional” dress-** categories 2 and 3 combined (*muda*, or *runa p’acha*: literally, fashion, or *runa* dress) (Figure 1: right). In a household variant of styles 2 and 3, Sakaka men purchase handwoven yardage, from the Laymi/Llallagua producers, then sew and embroider the garments in their Sakaka homes,



Figure 8. Close-up of two young women singers, performing in the Samkha *ayllu* folklore festival. Photo by E. Zorn, April 1989.

either copying the Llallagua dress styles, or working in a Sakaka embroidery style (Figure 2: men standing). This also is called *runa p'acha* or *muda*. As an example of the dynamicity of this fashion system market, in 1989 the Laymi, possibly in an effort to reclaim the component of the market which buys only yardage, either because of lower price or to customize the (*ayllu*-specific) embroidery style, began to produce an intermediate product—an unembroidered jacket—which they sold at a price between that of yardage and of embroidered jackets.

The Laymi/Llallagua cottage industry offers, then, four market alternatives with varying mixes of household and cottage production, and with varying implications for the mode of textile production and the identity being marked. The Sakaka can: (1) buy yarns and weave garments (in the household); (2) buy some garments ready-made with Laymi/generic Northern Potosí embroidery styles; (3) buy yardage and sew and embroider the garments in the household, or; (4) buy an unembroidered jacket and embroider the garment in the household. Clearly more cash is required to buy “ready-to-wear” clothing than just yarns. Purchasing only yardage reduces the cost compared to “ready-to-wear,” while also increasing the opportunity for individual creativity, and for community or *ayllu* differentiation. Purchasing an unembroidered jacket maximizes time-saving, while still allowing individual- and *ayllu*-distinctive embroidery.

5. Synthetic-fiber factory-made urban Indian/regional peasant dress- urban Indian “ethnic” dress (*cholita/cholo p'acha*: literally, female urban Indian or male urban Indian dress) (Figures 1: left, 4: left, skirt and sweater set). This style is worn primarily by Sakaka schoolchildren, an increasing number of teenagers, and some older people who are better off financially, and more upwardly-mobile, perhaps seeking entry into the *cholo/cholita* class (Figure 5: two girls to right of center). Young Sakaka, especially, consider this peasant style to be the most “modern” and therefore fashionable. While good quality factory-made peasant-style clothing is expensive, cheap versions cost the same or sometimes less than cottage-woven garments. Men’s *cholo* dress looks like Western-style dress, but women’s *cholita* dress remains distinctive.

6. Combined handwoven “modern traditional” and synthetic-fiber factory-made urban Indian/regional peasant dress- (Sakaka *cholita p’acha*: literally, Sakaka urban Indian dress) (Figures 1, 4). Sakaka who wear factory-made clothing usually combine these industrially-manufactured garments with at least some Sakaka-style handmade textiles—and artisan-produced items of dress—for a complete fashion, and ethnic, statement. This is exemplified by the young woman in Figure 1, on the left, who has combined factory-made urban Indian items of dress (sweater set, *pollera*) with Sakaka-style garments (especially the mantle). Many young Sakaka also wear one or more woven hatbands, which mark them as Sakaka.

Such mixing allows individuals to symbolize themselves either as Sakaka, or as generic peasants, who are not necessarily Indians: such combinations also signal a relationship with the city. For example, a Sakaka woman stops “being,” or representing herself, as a Sakaka *runa* by replacing her handwoven Sakaka mantle and northern-Potosí-style white hat with a factory-woven mantle and a dark-colored hat such as a bowler. This process of mixing factory- and handwoven items also works in reverse, however. While handwoven mantles typically mark factory-woven dress, factory-woven mantles are considered a fashionable complement to handwoven dress (style 2) (Zorn 1990).

7. Synthetic-fiber factory-made cosmopolitan-style national working class dress- (*q’ara píacha*, or *civil p’acha*: literally “white” or civilian dress) (Figure 9: man on the right with a folded mantle on his shoulder). Such Western-style dress rarely is worn by Sakaka adults in its complete form, which includes shoes and dark-colored hats. The sole exception of which I am aware is the wedding outfit rented by the town’s *vecino* godparents for a new Sakaka couple (above). Some older male Sakaka authorities (typically, veterans of Bolivia’s Chaco war) may wear an old worn Western-style suit at festivals (without a tie), but in the late 1980s the primary wearers of this essentially Western-style dress were children, especially those attending school, who are required to wear the Bolivian national school uniform (in Figure 9, the boy on the right wears a handknit cap, which protects him from the climate, and identifies him as Sakaka *runa*).



Figure 9. Male traders in the central plaza of the town of Sacaca, during a festival, hawk factory-made shawls (seen folded on the shoulder of the man on the right), in exchange for handwoven Sakaka mantles. Photo by E. Zorn, 1989.

In practice, the categories (genres) I have just described are not neatly bounded. For example, categories 3, 4, and 5 sometimes are mixed, or crossed (cf. Weismantel n.d.). It is worth underlining, however, that peasant use of *any* handwoven Sakaka garments, even in combination with factory-made clothing, marks the wearer not only as *runa* but as **Sakaka runa**. (Figure 1: the young woman on the left wears factory-made generically indigenous *cholita* dress, but with a handmade Sakaka-style mantle).

Insofar as combining different dress styles crosses, plays with, or challenges established social identities of race and ethnicity, it might make sense to analyze these practices as a kind of “ethnic cross-dressing,” extending how the term has been used up to now—for dress that crosses gender boundaries—to the realm of dress that crosses ethnic boundaries (Femenías n.d.)²².

Sakaka sometimes told me that they would prefer to wear industrially-made Western-style clothing, even if second-hand, but that they couldn’t afford to buy other clothing, so they wove their own. Some poor Sakaka indeed owned no or very few factory-made garments and only wore handmade textiles woven with handspun yarns spun from the sheep owned by the weaver or her family. Handmade clothing woven from sheep-wool yarns could signify, then, either poverty or aesthetic preference. However, many weavers used factory-spun rather than sheep wool yarns, to save on labor or because of poor quality wool. Factory-spun yarns can be obtained (by barter or purchase) incrementally, but even then the switch to factory-spun yarns raises production costs so much that it always is more expensive to weave and wear such modern “traditional Andean” or even *cholita* (urban Andean) dress than cheap factory-made or second hand cosmopolitan dress. (*Cholita*, or urban Indian dress uses more garments, with differently-styled skirts, usually with more expensive materials, and jewelry, and thus generally costs more than cosmopolitan dress).

Ideally, many Sakaka would prefer to own sets of clothing of different styles: handmade traditional (Sakaka ethnic dress), handmade modern or fashionable traditional (modern ethnic dress), factory-made urban Andean (*cholita/cholo* dress), and factory-made “Bolivian” working-class dress. Wearing handmade cloth is an important expression of ethnic group solidarity, a key marker that distinguishes “Indians” from “non-Indians” (*blancos* and *mestizos* in the Bolivian naming of social race). Since *runa* can place themselves differently in terms of the identity they claim at a given moment and place, the Sakaka, when economically possible, will alternate wearing industrially-made or traditional clothing, or combine them. Given Bolivia’s prevailing social structure, with Indians at the bottom, it is not surprising that Sakaka might want to change ethnic/class affiliation, which can begin with and/or be symbolized by changing from ethnic to cosmopolitan dress. What is perhaps more surprising is that young peasants such as Juana might instead choose to create a new and fashionable variant of ethnic dress. Why, however, would they do so?

A NEW STYLE OF SAKAKA “TRADITIONAL” DRESS

In the late 1980s I observed the creation of a new style of Sakaka ethnic dress, co-incident with the massive sales of heirloom textiles in the ethnic textile market (Zorn 1990). That “new” “traditional” style (Figure 2), made and worn primarily by young people, was considered by the Sakaka in the late 1980s as the most fashionable and interesting of other potential styles. New textiles such as Sakaka’s lime-green mantles with dancing devils, or the leaping lions and flowers in Juana’s overskirt, were unappealing to the market/intermediaries who purchased antique cloth for resale to tourists, but satisfied a new generation of young weavers/embroiderers who wanted textiles that represented modernity, not tradition (Zorn 1990, 1994, 1997a), but modernity without rejection of Sakaka identity (I will later take up the question of why the Sakaka created a new style that could not also be commercialized).

The Sakaka's new textile style, both at first glance and to the textile literate, appears very different than the "traditional" style woven a generation or even ten years ago, and distinct than those of neighboring ethnic groups, though some colors or images are shared, and the new Sakaka style textiles in many ways are solidly built on the garment types, technologies, and aesthetic principles of their older cloth. Weaving technology continues to be extraordinarily time-consuming, though time is saved by using factory-spun, rather than handspun, yarns. Levels of skill vary, though there has been a general decline in average weaving skills, and certainly in spinning skills. Few contemporary textiles demonstrate the technical levels found in antique weavings, though the strength of the weavers' aesthetic vision remains evident.

The garments Sakaka weave in this new style include women's mantles, men's vests, jackets, pants and *ponchos*, and hatbands and belts for both sexes. The three women in Figure 2 wear such handwoven shawls and hatbands; the woman at right wears a belt, and holds a man's knit cap. They wear their shawls atop elaborately embroidered long black dresses characteristic of Northern Potosí. The women in Figure 1 (center and right) wear similar shawls and hatbands, but atop factory-made sweater sets, and non-*ayllu*-made skirts. Both men in Figure 3 illustrate this new Sakaka style. The slightly older man at left wears the plaid jacket and vest with minimal embroidery that characterizes middle-aged men, while his elaborately embroidered pants, belts, hatbands, and knit cap demonstrate the latest fashion of Sakaka youth, exemplified by the young man on the right.

The new Sakaka style utilizes new aesthetic forms (Aymara-influenced rainbow striping), materials (factory-spun synthetic-fiber yarns), colors (synthetic-fiber neons), weave structures (warp-faced double-cloth), and images derived from diverse sources outside the *ayllu* (motorcycles, lowland parrots, devil dancers). Both women and men have participated in developing this new style. In the 1980s Sakaka women wove fashionable textiles and knit caps in this new style of ethnic dress. Sakaka men wove striped and plaid jackets and, like other *runa* in northern Potosí, also developed an increasingly elaborate style of embroidery on plain-colored garments (Figures 1, 5, 6, 8); Sakaka embroidery was inspired by synthetic-fiber skirts and jackets made outside the *ayllu*, in Llallagua (Figure 1, woman's skirt at right). (Embroidery also "produces" ethnicity, since embroidery on dresses, pants, vests, and jackets marks ethnic differences, and serves to distinguish *ayllus*).

Two socio-economic phenomena—the difficulty of getting traditional materials, and the availability of new materials—underlay the creation of this new style, though they are not sufficient to explain it. Both phenomena should be understood in the broader context of the Andean textile economy. As Velasco (1995) points out, the phenomenon of rural to urban migration by Northern Potosí *runa* such as the Sakaka also seems to have contributed to the formation of this style, which is principally made and worn by the young people who are the most likely to migrate seasonally to the cities, from the mid-1980s onward (she refers primarily to the images woven into the patterned areas of the woman's mantle). Here I focus on socio-economic transformations in the textile system, but Velasco's point is very relevant.

TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE "TRADITIONAL" SAKAKA TEXTILE SYSTEM AND THE AGRO-PASTORAL ECONOMY

The "traditional" Andean textile system, itself of course transformed repeatedly over the course of the region's history, faced changes in the second half of the twentieth century that in scale perhaps approached those that occurred during the colonial period. "Modernization"—a term that encapsulates a plethora of economic, social, and cultural changes—affected the "traditional" Andean textile system in multiple ways, which I will discuss only briefly here (Zorn 1997a). Even into the second half of the twentieth century, virtually all Sakaka made

all their own clothing, with fiber obtained from their own animals or from exchange with other Andeans. In this sense they participated in what might be called an “ethnic” textile economy (following Harris 1987 on the Laymi ayllu’s “ethnic” economy)²³, though cash sometimes was needed to purchase chemical dyes, which had largely replaced natural dyes. Unlike some Andeans who produced textiles for exchange or sale to non-group members, Sakaka textile production appears to have been endogamous within the *ayllu*²⁴. During the colonial period numerous Andeans were forced into onerous work in Spanish textile factories (*obrajes*), but there is no evidence, and it seems unlikely, that the Sakaka did so (the Sakaka instead sent workers to the Potosí mines).

“Traditionally” indigenous weavers could count on obtaining fiber, the most critical material needed to produce cloth, through either direct access (i.e., from their own herds), through kinship networks, or through barter²⁵. While the finest textiles were woven with fiber from the *alpaca*, the indigenous South American camelid bred for that purpose, carefully selected fiber from the domesticated *llama* (a closely related species, bred as beasts of burden on long trading trips) also can be of good quality and appropriate to use to produce textiles of excellent quality (most *llama* fiber is coarse and is best used to make slings, ropes, and coarse sacks). One of the world’s finest fibers comes from the wild Andean *vicuña*, which is an endangered species and therefore off-limits to contemporary Andean weavers. The wool of the European sheep is adequate for weaving yardage for basic Western-style clothing (pants, dresses, shirts, vests, etc.), but is inferior to camelid fiber for weaving fine textiles.

Most Sakaka had to obtain camelid fiber for spinning into yarn from non—Sakaka, since relatively few Sakaka own camelids, unlike the case of other Northern Potosí ethnic groups such as the Macha who have many more herds. Until the second half of the twentieth century, and apparently on into the 1970s, most Sakaka obtained camelid fiber (preferentially *alpaca*, but then *llama*) from Aymara-speaking herders who crossed Sakaka territory with their *llama* caravans; herders journeyed from the high plain (*altiplano*) of Oruro through Sakaka on their way to the warm valley lands of northern Potosí in search of corn. Even in the late 1980s one could meet the occasional herder with his small caravan who walked through Sakaka territory, or even through the town of Sacaca. Sakaka say that they typically traded their potatoes for unspun camelid fleece. Most Sakaka could get sheep wool, which they need for yardage, either from their own mongrel sheep (raised more for their manure for fertilizer than for wool), or from the sheep of kin. When fiber is available, older weavers especially produced “traditional” Sakaka dress.

A series of changes occurred in the Sakaka textile system during the 1980s that impacted the system and transformed it irreversibly. The overall effect of these phenomena was to “push” the Sakaka into the market in terms of both the production and commercialization of “traditional” handwoven cloth. There were four principal changes. First, social, economic, and cultural transformations at the local, regional, national, and international levels resulted in the collapse of certain sectors of the agro-pastoral economy, whose consequences included declining or non-existent access to textile inputs (primarily wool and dyes). Second, the rise of an international market in ethnic antique/heirloom cloth resulted in the removal of an incalculable number of handwoven textiles from homes, communities, and entire *ayllus* (Zorn 1990), leaving the technical knowledge and memory but not the physical models for weaving. Third, Bolivia developed a national textile industry that produced yarns and some garments for an indigenous market. Finally, the appearance of two short-term sources for materials and/or cash made it possible to obtain industrially-manufactured yarns and garments. These sources were the antique textile market (where peasants often bartered old textiles for new ones or for synthetic-fiber yarns), and the growth of the *coca* economy in Bolivia (which provided a source for income for purchasing textile inputs).

As a consequence of these phenomena —especially the collapse of certain sectors of a regional agro-pastoral economy— by the late 1980s virtually all Sakaka needed money to purchase the materials (inputs) needed to create handmade cloth. Some Sakaka could handweave or handknit a few garments from the wool of their small herds of mongrel sheep, but the wool and therefore resulting garment quality were poor, and colors had to be natural white or dark brown, since dyes also were extremely poor in quality.

By the late 1980s Sakaka access to raw materials for producing cloth had declined enormously. Erosion continued to limit pasturage and therefore the wool quality of their mongrel sheep. The agro-pastoral economy had begun to decline, according to the Sakaka, by the 1970s. The herders who formerly brought *llama* fiber to the Sakaka rarely crossed their territory when travelling to the valleys for corn. By the late 1980s most herders traveled by truck down to the valleys, or bartered for or purchased corn in the cities, rather than endure the long treks —several weeks or even months to travel from the high *puna* down to the eastern valleys— that were fairly typical even into the late 1970s.

By the second half of this century fewer and fewer Andeans still knew how to use, or could locate good sources of, natural plant and mineral dyes. Since the turn of the 20th century Andeans had imported aniline dyes from Germany, but these became increasingly unavailable by the 1970s. Peruvian dyes, which when first produced in the 1960s were fairly good in quality, soon were much inferior; colors often bled with the first washing. The Sakaka, like many Andeans, were left without access to either fleece or dyes.

For all these reasons, as well as the pressures of modernization and an increased opportunity to dress in a way that allowed some peasants to lay stake to “higher” non-Indian social status, the Sakaka, as well as other Andeans, found in factory-made clothing —either generically indigenous or cosmopolitan working-class styles— an alternative to handmade clothing that was both available and relatively cheap (this article explores why Andeans might not want to wear such clothing). While Bolivia never developed a very large factory-based textile industry, textile production is one of Bolivia’s few remaining industrial sectors, providing relatively cheap cosmopolitan-style garments. Such industrially-manufactured synthetic-fiber clothing is widely available at regional fairs, in the town of Sacaca, and in cities to which Sakaka normally travel (Oruro and Cochabamba). Depending upon fluctuations in the exchange rate, which alter the direction of flow, contraband imports from Peru and Brazil (both excellent garment producers) sometimes flood Bolivia. Used American clothing is also available relatively inexpensively, from sources such as the locally-based Mothers Clubs, run by the Catholic church.

Since both fleece for spinning yarn and dyes for adding color were poor in quality, the logical solution for Sakaka who wanted handmade clothing was to turn to synthetic-fiber factory-spun yarns (*lanas*), which were available in a wide palette of colors (“*lanas*” literally mean “wools” but in this context refers to factory-spun yarns). Several Bolivian spinning factories, based in La Paz and in Cochabamba (such as Sendtex and Hilbo), produce synthetic-fiber yarns of varying thicknesses, plys, and colors for the national market, which encompasses both middle-aged *mestiza* ladies in La Paz who knit sweaters and young Sakaka teenagers in northern Potosí who weave *coca* purses. These synthetic-fiber factories are quite savvy about Andean demand, apparently producing and marketing yarns that accord well with the specific colors preferences of different ethnic groups (Cassandra Torrico, personal communication, 1986). Factory-spun yarns also present a significant advantage in terms of saving labor in the most time-consuming phase of textile production, which is spinning. My research revealed that, surprisingly, young Sakaka, and probably many other Andeans, use the considerable time saved by buying factory-spun yarns to weave more, thereby increasing productivity, though for use, not for sale (the market in ethnic textiles prefers natural-, not synthetic-fiber, weavings). In the late 1980s a skein of fine two-ply yarn, of appropriate thickness for re-spinning into a yarn suitable for weaving a Northern

Potosí-style garment such as a *poncho* or shawl, cost approximately U.S. \$ 1, or a day's wages in the town of Sacaca.

The Sakaka who buy factory-spun yarns generally have greater relative access to cash, which they obtain outside their *ayllu* and mostly outside their province. In the 1980s the Sakaka came to obtain materials (principally machine-spun yarns) for cloth-making from two main sources: the exchange (for yarns or factory-woven shawls) or sale of heirloom textiles in the international trade in ethnic textiles (early to mid-1980s), and seasonal wage labor in the *coca* economy in the Chapare (mid to late 1980s).

THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET FOR ANTIQUE "ETHNIC" CLOTH

The decade of the eighties had seen one "boom" in Andean peasant economies- the rise of an international market for antique handwoven Andean cloth, most of which left indigenous communities for export to Europe and the U.S., pausing along the way to lie piled in the streets of Bolivia's capital, La Paz (Zorn 1990). This market reflected increased consumer demand from industrial countries for Third and Fourth World "ethnic" art, as part of late capitalist reactions to industrialization that were manifested in an increasing interest in authenticity and "original" handmade objects. Andean textiles were priced at the very low end of the international antique cloth market (this market remains surprisingly undocumented). Starting sometime in the mid-1970s, and reaching a peak ca. 1983-84 (following two years of drought and then another year of floods, which seriously disrupted highland agricultural production), incalculable quantities of heirloom textiles, dating primarily from the 19th century —though some may have been much, much older— left Andean communities.

The Sakaka, unlike ethnic groups such as the Otavalo of Ecuador (Meisch 1987) and people from the community of Taquile, Peru (Zorn 1997a), did not produce textiles for the market; the Sakaka only commercialized antique textiles. Multiple factors account for this difference, including historical patterns of production and exchange, and the low prices paid for these labor-intensive products. Even at the rate of local wages in the town of Sacaca (U.S. \$1/day), a weaver would need to earn at least U.S. \$18 (three weeks' work) for a shawl, excluding the cost of materials, for her labor alone (the stored labor in antique textiles typically is much greater, with one shawl often having required three months of labor). In Sacaca, weavers typically are paid a tin of grain for the labor of weaving a textile such as a blanket, which takes about two weeks of work. Selling a newly-woven Sakaka shawl, if possible, would earn a weaver U.S. \$5-10, which is barely enough to cover the cost of materials. The Sakaka receive so little for their weaving since they have no direct access to buyers of ethnic textiles; Sakaka sell handwoven textiles to intermediaries, who typically travel to rural areas seeking antique textiles, then go to La Paz where they resell to dealers who market weavings to tourists (Figure 9) (Zorn 1990). This market peaked in 1983-85, during several years of drought and floods, though even in the late 1990s mountains of handwoven textiles lay piled for sale on La Paz streets.

While some Sakaka, like many other indigenous Peruvians and Bolivians, sold heirloom textiles (usually shawls, woven by women) for small amounts of money (\$5 - 10) to such middlemen, many others exchanged their older textiles for either factory-made synthetic-fiber shawls, or for a quantity of skeins of factory-spun synthetic-fiber yarns in currently-fashionable colors (Figure 9) (Zorn 1990). On the La Paz streets a handmade Sakaka shawl sold for U.S. \$ 10 or \$20, up to \$50 or \$ 75 for older or more elaborately-patterned textiles. A typical exchange in the late 1980s of an heirloom textile for skeins of yarn was one shawl for five or six skeins of yarn, worth approximately U.S. \$ 5-6. By the late 1980s only very few old textiles remained in Sakaka communities. Young Sakaka were, however, largely unconcerned about such losses, primarily because they were confident of their productive

capabilities and busily created new and, to them, more beautiful textiles, often using the yarns they received in exchange for older textiles.

The purchase of handmade textiles, by foreign dealers and Bolivian intermediaries, slowed in the late 1980s as fewer “good” old pieces remained. Dealers were not interested in the newer Sakaka textiles, produced using synthetic-fiber neon-colored yarns, as these would not sell in the ethnic textile market, where demand was for older natural-colored or softly-colored pieces. The young Sakaka’s preferences for synthetic-fiber incandescent colors—lime green in particular—do not appeal to Western buyers of ethnic/antique textiles²⁶; such handwoven textiles therefore are unsaleable and cannot be commercialized. Within the ethnic group, however, these new-style textiles demonstrate the weavers’ skills (including competence in the city; Velasco 1995) and serve as the markers of an ethnic identity that people still have an important interest in maintaining. One of the most interesting aspects of the Sakaka style of dress created in the 1980s was, then, its situatedness outside the market, responding to internal demands: aesthetic, symbolic, social. These attributes form part of the social meaning of the continuity of weaving. Aesthetics has value in and of itself, but also as an index of weaving ability, which itself indexes and symbolizes economic productivity; for unmarried Sakaka, this translates into desirability as a potential spouse.

SOURCES FOR SAKAKA STYLES

Another way to appreciate the complexity of Sakaka identity is to examine some of the sources for modern Sakaka styles. These include technology and aesthetic features from diverse historical periods. I believe that such transformations are part of a long-term process, which began not just with the Spanish invasion, but probably even earlier, at least when the Inkas invaded the Aymara federations of which the Sakaka were part²⁷.

Pre-Columbian-type sources that modern Sakaka draw on include: (1) garment forms (the mantle, *coca*-leaf purse, belt, and so forth); (2) fibers (camelid, cotton), yarn preparation tools and techniques (drop spindle), and dyes; (3) looms and weaving tools; (4) images, and; (5) weave structures (principally warp-patterned weaves).

Colonial Spanish-type sources that modern Sakaka draw on include: (1) Spanish peasant costume items (today worn daily or for fighting in ritual battles) and New World garment forms (the *poncho*); (2) fibers (sheep), yarn preparation tools and techniques (spinning wheel), and dyes; (3) images, and; (4) textile structures (knitting).

Nineteenth and twentieth century-type sources that modern Sakaka draw on include: (1) fibers (synthetic polyester yarns), yarn preparation tools and techniques (industrial spinning), and dyes (aniline); (2) garment construction (sewing machines); (3) industrially-spun/cottage industry woven yardage in various colors, and; (4) manufactured (cottage- and factory-manufactured) clothing, that is, blouses and *polleras*, white felt hats, and rubber-tire sandals.

The Sakaka appropriate woven and embroidered images from multiple sources, including international, national and regional, and *ayllu* symbols. Bolivian national symbols include the Bolivian national seal, lions from bank notes, owls from school primers, and insignia from army regiments (the latter also representing a more localized identity). Regional symbols include images drawn from mythologies of the devil (Bolivia’s well-known *diablada*), the city (helicopter, motorcycle), and self-representation (*tinku* fighter).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Investments by young unmarried Sakaka in ethnic-style cottage-industry-made garments and in materials for creating handmade “ethnic” dress require some explanation. The

reaffirmation of tradition and the assertion of Sakaka ethnic identity symbolized by creating and wearing Sakaka dress seems somewhat surprising given the forces —modernization, racism, poverty, globalization— that one might expect would make peasants such as Juana want to be anything other than Sakaka.

Sakaka use of ethnic dress expresses an increasingly self-conscious choice in ethnically diverse and polarized Bolivia, where dress can be (but is not always) a form of nonverbal resistance to the political and cultural hegemony of the white and *mestizo* Bolivian state. Also, style matters, in ways that are hardly trivial (though fashion of course can be this, too). Clothes do make the woman, or the man. Although Western factory-made clothing is cheaper than hand-made dress, many Andeans still make cloth, and textiles continue to be enormously important in local cultural and social reproduction, as a site for investing money, labor, and materials. Exquisitely woven and embroidered dress proclaims skill, economic resources, and good taste (*gusto*) (Zorn 1997a). These attributes bring high prestige to young women such as Juana, creating attractiveness and desirability, drawing many potential admirers and, for the unmarried, suitors. The finest textiles, and the most innovative fashions, are woven by the young unmarried or recently married, who have the eyesight, physical strength, desire, and time to weave, and the economic resources to obtain materials to do so (older weavers have a surer sense of taste and aesthetics, and greater experience, but the demands of married life leave little time for fine weaving).

The recent transformation in Bolivia's ethnic textile economy occurred at the intersection of an (in-)felicitous combination of regional, national, and international forces. In the course of this transformation, key materials for producing cloth—wool, primarily, though also dyes—became unavailable through barter in the ethnic and regional economy. The materials to handmake cloth now require cash to obtain, and frequently are of man-made origin. It is worth emphasizing that the shift from ethnic to generically indigenous to cosmopolitan dress, and from Indian to urban Indian to *mestizo* ethnic/racial/social categories (and statuses), generally includes a shift from local to regional to urban production, and from natural wool to man-made synthetic fibers. However, these neat dualistic divisions, between local and natural and Indian on the one hand, and global and synthetic and *mestizo* on the other, are much more complex in daily life. To give just one example, Sakaka ethnic dress has come to rely on synthetic-fiber yarns, while elite cosmopolitan dress now uses natural fibers.

Coincident with the loss of availability of natural materials, and a new availability of man-made substitutes, was the rise, and collapse, of the international market in ethnic textiles. The loss of heirloom textiles in Sakaka hamlets by the late 1980s was another factor that might have been expected to lead to the demise of cloth production, since the physical models for weaving (the "books" in the textile libraries) were lost (Zorn 1990). Yet by the late 1980s the young Sakaka had created a new style of dress, outside of the textile market, which dealers in antique cloth —the only market for Sakaka weavings— refused to buy since the intermediaries considered these weavings unsaleable.

As Sakaka fine heirloom textiles were becoming depleted, the Sakaka found another means (the *coca* economy) by which they could obtain the cash needed to buy the materials from which they created local cloth, which continued to proclaim their distinctive identity. Participation in the *coca* economy ironically took Sakaka such as Juana "back" into the "ethnic" economy, by providing an alternative source of money that "freed" the Sakaka from the minimal return of the textile market, which they were losing access to anyway as their stocks of traditional textiles were depleted. In the 1980s the Sakaka no longer needed to sell antique textiles to obtain the inputs required to continue to create handwoven cloth —even though many of these inputs are factory-made and therefore "in the market".

Paradoxically, then, work in the *coca* economy in the late 1980s, which though necessary for landless and impoverished peasants has so clearly been shown to be dangerous, and

socially and culturally disruptive, allowed young Sakaka weavers to finance the creation of a new style of dress, and to avoid either weaving textiles for sale, or selling heirloom textiles in the international ethnic arts market, thereby reinforcing the “traditional” Andean textile system of meanings. Willingness to invest meager earnings from the *coca/cocaine* economy in clothing and weaving materials points to both the continued importance of cloth in the Andes for many young people, and the poor opportunities available to Bolivian peasants to earn adequate wages, and modify their lifestyle in the way adoption of Western-style clothing would signify. This despite the fact that such clothing would be cheaper and would require much less investment of time to obtain.

When Juana returned from the Chapare, she wove a fashionable garment in a modern ethnic style of dress, using materials she had purchased with cash that she earned as a peasant laborer (specifically, a cook) in the global *coca/cocaine* economy. The theoretical implications of this apparently idiosyncratic act can contribute valuable insights to the analysis of larger, global social forces. I argue that Sakaka creation of a new style of dress, financed by seasonal migration to the Chapare, counters the assumption that insertion into the global economy (albeit at the lowest rung as an unskilled wage laborer in the *coca/cocaine* economy) inevitably homogenizes or eradicates local culture. Such processes of local interpretation of global phenomena are analyzed in Nash’s pioneering study of Bolivian miners (1979), and in Rowe and Schelling’s analysis of popular culture in Latin America, particularly in relation to mass media (1991).

Many of the topics I discuss here require further investigation. Research is needed to follow up with the Sakaka to assess changes in their fashion system in the 1990s; to study factory-production of yarns and garments for Andean “traditional” indigenous and peasant markets; to document the international market in Andean ethnic cloth; and to thoroughly investigate the history of transformations in the “ethnic” textile economy, especially during this century. Other issues, which require further research, seem clear.

Modern peasants such as the Sakaka seek changes in the national Bolivian agrarian structure that would provide better prices for their crops, jobs with wages that at least equal what they earn in the Chapare, a market that would pay a fair wage for handmade textiles, and a change in the U.S. drug policy, which unfairly shifts the blame to supply, rather than seriously try to control demand. While I do not think that cocaine is the solution some would hope for, ironically, the demand for this product in the global economy—the fact that money from the crack epidemic on U.S. streets financed “traditional” Andean textiles (Blenda Femenías, personal communication, September 1994)—makes it possible for Sakaka peasants to create one of the most culturally meaningful local products, their cloth. As long as Bolivian peasants can commercialize neither agricultural products nor handwoven cloth for wages that provide a fair return on their investments of inputs and labor, it should not be surprising that peasants such as Juana weave only to please themselves, and that Juana, and her male relatives, migrate to the Chapare to participate in the *coca/cocaine* export economy to earn cash.

Although dress is, on one level, an activity that is “superfluous to survival,” as in the mocking title of an edited volume by Lewin and Cherfas (Turner 1980), the importance of dress can be noted in many ways. This includes the investment in materials by a young peasant woman like Juana, the economic weight of the fashion and clothing industry worldwide, or the propensity of many regimes and elites, historically, to try to control what should, or should not, be worn (de Areche 1995; Phipps 1996).

Figure 1, of two young Sakaka women in the central *plaza* of the town of Sacaca, who defiantly gaze at the photographer, taken on an ordinary Sunday market day, is one that I could not have photographed prior to Bolivia’s 1952 nationalist revolution. Sakaka told me that before that time, they were not “allowed” to use the public space of the *plaza*. How were Sakaka recognized? By their dress. One of the stories that has haunted me since I first

heard it in the mid-1980s, from an elderly indigenous man in southern Peru, reminds us that dress and identity are indeed not superfluous in the highland Andes. Whether literally true or not, the structure and content of the narrative recounts important truths.

Some forty years before (that is, in the 1940s), this man returned from having worked in a Chilean mine, to his home region near the city of Juliaca, Peru. He went from his rural hamlet to a nearby town in the department of Puno, where he made some purchases with money he had earned. He then went to the central *plaza* to do as all others do: stroll or sit, or rest, or watch people. He was wearing, as he emphasized, a new, Western-style shirt, perhaps imported, rather than a complete outfit of handmade ethnic dress. The upshot of a series of details that I don't remember is that he was harassed, beaten, stripped of his shirt, and thrown out of the *plaza*. His "crime," to the town elite, was to be an Indian in the town's public space, and to dare to "cross-dress" in Western-style clothing (possibly imported, which they would not have had access to).

Within the cross-cutting parameters of social identity of gender, class, race, and ethnicity, fashion enters in a variety of ways. My discussion of different styles (genres) are a start towards illustrating the complexity of identity in the south-central Andes. Yet whereas identity is clear at any given moment, dress does not always neatly line up with the identity being demonstrated or claimed; ultimately, textiles are not a fixed semiotic code, like language. Textiles from one sub-style may be worn with another. A Sakaka woman wearing a dress of style 2 (made from synthetic yarns) may also wear an overskirt made from sheep wool (style 1) and/or a mantle woven in a factory (style 5). A Sakaka man may handweave a jacket from synthetic yarn (style 2) that imitates a jacket purchased from the Laymi cottage industry (style 3). Nonetheless, these codes communicate.

Dress in Sakaka, as in much of the Andes and many other parts of the world, remains profoundly important for the formation of both individual and group identity. I think that what we see today has been going on for a very long time. Precise use of combinations of elements such as the ones illustrated here makes it possible for the Sakaka to differentiate themselves (or not) from their non-Indian neighbors (*vecinos*), other peasants, and their indigenous *ayllu* neighbors, such as the Kirkawi and the Chayanta, in clear ways, with conscious (re)presentation. Distinctions in styles of dress remain important in the Andes as powerful semiotic indexes and symbols of gender, ethnic, class, and racial identities. Dress codes the experiences of the Sakaka. They fashion their dress, using diverse materials from varied sources, into many styles, which help them construct not one "essential", but rather multiple, Sakaka identities.

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NOTAS

- ¹ This article draws on material from Zorn (1994, 1997a, 1997b, n.d.a, n.d.b).
- ² I use the term “ethnic group” as a shorthand for *ayllu*. *Ayllu* can be glossed as ethnic group, polity, community, or kin group, in part depending upon the level of social organization discussed; an abundant literature exists on this topic (Zorn 1997a). In the past decades, Sakaka’s “minor” *ayllus* have become increasingly important in daily and political life (Velasco 1997).
- ³ By cloth, I mean all textiles. On the meanings and classification of dress, see Eicher and Roach-Higgins (1992: 15), who support the “use of the word ‘dress’ as a comprehensive term to identify both direct body changes and items added to the body”: specifically, “as an assemblage of body modifications and/or supplements displayed by a person in communicating with other human beings” (Ibid.). Scholarship on dress and its uses, though limited, is growing; see for example Ash and Wilson (1992); Barnes and Eicher (1992b); Berlo (1991); Eicher (1995); Femenías (1997); Hendrickson (1995); Hendrickson (1996); Medlin (1983); Meisch (1997); Nash (1993); Schevill et al. (1991); Weiner and Schneider (1989); and Zorn (1997a).
- ⁴ This term deliberately echoes Olivia Harris’ (1987) formulation of the “ethnic” economy of the Laymi of northern Potosí, where products circulate throughout the totality (highland and lowland) of the Laymi ethnic group.
- ⁵ My use of the term “fashion system” for Andean textile production plays off Roland Barthes’ (1983) application of the concept in the late capitalist West.
- ⁶ While in a postmodernist world it appears that the adjective “traditional” can only be used ironically, within Peru and Bolivia “traditional”, in the context used here, refers to cultural practices conceptualized as having pre-Columbian, and therefore indigenous, origins, such as the handmade dress worn by the Sakaka. On the complex interplay of tradition, modernity, and postmodernity in contemporary Latin America see, for example, García Canclini (1993), Rowe and Schelling (1991), and the special issue of *boundary 2* on postmodernism (Beverley and Oviedo 1993); on “tradition” in Hispanic textiles in New Mexico, see Baizerman (1990); for an exploration of these issues in the practices of two Andean peoples, see Zorn (1997a).
- ⁷ I use the terms *cholo* and *cholita* (male and female urban Indian) here, rather than *cholo* and *chola*, because this is how people in the Sakaka region referred to urban Indian, including self-reference; *cholita* was considered to be a more respectful term than *chola* (see for example Paredes-Candia 1992; Weismantel n.d., and below).
- ⁸ A significant body of anthropological and ethnohistorical research has been done with *ayllus* in the Northern Potosí region; see among others Godoy (1990); Harris (1987); Harris and Albó (1986); Izko (1992); and Platt (1982). On *ayllus* in Oruro, see Abercrombie (1986) and Arnold (1988).
- ⁹ Most indigenous people in Bolivia do not call themselves *indio*, the Spanish word for Indian, preferring the term *campesino* (peasant); in Bolivia *indio* is used self-consciously by a few small but significant political parties with an Indianist agenda.
- ¹⁰ Researchers on the Sakaka are indebted to the pioneering work of Padre José Antonio Bustamante C.M.F. (1985), as yet published only in mimeograph form. I am extremely grateful to Padre Bustamante, and to Enrique Tandeter, for copies of this important work.
- ¹¹ Quechua is the Peruvian Spanish spelling of the Inka language; Aymara is Bolivia’s other principal highland indigenous language. Most Aymara-speakers in this part of Bolivia also speak Quechua, which is the lingua franca of the zone and the language spoken in the region’s towns. The number of Quechua speakers is growing in the Northern Potosí region, as in other Bolivian departments (except for La Paz), at the expense of Aymara. On the bewildering complexity of language use in Bolivia (including Northern Potosí), see the impressive two volume study, created for educators and planners, by Xavier Albó (1995).
- ¹² In addition to geographic and historic differences between the Laymi and the Sakaka, the Sakaka’s increasingly limited access to valley lands, and therefore the products from that ecological level, explains a greater need for cash within the Sakaka economy. (The Sakaka lost access to most of their valley lands following Bolivia’s 1953 Agrarian Reform).
- ¹³ See Zorn (1997a) on Sakaka unpaid labor for Sacaca townspeople, obtained from the Sakaka through direct coercion or indirect manipulation of fictive kinship ties.
- ¹⁴ The complex interplay of ethnicity and race in Bolivia, with its kaleidoscopic variations, clearly are beyond the scope of this paper. The issue of social identity is somewhat simplified within the *ayllu* since precise identity, as a Sakaka or non-Sakaka, basically determines access to land and other *ayllu* resources (Zorn 1997a).
- ¹⁵ Much of this discussion about identity in Bolivia also applies to highland Peru.
- ¹⁶ My thanks to Blenda Femenías and Ann Peters for our ongoing conversations about ethnicity, identity, racial categories, and dress in highland Peru.
- ¹⁷ The category of the *cholita* is highly charged semiotically in Andean society, bearing many strongly-believed, often contradictory, meanings, such as sexuality, fecundity, astuteness, and rebelliousness; on these meanings, see for example Paredes-Candia (1992); Mendoza (1992); Weismantel (n.d.).
- ¹⁸ My thanks to Cassandra Torrico for suggesting the concept of “coding” as a way to conceptualize these distinctions.
- ¹⁹ Eicher and Sumberg (1995) suggest the term cosmopolitan dress, because of this style’s world-wide use.
- ²⁰ A discussion of the semantic richness of these terms is outside the scope of this article.

- ²¹ The analysis of dress as a semiotic form clearly has the potential to draw on the fields of linguistics and semiotics, as the pioneering work of Verónica Cereceda demonstrates (1978, 1992); while in this paper I have borrowed certain analogies from linguistics (Sassurean distinctions between langue and parole, and the concept of genre), I do not analyze dress as a text.
- ²² The topic of cross-dressing across gender lines is receiving increasing attention, with much interesting scholarship; see for example Garber (1992). Enrique Mayer, discussant for the session on "Popular strategies of ethnic representation" at the 1997 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, challenged our panel to consider extending the definition of cross-dressing as it is usually used across gender boundaries to "ethnic cross-dressing" (I have given several examples above).
- ²³ Early in the colonial period prominent Sakaka nobles sometimes wore fine Spanish cloth (Memorial de Charcas n.d.); they sometimes wore the Andean tunic (*unku*) over such dress (Arze y Medinaceli 1991).
- ²⁴ See Nash (1993) on effects of commercialization on Middle American artisans.
- ²⁵ References to many aspects of the economics of contemporary Andean textile production can be found in various sources, but there has been no scholarly book-length treatment to date of the topic.
- ²⁶ As I previously noted, this aesthetic preference is widespread across the Andes (see Femenías (1997 on "lime green" in the Colca Valley of Peru), and could change for buyers of ethnic textiles. When I returned from Bolivia to the U.S. in 1989 I was struck by the popularity among college students of neon colors, especially pink and lime green. The popularity of these colors can be seen also in mass-market products for children, such as markers and crayons.
- ²⁷ My thanks to Gary Urton for his comments on a draft of Zorn (1994) on this point.