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(RE-)FASHIONING IDENTITY: LATE TWENTIETH-CENTURY TRANSFORMATIONS IN DRESS AND SOCIETY IN BOLIVIA

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INTRODUCTION¹

The members of most of Bolivia's large indigenous ethnic groups, such as the nearly 22,000 people of *ayllu* Sakaka of northern Potosi, continue to wear a distinctive daily dress (Figs. 1, 2).² Such dress nationally and internationally is emblematic of the Sakaka's separate, and to many inferior, identity as Indians. To the wearers also, or 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.

Yet most members of these large indigenous ethnic groups, who I refer to by the name of their group or as Andeans, also wear (or strategically deploy) other styles of clothing. Each style has its own gender, class, ethnic, and/or "racial" denotations and connotations. Dress also varies by generation and by region. These styles of dress code and symbolize the Sakaka's varied experiences, and mark and help "construct" their positions of social status, achieved or aspired, in late twentieth-century Bolivian society.³

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 paper 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 indications of identity, which I do not go into here, include residence, language(s), religious practices, music, and so forth. Anthropologists and other social scientists recently have paid increasing attention to questions of identity, in part because issues of identity and ethnic difference stubbornly re-surface in the post-Cold War era, often with tragic results.

In Bolivia, a pluri-cultural, multi-lingual nation, a woman who wears non-European dress, i.e., urban Indian clothes, cannot teach in that country's schools—a point made by Víctor Hugo Cárdenas, Bolivia's first Aymara Indian Vice-President, about his wife who still dresses "*de pollera*" (wears Indian-style dress). The pollera, a full-pleated skirt derived from Spanish colonial dress, is worn by urban Indian women, some rural Indian women, and some townswomen. The pollera has a number of variable stylistic features, which include length, material, number of pleats, color, and so forth. While in practice the pollera's use crosses class lines, that full-pleated skirt symbolizes the Indian woman to Bolivian society. As such its prohibition from national classrooms symbolizes the exclusion of Indians from national power, and illustrates the importance of dress in the politics of identity.

My paper for the 1990 TSA Symposium, which was based on my two-year residence and Ph.D. research with the Sakaka (Zorn 1990), examined the creation of a new style of Sakaka dress, co-incident with the massive sales of heirloom textiles in the ethnic textile market. (Use of old textiles may be one of many factors, as I explained in my 1990 paper.) That "new" "traditional" style, made and worn primarily by young people, was considered by the Sakaka as the most fashionable and interesting of other potential styles, but it was not the only Sakaka style (see Baizerman 1990 on "tradition"). In this paper I complicate the picture I painted in 1990 by examining the other types of dress worn by Sakaka people in various

contexts, in which dress styles indicate different status positions. I also contextualize these styles of dress in relation to the Sakaka's Indian and non-Indian "neighbors" in Bolivia.

In the Andes today fashion and distinctions in dress remain important in marking and symbolizing both individual and group identity. Andeans such as the Sakaka selectively choose and use (that is, appropriate) technologies, materials, 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). The Sakaka also use dress to define themselves in relation to other neighboring *runa*.

WHO ARE THE SAKAKA?

In the longer version of this paper, I situate the Sakaka historically and geographically, but here I discuss textiles and provide only some background (see Zorn 1994). The Sakaka call themselves *runa*, a Quechua word for people, which term I also use. Most indigenous people do not call themselves *indio*, the Spanish word for Indian (see also Femenias and Seibold in this volume); in Bolivia the term *indio* is used self-consciously by a few small but significant political parties with an indianist agenda.

Ayllu Sakaka is one of the larger Bolivian ayllus. Sakaka territory nearly equals Alonso de Ibañez province in northern Potosí, one of the most "traditional"—and poorest—areas of Bolivia. The region's people may be monolingual, bilingual or trilingual in Quechua, Aymara, and/or Spanish (Quechua is the Peruvian Spanish spelling of the Inka language; Aymara is Bolivia's other principal highland indigenous language). Most Aymara-speakers also speak Quechua, which is the lingua franca of the zone and the language spoken in the region's towns. Primarily peasant farmers, the Sakaka live in approximately five hundred hamlets scattered at three to four thousand meters (9,900-13,220 feet) above sea level, in the north of northern Potosí; Cochabamba department lies to the northwest, Oruro department to the west, and the valley provinces of Charcas and Bilbao Rioja, Potosí, to the east. Sakaka territory ranges from the upper *puna* (high grasslands), through lower *puna*, down to intermontane valleys. Hamlets contain as few as four or five or as many as sixty households; average hamlet size is fifteen. Former Aymara speakers, approximately half the Sakaka now speak Quechua as their first language. Many Sakaka (especially men) also speak Spanish, which they learned in school, in the army, or in the Chapare (below). Very few are literate. The contemporary Sakaka roughly correspond to the "first" nation of the pre-Columbian Charka federation, a pre-Inka Aymara confederation. The Sakaka, descendants of a warrior nation, are proud of their fighting abilities in contemporary ritual battles (*tinkus*).

Sakaka ayllu is composed of minor ayllus which "function" through the practices of their members (as does K'ulta ayllu in Oruro, Bolivia; Abercrombie 1986). Despite the ongoing destructuring of the great *ayllu* the Sakaka still constitute an ethnic group and function as a single ayllu in the following ways. The Sakaka: 1) control a common territory, though this no longer includes the valley fraction; 2) are overwhelmingly endogamous, that is, they marry among themselves at a level higher than ninety percent; 3) share a particular festival-ritual cycle; and 4) wear a distinctive, identifiable (sub-)style of clothing, which proclaims their identity to the textile-literate.

The Sakaka make up nearly the entire population of Alonso de Ibañez province; a few hundred people in the province identify themselves as non-*runa* townspeople (*vecinos*), who consider themselves of higher social status than *runa*. A very small number of *runa* who still identify themselves as Sakaka ayllu members live in the neighboring eastern valleys. Alonso de Ibañez province has four tiny towns, including the capital, also called Sacaca. Like many small Andean towns, Sacaca is a site where classes intermingle, and where petty exploitation of *runa* by townspeople still occurs. This petty exploitation functions today primarily through mechanisms such as fictive kin ties; the worst excesses of the pre-1952 Revolutionary period

have abated. Prior to the late 1950s the Sakaka suffered debt peonage, the presence of the *hacienda* (landed estate) system, continual demands on their labor, thefts of livestock, and physical abuse by the area's townspeople.

The Sakaka are subsistence farmers, whose primary crops are potatoes, broad beans, and wheat; they also plant other Andean tubers and some green vegetables and flowers. Many raise small herds of sheep; some have cattle, and a few small livestock. Some Sakaka herd llamas. Fields in rural areas are not irrigated, and farming is subject to frequent frosts and periodic hailstorms. The Sakaka, like other northern Potosi runa, are among the poorest in a poverty-stricken nation. Hamlets lack potable running water, sewer systems, electricity, irrigation, roads, and transportation. None of their homes, hand-built with stones and adobe bricks, have lights, sinks, bathrooms, heat, or other modern conveniences. Infant mortality is extremely high, and in 1976 it was estimated that one of four Sakaka children die by age five (UNICEF 1989). Opportunities to work for money are limited and local wages in the town of Sacaca in 1989 were only a dollar a day. The principal way that young Sakaka obtain cash is by migrating seasonally to work in the Chapare-Bolivia's principal coca-growing region in eastern Cochabamba—despite the dangers inherent in the illegal coca/cocaine business. (In the Chapare young men work as bearers or stompers (*pisadores*), who smash coca leaves into coca paste; young women work as cooks.)

In contrast to runa in other south-central Andean highland regions, indigenous ethnic groups in northern Potosi and southern Cochabamba hold title to sizeable territories, and their social organizations (the ayllu) are much larger than those of other ayllus or communities. 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 ayllu of Quechua-speakers in Arque province, Cochabamba. The Sakaka and the Kirkawi share a general northern Potosi culture, but do not intermarry. They have fought over boundaries for centuries, and their border remains a site for intermittent conflict.

While Kirkawi and Sakaka dress appears similar, a variety of stylistic features differentiate their textiles and mark the groups' separate ethnic identities. These features include use (or not) of an embroidered headshawl, woven and knitted images, width of hat brim, embroidery style, and so forth. The "Bolívar" have been described as having a unique textile style called *kurti* (Gisbert, Arze, and Cajías 1987, especially Figs. 229, 231). While members of these ayllus do not intermarry, I found that in the late 1980s both the Kirkawi and the Sakaka used that term for warp-faced double cloth (Zorn 1994), which I suspect the Sakaka learned from the Kirkawi.

Southwest and due east of the Sakaka live the various Aymara ethnic groups centered around Chayanta, the former twin capital (with Sacaca) of the ancient Charka federation, referred to above. These Aymara-speaking ayllus include the Chayantaka, the Sikuya, the Aymaya and so forth. The Chayanta half of the Charka kingdom also includes the Laymi, Jukumani, and Macha ethnic groups, with whom ethnographic research has been conducted (see bibliography in Zorn 1994). Around the turn of the twentieth century the Sakaka fought battles with several Chayanta ayllus over boundaries. The Sakaka also dress similarly to members of the Chayanta ayllus, but ethnicity is differentiated by stylistic features, which include number of belts, embroidery style, knitted and woven images and so forth.

Finally, while this study focuses on identity, not gender, it is worth emphasizing that ethnicity in the (south-central) Andes, as marked by the percentage of Western-style factory-made vs. non-Western-style hand- or factory-made textiles, continues to be gendered, in terms of both production and wear. For example, Aymara men who dress as cholos wear Western-style clothing (such as pinstripe suits) while their wives wear expensive hand- or factory-made polyester peasant-style polleras. Sakaka women weave most of the textiles that mark Sakaka

ethnicity. However, nothing is ever this simple. Sakaka men, like other runa in northern Potosi, were developing in the 1980s an increasingly elaborate style of embroidery, which also "produces" ethnicity, since embroidery on pants, vests, and jackets marks ethnic differences, and serves to distinguish ayllus.

THE POLITICS OF 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/display. Over time, however, any such identity may change, a point that was perfectly clear to local users of cloth and observers.

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. 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 peasants or workers, often are believed to belong to a separate race and a higher class.

If dress codes Sakaka identity, what is it coding? The primary social opposition in much of Andean society is between runa (Indian) and q'ara (non-Indian, from the runa point of view), mediated by the intermediate groups of cholos/cholitas and mestizos/mestizas. 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 Bolivian.⁴ Members of the elite wear a national variant or imported Western-style dress, but 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 Bolivians.⁵ Saying one is "mestizo" implies or imagines a middle-class which in reality exists in ever-dwindling numbers. Mestizos wear less expensive version of elite 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, 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 Potosi a percentage of ayllu members regularly change status and cease being runa. The first step is to become cholitas/cholos (urban Indians). This transformation occurs in a (limited) number of ways. The usual route for ayllu Sakaka members is to marry a townspeople, move to the town (of Sacaca), change one's dress, stop weaving, and learn to speak Spanish (along with other changes in behavior). A Sakaka runa woman changes her woven overskirt (*aqsu*) and woven full black dress (*aymilla*) (Fig. 2, two women on the left) for a full pleated skirt (pollera) and sweater set (Fig. 2, two girls right of center). The children of former runa, if born and raised in the town of Sacaca, would for the most part be considered townspeople (*vecinos*). In northern Potosi, and probably throughout much of the south-central Andes, most such marriages take place between peasant women and townsmen.

Other routes for changing status from runa to urban Indian (cholita) or person of mixed-blood (mestiza) 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 for this transformation). 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. Like other social scientists such as Xavier Albo, I translate cholita/cholo as urban Andean (urban “Indian”), as do, I think, most people who would consider themselves members of that group.

Cholos (men) usually wear a variant of Western-style dress, perhaps with a distinctive hat, and may use a scarf, knit cap, and/or poncho. Cholitas (women) wear a 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. Distinctive dress is important in defining this group; mestiza townswomen also wear polleras and bowler hats, but often of less costly materials (Fig. 2, 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.

SAKAKA DRESS

I now turn to examples of the different dress styles commonly worn (deployed) by members of ayllu Sakaka. Sakaka “choice” of dress depends on many factors. These include geography, cultural habit, fashion, economic constraints—including access to materials and money—and social status, achieved or desired (“dress for success” in Andean terms). If Sakaka dress codes the experiences of Sakaka, and indexes and symbolizes identity, what are these experiences? Sakaka “distinctive” daily dress, which differs from Western-style dress worn daily by the elite and identifies the Sakaka as runa, includes several sub-styles. These sub-styles throw into question the neat hierarchy of identity I just outlined. The following list of sub-styles is my classification, but the styles correspond to Sakaka distinctions.

1. *Handwoven “classic traditional” Indian dress.* This sub-style, called *runa p’acha* (dress of the people, Indian dress), 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” 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 *lliqlla* in Quechua) (Fig. 2, two women at left). Men’s dress is characterized by handwoven pants, vest and jacket (Fig. 1, standing man at right), and symbolized by the handwoven poncho. 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” (Fig. 2, woman at left), which some authors have likened to Inka *tukapu* (Gisbert, Arze, and Cajías 1987: 200ff., Figs. 211, 213, 217). This feature is shared by many Llallagua-San Pedro textiles, and contrasts with the “kurti” style described for the Kirkawi (above). I analyze certain aesthetic features of Sakaka dress elsewhere (Zorn 1990).

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

travelling herders, who 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.

The Sakaka do not, however, make all items of their "traditional" dress; components made outside the ayllu that must be purchased include sandals made from recycled rubber-tires and white felt hats (Figs. 1, 2). Made by regional artisans, both items are crafted with subtle differences that vary systematically by ethnic group. For example, while all northern Potosi white peasant hats may appear the same, the Kirkawi (neighbors to the Sakaka) prefer a slightly narrower hat brim. Single workshops seem to produce variants for ayllu-specific consumption. 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.

2. *Handwoven "modern traditional" Indian dress.* This sub-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 sub-style (Fig. 1; Fig. 2, young woman second to left). This is the "new" Sakaka style that I analyzed previously (Zorn 1990). The 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, and men's clothing (Fig. 2, standing men in center), are embroidered by men on sewing machines. Sakaka who dress in this sub-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 sub-style is produced using factory-made materials, and incorporates significant aesthetic changes, including color, image, and aesthetic devices

"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. The most fashionable dominant colors in 1987-1989 were lime green, called *verde lechuga* (lettuce green), or *limonara* (lemonade); lime green replaced white, which was fashionable in the mid-1980s. (Like Femenias (in this volume), I learned to weave with, wear, and love lime green.) There are many reasons for using factory-spun yarns; in general, time saved spinning is invested in weaving and in embroidery (see Seibold in this volume). Aesthetic changes in this sub-style, which I analyze elsewhere in detail (Zorn 1990, 1994), include new images (motorcycles, helicopters), aesthetic devices (gradated rather than solid-block color divisions between warp-pattern-weave stripes), and new weave structures (warp-faced double cloth and supplementary weft warp patterned weave) (Fig. 2, woman second from left; Zorn 1990: Figs. 1, 3). Garments in this sub-style often imitate the sub-style I describe next (see below 3.).

The Sakaka who buy factory-spun yarns generally have greater relative access to cash, which they obtain outside the ayllu and mostly outside the province. Agricultural labor in the town of Sacaca provides some cash; few Sakaka work in the region's mines. Cash formerly was obtained through seasonal migration to Bolivia's agricultural regions, but today the major source for cash is the illegal coca/cocaine business in the Chapare, where young peasants such as the Sakaka work as porters and laborers, or coca-leaf "stompers" (men) and cooks (women). A very few Sakaka obtained land titles in the Chapare and grow coca leaf and other crops. Since young Sakaka use money obtained from the illegal coca/cocaine business to buy clothing and weaving and embroidery materials, money from the crack epidemic on U.S. streets (as my co-chair Blenda Femenias succinctly put it) makes this type of "traditional" Sakaka dress possible. The Sakaka also obtain cash by seasonal work in Bolivian cities as porters (men) and low-end resellers of produce such as limes (women); women sometimes beg on city streets. These strategies, almost without exception, do not allow the Sakaka to accumulate cash in any

significant amounts, though the relatively higher wages obtained in the Chapare formerly did make some accumulation possible.

3. *Cottage-industry-woven “modern traditional” Indian dress.* This sub-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 sub-style are made outside the ayllu, by a cottage industry which appears to have developed in the early 1980s.⁶ Cottage-produced garments for women include the full long dress, a skirt (which is a non-traditional item, since *runa* women usually wear dresses, not skirts and blouses), and for men, jackets, vests, and scarves. These cottage-woven ready-to-wear garments are woven and embroidered in a regional northern Potosi peasant style. This small industry is centered around Llallagua, an abandoned mining city near Bolivia’s great mines, though my preliminary impression is that most producers work in their rural hamlets.

Although this sub-style appears quite different from Sakaka handwoven dress, this visual impression is based on only a few garments—the woman’s skirt and the man’s jacket, which are the best-sellers of the industry (or at least the most frequently purchased by the Sakaka) (Fig. 1, plaid jacket of standing shirtless man at left). The fashionable ready-to-wear synthetic-fiber “traditional” garments of this sub-style are woven from factory-spun polyester yarns (the same as those used for the previous sub-style). Individual garments are elaborately embroidered on treadle sewing machines by male members of a regional cottage industry, run by members of the Laymi ethnic group, who sell to the Sakaka and members of other northern Potosi ayllus. Urban users who wish to (re-)present themselves as Indians typically wear these clothes for masked dances, performed as far away as Peru. The style of this industry’s elaborate embroidery changes regularly, 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.

In this part of the Andes, men make certain textiles and women others. Each sex requires textiles made by the other sex to be completely clothed. The shift in this sub-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, however, others—the overskirt, mantle, *cinta* (hatband), poncho, and *ch’ulu* (knit cap)—continue to be handmade. All of these handmade textiles are produced by women. (Factory-made mantles also can be purchased; see below.)

The Sakaka who wear this sub-style of “modern” “traditional” dress from 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 knitted cap—mark the wearers as Sakaka. In fact, these textiles continue to be handmade and worn and to mark the users’ ayllu-specific identity when combined with factory-woven cloth in pan-Bolivian-peasant or working-class styles (see below). Like textiles produced by females, styles of embroidery by males also can mark ayllu-specific identity (Fig. 1; contrast the embroidery styles of the reclining man in front with the standing men). A Sakaka woman’s shift from full dress and overskirt to a skirt and blouse or sweater and a 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.* In a household variant of sub-styles 2. and 3., Sakaka men purchase handwoven yardage from Laymi producers, then sew and embroider the garments in their Sakaka homes, either copying Laymi dress styles, or working in a Sakaka embroidery style (Fig. 2, standing men). 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 (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 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 Potosi 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 “pret-a-pôrtier” clothing than just yarns. Purchasing only yardage reduces the cost, and increases the opportunity for individual creativity—and community or ayllu differentiation. Purchasing an unembroidered jacket maximizes time-saving and individual/ayllu input and meaning.

5. *Synthetic-fiber factory-made urban Indian/regional peasant dress.* This sub-style, called *cholita* or *cholo p’acha*, 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 (Fig. 2, two girls 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. As an example of the gendering of ethnicity, men’s *cholo* dress is essentially Western, but women’s *cholita* dress remains distinctive.

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

6. *Synthetic-fiber factory-made national working class dress.* This sub-style, called *q’ara p’acha* (non-*runa* dress) or *civil p’acha* (civilian or civilized dress), consists of Western-style dress rarely is worn by Sakaka adults in its complete form, which includes shoes and dark-colored hats. The exception is the wedding outfit rented by the town’s *vecino* godparents for a new Sakaka couple. Some older male Sakaka authorities (often 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. What will they wear when they grow up?

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 part.⁷

Pre-Columbian-type sources that modern Sakaka draw on include:

a) garment forms (the mantle, coca-leaf purse, belt and so forth); b) fibers (camelid, cotton), yarn preparation tools and techniques (drop spindle), and dyes; c) looms and weaving tools; d) images, and; e) weave structures (principally warp-patterned weaves).

Colonial Spanish-type sources that modern Sakaka draw on include:

a) Spanish peasant costume items (today worn daily or for fighting in ritual battles) and New World garment forms (the poncho); b) fibers (sheep), yarn preparation tools and techniques (spinning wheel), and dyes; d) images, and; e) textile structures (knitting).

Nineteenth and twentieth century-type sources that modern Sakaka draw on include:

a) fibers (synthetic polyester yarns), yarn preparation tools and techniques (industrial spinning), and dyes (aniline); b) garment construction (sewing machines); c) industrially-spun/cottage industry woven yardage in various colors; and manufactured (cottage- and factory-made) 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: National symbols include the 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*), modernity (helicopter, motorcycle), and self-representation (tinku fighter).

CONCLUSIONS

Within the parameters of gender, class, and race/ethnicity, fashion enters in a variety of ways. The descriptions of different styles 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. Textiles from one sub-style may be worn with another. A Sakaka woman wearing a dress of sub-style 2. (made from synthetic yarns) may combine with an overskirt made from sheep wool (sub-style 1.) and/or a mantle woven in a factory (sub-style 5.). A Sakaka man may handweave a jacket from synthetic yarn (sub-style 2.) that imitates a jacket purchased from the Laymi cottage industry (sub-style 3.)

Dress in Sakaka, as in much of the Andes and many other parts of the world, remains 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 I illustrated makes it possible for the Sakaka to differentiate themselves—or not—from their non-Indian neighbors (vecinos), other peasants, and ayllu (runa) neighbors such as the Kirkawi and the Chayanta, in clear ways, with conscious re-presentation (even if my presentation lacks this clarity). I argue that dress codes the experiences of the Sakaka. Their dress, using diverse materials from varied sources, helps them construct not one “essential” but rather multiple Sakaka identities.

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CAPTIONS (for Figures on the following two pages)

Fig. 1. Male members of a Sakka hamlet pose for a portrait with their Carnival flutes after participating in the Ayllu Samkha music festival at Mallkuch'api, Potosi, Bolivia, April 1989. The men in the back row (standing) wear runa dress, with age-specific variations (it is unusual that the man on the left is shirtless under his vest and jacket). The men in the middle row (kneeling) wear Western-style, runa, and peasant-style dress. Judging by his sweater and socks/shoes, the man on the left probably is the community's school teacher. The man in the front (Abel Sánchez) is a promotor who organized the music festival; he wears a complete set of runa clothes, with a jacket custom-embroidered for him. Music festival participants from another community, who are visible in the upper left corner, wait for Zorn to take their picture.

Fig. 2. Women and girls at the outdoor market in the Sacaca town plaza, August 1989 (on the occasion of the August 6th festival of Niñito San Salvador. The two women at left wear runa dress; the two girls to the right of center wear peasant-style dress, made ayllu-specific by handwoven Sakaka mantles. All look at the display of factory-woven mantles and factory-woven yarns. The woman on the right is a mestiza townswoman or possibly an itinerant vendor.

¹ This paper, and the panel of which it formed a part, is dedicated to Joanne Siegal Brandford.

² Ayllu can be glossed as ethnic group, polity, community, or kin group, in part depending upon the level of social organization discussed; see Zorn (1994) for the literature on this topic.

³ I am indebted to Cassandra Torrico and to Ann Peters for insights from our ongoing conversations about visual semiotics and the semiotics of dress.

⁴ Much of the following discussion about identity in Bolivia can be applied to highland Peru.

⁵ My thanks to Blenda Femenias for our conversations about ethnicity and identity in Peru.

⁶ I hope to conduct more research on the topic of this fashion system and cottage industry.

⁷ My thanks to Gary Urton for his comments on a draft of the TSA paper concerning this point.



Fig. 1. Ayllus Samkha music festival. See previous page for caption.



Fig. 2. Sacaca town market. See end of text for caption.