Tinku Performative Adaptation in Two Bolivian Towns

Scholars describe the *tinku* of Northern Potosí, Bolivia, as a ritual battle between opposing rural community groups or individuals.¹ The participants themselves—mostly subsistence farmers and herders—fight individually or in groups, and often simply say in Quechua, ‘Maqananakuyku,’ or ‘we hit one another’ (see figures 1. and 2. *Tinku*).²

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² I lived in Toro Toro (Charcas Province-Second Section) from September 1997 to August 1999, and in Ocurí (Chayanta Province-Fourth Section) from December 1999 to October 2000. This study is based in part on ethnographic data gathered in four *tinkus* I attended: Toracari, Charcas Province-First Section, Festival of Saint Francis of Assisi, October, 1998; Macha, Chayanta Province-Second Section, Festival of the Holy Cross (*Cruz*),
Rural agriculturalists, or campesinos (‘peasant’), stage the tinku in one of several towns in the rugged mountains of the northern Potosí region of Bolivia every year during a Catholic saints’ name-day festivals. The fights occur amid the racous atmosphere of the combo bands, fireworks and community-wide processions that characterize the rural Catholic celebrations of the region (see figure 3). All analysts have associated participation in the tinku with the Andean tribal form, the ayllu based on the vertical ecology of the Andes, classically described by John Murra.3

The tinku has important religious, sociopolitical, and cultural significance for its modern day participants. In religious terms, agriculturalist participants (see figure 4) may consider blood shed during these battles an offering to the Pachamama (Andean earth diety), thereby defining the tinku as an agricultural increase ritual (see figure 5, ‘Pachamamapaj,’ ‘For Mother Earth,’ locals say).4 Participants often publicly identify themselves as belonging to a specific community5, information that is important for assigning communal work obligations later in the year. The fighting can serve as a mechanism to ameliorate tensions


5Bolin, 94-95.
arising from disputes between communities or individuals over land or other grievances.⁶
Communities often consider fighting in the *tinku* a rite of passage for younger participants.⁷
Choosing whether to participate as a *tinku* warrior is an important indicator of individual identity as either rural Quechua subsistence farmers, or *campesinos*, as distinct from *vecinos* or *mestizos*.⁸ In the context of mass rural-to-urban migration, for individuals absent from the community for an extended period of time, the validation of individual land rights or the procurement of access to communal lands is especially important.⁹ Similarly, return migrants from urban areas might attempt to re-establish their status as a member of the community where the *tinku* is performed.¹⁰

While both individual and societal needs such as the abovementioned have motivated communities to stage and engage in the *tinku*, at times, certain groups have disparaged the practice of ritual battles and sought to prohibit the *tinku*.¹¹ These sometimes antagonistic groups included, the Catholic clergy, and, in the latter half of the 20th century, Protestant groups. Government authorities have sought to restrict or prohibit the *tinku*. Tensions have manifested themselves along class and ethnic cleavages.

**Description of Activities Leading Up to the Tinku**

⁷Urton, 125; Duviols, 284.
⁸*Vecino*=a person of indigenous background that has moved into a rural town (Tr.: ‘pueblo’ [Sp.]) and assimilated many *mestizo* cultural traits, the principal of which are usually dress and the Spanish language.
⁹Ricardo A. Godoy, “From Indian to Miner and Back Again: Small Scale Mining in the Jukumani Ayllu, Northern Potosí, Bolivia” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1983), 9, 102.
Several towns still perform the *tinku* in modern day northern Potosí. In its modern form, religious rituals and preparations take place over the course of several weeks preceding the *tinku*. These preparations begin in the rural communities outside of a population center, or *pueblo*, and culminate in that *pueblo* on the day of that town’s Catholic saint’s name-day festival in a ritual battle, usually in the *pueblo*’s plaza, or in other central areas of the town. The *tinku*’s participants are overwhelmingly, but not exclusively, *campesinos* who live outside of the population centers and who are subsistence agriculturists or herders. The following is a general outline of the activities and rites that participants undertake in preparation for the *tinku*.\(^\text{12}\)

In or near the *ranchitos* (Tr.: ‘rural hamlets’ [Sp.]) where participants live, community members begin the preparation of *aqha* or *chicha* (Tr.: ‘aqha’ [Qu.] and ‘chicha’ [Sp.]=‘corn beer’) with about two to three weeks anticipation (see Figure 6. *Pre-Festival Chicha Preparation*). Participants will drink the *chicha* throughout the festival and use it for libations to the *Pachamama* (Tr.: ‘Earth/Time Mother’ [Qu.]). *Imilla wawas* (Tr.: ‘girl children’ [Qu.]) dress in the traditional black dress of northern Potosí (see Figure 7. *Imilla Wawas*). The girls will use the round mirrors on their dresses to reflect the sunlight to attract young boys’ attention. These festivals are the principal events where a young person might

\(^{12}\)The sources for this summary is threefold: (1) Tristan Platt, *Los guerrieros*, 49-75; (2) The author’s personal experience as a Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) in northern Potosí living in Toro Toro, Charcas Province—Second Section, from September 1997 to August 1999, and in Ocurí, Chayanta Province—Fourth Section, from December 1999 to October 2000. The author attended the following *tinkus*: Toracarí-Oct. 1998, Macha-May, 1999, and Ocurí-May, 2000; and (3) Rich Brickman, Phone interview by author, 15 November 2002, Cleveland, OH and Austin, TX. Brickman was a PCV living in Toro Toro from August 1999 to November 2002, who attended the following *tinkus*: Laguna-July, 2000, Macha-May, 2001, and Toro Toro-July, 2002. The summary is representative of the modern northern Potosí *tinku* in a general sense, as activities vary slightly from year to year and in different communities.
meet a life’s mate. An Andean shaman, or yachaj (Tr.: ‘he who knows’ [Qu.]), performs increase rites and rituals in the outlying communities (comunidades, ranchos or ranchitos) (see Figure 8. Yachaj). These rites may include libations to the saphis (Tr.: ‘roots’ [Qu.]) of a tree or plant,\textsuperscript{13} sacrifice of a llama or sheep (wilancha [Qu.]) (see Figure 9 Wilancha), and ritual ‘feeding’ of huacas (sacred places). The purpose of these rites and rituals is to propitiate the mountain deities for a good harvest in the year to come.

A pilgrimage from the community to the pueblo where the tinku battle will take place follows the ritual activities in the communities. Groups often wend their way along sinuous mountain paths to arrive at the pueblo. Trips can take from a few hours to a few days, depending on how far the communities are from the town center. During the pilgrimage, comuneros walk along mountain paths in a group while playing zampoñas (Tr.: ‘pan-flutes’), jula julas (Tr.: ‘warriors panpipes’\textsuperscript{14}), and charangos (Tr.: ‘ukuleles’).\textsuperscript{15} Comunero/as will make many libations during the pilgrimage, and may make additional animal sacrifices as well. Men detonate dynamite along the pathway to signal the coming of the group, especially in tinkus near mining centers where there is ready access to dynamite.

Often, the community times its arrival at the pueblo for the very early morning of the first official day of the festival. Upon arrival to the pueblo, a mestizo or a vecino from the pueblo might slaughter a bull brought by the community, something very special for its size,

\textsuperscript{13}Platt characterizes the saphis as “a vital metaphor that links the two Worlds [i.e., Janajpacha (‘the upper world’ [Qu.]) and Ukhupacha (Tr.: ‘the inner world’ [Qu.]), binding them to reciprocal complementarity...” “Andean Soldiers”, 146; ibid., Los guerreros, 24.

\textsuperscript{14}Platt, “Andean Soldiers”, 157.

\textsuperscript{15}The charango is a twelve-stringed instrument similar to the ukulele. Its sound box is shaped in the form of an armadillo’s shell, the traditional material used for its construction.
economic value, and importance for agricultural use. While Platt suggests that the slaughter of the bull represents both the mestizos’ oppression of indigenous peoples and, simultaneously, a sacrifice for the earth deities, the latter alone might be the more appropriate significance. Community groups will carry out many processions through the pueblo’s streets, passing through the main plaza, and often genuflecting at the doors of the town’s Catholic church. In these processions the male members of a community group run through the town’s streets, play instruments, and stomp, while the women members of the group sing and wave a white flag called a wiphala (‘warlike’ in [Qu.], see Figure 10.

Wiphala Dancers). Groups carry their community cross—sometimes called tata wilakruz (Tr.: ‘Santa Vera Cruz’ [Sp.]; ‘Saint Holy Cross’ [En.])—to be blessed by the town priest. ‘Wila’ means ‘red’ or ‘blood’ in Aymara, and I suggest that this is linked symbolically with the blood of the increase rituals that feature sacrifices. Platt notes that communities paint the cross with symbols of plant and animal increase during the rainy season. The night before the principal day of the festival, Catholic priests celebrate the Santisimo Sacramento in the church, and often, community groups will offer food—potatoes, corn, wheat, etc.—to the parish priest.

On the main day of the festival, the tinku battles begin. Men are the principal fighters, but may women fight at times as well. Mainly working-age males participate, but

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16Platt, Los guerreros, 53.
17Platt, Los guerreros, 67.
19ibid.
20ibid.
both the young and the old fight as well. For the young, participation can be an initiation into adulthood, just as it was for the Incan youth.\textsuperscript{22} Men often wear hardened leather helmets called \textit{monteras} that resemble \textit{conquistador’s} helmets.

The fights can take a variety of forms, from strictly controlled fist fights between individuals in the main plaza of the \textit{pueblo}, to large brawls between groups in the back streets of the town or rock slinging episodes between large groups (either thrown by hand or hurled with a \textit{honda}, as in colonial and Incan ritual battles).\textsuperscript{23} Contemporary group fights most closely resemble the colonial and pre-Incan fights that chroniclers described; individual fights seem to be a more recent advent. This is a significant detail. Preceding the large confrontations, the community groups parade through the streets running and playing \textit{zampoñas} (Tr.: ‘pan flute’ [Qu.]). Women sing and men stomp their boots in a cadence that resembles army troops marching. When two groups meet they might begin to circle one another in a pre-fight dance in the plaza. Slowly closing the distance between one another, individuals within the groups tend to stop playing their instruments and begin to approximate the \textit{tinku} dance. One side usually launches a rock, and that signals the beginning of the battle. Shop owners quickly batten down their doors and windows, and bystanders often head for cover. An \textit{azutero} (person with a whip) stands behind his or her soldiers, whipping them during the battles so that they are brave and do not run from the enemy (see Figure 11 \textit{Azutero}). Sometimes, the \textit{azutera} is a woman, usually the warrior’s wife. The fighting continues until one group has been driven to retreat. This type of group fight is most

\textsuperscript{22}Urton, 173.
\textsuperscript{23}Platt, “Pensamiento político,” 377.
common in the *puna* (or ‘highland’) moieties of the *ayllus mayores*.\(^{24}\)

Since pre-Incan times, there have been five *ayllus mayores* in northern Potosí: Sakaka, Chayanta, Pocoata, Macha, and Laymi. Each of these *ayllus mayores* is divided into *puna/suni* (i.e., upper moiety) and *vallelikina* (i.e., lower moiety). These terms are interchangeable with *hanasaya* and *hurinsaya* seen in the colonial descriptions of ritual battles. A middle zone (*chawpirana* [Qu.] or *taypirana* [Ay.]) divides the two moieties. The moieties of the *ayllus mayores* themselves are further subdivided into upper and lower moieties. For example, the *puna/suni* moiety of the Macha *ayllu mayor* is divided between *Alasaya* (Tr.: ‘upper’ [Ay.]) and *Majasaya* (Tr.: ‘lower’ [Ay.]) moieties. Both *Alasaya* and *Majasaya* comprise five sub-divisions, generically called *ayllus* themselves, or, to distinguish them from larger entities, *churi ayllus* (Tr.: ‘churi’=‘child’ [Qu.]).\(^{25}\)

Groups engaging in the fights may align themselves along lines conforming to various criteria within this *ayllu* structure. According to Platt, the large group fights can be either *inter-ayllu* (i.e., between two of the *ayllus mayores*), or *intra-ayllu*, (i.e., between the upper and lower halves of one of the *ayllus mayors*). Additionally, fights might occur between the sub-divisions (e.g., the *Alasaya* and *Majasaya* moieties of the Macha *suni* moiety) or the *churi ayllus* (intra-*ayllu*). Platt notes that *churi ayllu* groups might fight each other, but then unite to fight another *mitad* (‘mitad’=‘half’, ‘moiety division’ [Sp.]) in an alliance with their *ayllu mayor* against another *ayllu mayor*.\(^{26}\) This description of the

\(^{24}\)Tr.: ‘Ayllus mayores’=‘largest ayllus’, ‘mayor’=‘largest’ (Sp.).
\(^{26}\)Platt, *Los guerreros*. 
division of the warriors by ayllu, I suggest, represents, to some extent, an idealized version of the tinku similar to that that Urton describes below.\(^{27}\)

Individuals may fight one another in the tinku. Fights may be between individuals from the same ayllu mayor, its constituent moieties, or the churi ayllu groups. Equally, fights may be between individuals from another ayllu mayor. There seem to be little or no restrictions on the group identity of participants that fight in the individual ritual fights. The controlled fights between individuals can resemble a choreographed dance because of the etiquette followed by each fighter: fighters approach one another while stomping and circling each other as if in a dance, arms are held rigidly without bending the elbows, even during the actual trading of blows.

Participants often shed blood during these fights, but deaths are more seldom than is sometimes represented in sensational journalistic accounts. Many tinkus pass without one death; however, the death of a participant is supposed to signify a good harvest for the year to come.\(^{28}\)

Upon completion of the fights, participants usually stay in the town for several more days, drinking and merry-making. Each community has a communal house in the pueblo for such occasions (see Figure 12. Post-Tinku Festivities). The festival is probably the single most important opportunity to exchange goods and purchase clothes and household items for many of the participants who live in the more isolated areas, so staying in town might be a welcome opportunity. Afterwards, groups return to their respective communities to continue

\(^{27}\)Urton, 126.
\(^{28}\)Sallnow, 141-42.
A recounting of the *tinku* of Toro Toro that I attended in 2003 will offer a specific enactment of the ritual battles to help enhance the composite description above, as well as introduce specific thematic elements to be examined below.

**CASE STUDY: TATA SANTIAGU IN TORO TORO 2003**

Excitement filled the pre-festival air in Toro Toro. *Cumbia* blared from rented speakers and each street counted with an assortment of bars, restaurants and *chicherías* (Tr.: ‘chicha bars’ [Sp.]). Jeeps, Toyota Land Cruisers and chartered busses from the city littered Toro Toro’s narrow, cobble-stoned streets in the days leading up to and during the festival. Many in this ex-*haciendado* center have connections to the city of Cochabamba and wealthy professionals returned to their birth town for the *Festival de Santiago*, referred to by all as simply ‘Santiago.’ Most of the professional people had come for the processions of *Santiago* through the streets, to check on their vacation homes that remain locked up for the majority of the year and to see old friends.

A great number of less wealthy rural-urban migrants returned for the festival every year. These are often individuals that have taken jobs in the city in workshops, as bus drivers, as porters, or in the Chapare (one of Bolivia’s two coca-growing regions) working as *hormigas* (Tr.: ‘ants’ or fig. ‘peons’ [Sp.]) in the cocaine trade. Some are young men whose parents have sent them to the city to study or young men returning from their obligatory one-year military service. They too enjoyed the procession of *Tata Santiago* (Tr.: ‘tata’=‘father’
(Qu.)[29], as they often preferred to say. Reunions with family members, either in the town or in the outlying communities, are happy events.

Rural-urban migrants—especially those that live more or less permanently in the city—often use the opportunity that the return to Toro Toro for the festival to reassert their property rights, mostly for plots of land in the rural areas. This can be, at times, contentious. I witnessed an incident in the community of Estrellani, just outside of Toro Toro, a few days before the festival of Santiago that illustrates this dynamic. A member of the community who was living in Cochabamba had returned for the festival was arguing with other community members over land that he claimed was his own. After much drinking, the argument over the rights to a specific plot of land escalated to a shouting match. Afterward, when the person had left, one of the Estrellaneños told me not to worry, that he did that every year and the community always placated him (“Nosotros arreglamos todo con él.” [sp.]).

Based on the sheer number of comments about the actual trading of blows that I heard, the most anticipated of the numerous festival events for many appears to be the tinku battles. Men sitting in the sun drenched patio of don Heber’s Alojamiento Charcas, the town’s main hotel, looked up from their beer-filled table to offer an unsolicited but emphatic, “¡Maqanqakunku!” (Tr.: “They will fight,” or literally, “They will hit one another” [Qu.]). Don Isidro, the town’s most recognized carpenter, when I asked him, gave a gruff nod of affirmation as a smile crept across his face and he said, “Sí, van a pelear.” (Tr.: “Yes, they will fight” [Sp.]). Gary Urton similarly notes an excitement on the part of at least some of

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[29] A ‘u’ for ‘o’ substitution is common when Quechua speakers borrow a Spanish term.
the younger people in a community in Peru: “I cannot emphasize strongly enough how important the ‘fight between the headmen of the ayllus’ is in local lore. Young men talked about this fight with a gleam in their eyes; older men just shook their heads in resignation at the naked truth of man’s barbarity to man as exemplified by the ritual battles of Carnival.”  

In 2003, the municipal government of Toro Toro sponsored events and festivities leading up to the tinku in Toro Toro. It organized a ‘Takiy Tinku,’ literally a ‘singing tinku,’ in which groups from different communities competed in a dancing and singing competition. The groups played instruments such as the jula jula (‘warrior’s panpipes’ or ‘zamponia de guerrero’ [Qu.]), sikus (‘pan flute’ or ‘zampoña’ [Qu.]), and the charango (‘ukulele’ [Sp.]). Performers from the community of Pocosuco Grande of the Laymi likina moiety interrupted their musical routine on the stage and said a prayer into the microphone calling for a good harvest for the year to come. “Sumaq poqonqa kachun,” they said solemnly into the microphone. According to Harris, flute music attracts rain. Dancers wore saphis (Tr.: ‘roots’ [Qu.]), a symbol of offerings to mountain-spirits for increased production while dancing.  

There was a two day match for the actual fights in Toro Toro in 2003. Municipal authorities together with representatives of the Catholic church purposely postponed the start until after the main day of the festival, July 25, when the procession bearing the statue of the patron saint would take place. Participants staged the fight in one of the most prominent

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30 Urton, 123.  
31 In the Laymi region of the Charcas II province.  
32 Tr.: ‘Let there be a good harvest.” (Qu.)  
33 Harris, “Dead and Devils,” 60.  
34 See note 180, above.
locations in town, on Main Street, one block off of the main plaza. The fights began at about
noon both days and, interestingly, ended at promptly three in the afternoon. The fights began
extemporaneously the first day. Two young men, emboldened by alcohol, angrily shook fists
at one another as they stared each other down in the middle of the street. A crowd quickly
gathered around them as they began to trade blows. After this, moderators arrived to referee
the fights and the participating communities established a rotation for the fights. All fights
were between two individuals, and no group fights took place.

The mood of the crowd surrounding the fighters ebbed and flowed. Most often, as
soon as the fighting began, individuals in the crowd yelled, “¡Dale! ¡Dale!” (Tr.:≈“Go for it!”
[Sp.]), and a charge of excitement ran through the air. On the other hand, the crowd was
sometimes quiet enough to allow one to hear the dull thud of leather gloves hitting flesh.
When a solid blow that stunned a warrior landed or drew blood, ‘Oooohs’ and ‘Aaaahhs’
arose from the crowd. Fighters walked around with blood prominently displayed after
fighting.

Laymis always seemed to fight Pampas. Children and adolescents often identified the
fallen combatant as ‘Laymi’ (a highland dweller) or as ‘Pampa’ (a valley dweller): “¡Laymi
kasqa!”, “¡Pampa kasqa,” they yelled out. (Tr.: “It was a ‘Laymi,’” or, “It was a ‘Pampa’”;
“pampa”=“plain, flatlands” [Sp.]). The Laymi/Pampa distinction represents the upper
moiety/lower moiety division, or an approximation of the hanansayalhurinsaya division in
the Toro Toro valley. I will explore this more below. At one point, when one fighter (a
Pampa) was ready but had no opponent, the moderator yelled out, “¿Laymichu kan?” (Tr.:
“Is there a Laymi [in the crowd]?” [Qu.]. In jest, one middle aged man—apparently not a Laymi—jumped into the fighting circle and proclaimed “¡Laymi kani!” (Tr.: “I am a Laymi!”). Chuckles from the crowd signaled approval for his jest. After fights, some would embrace. This act, I suggest, was symbolic of the duality and cohesion discussed herein.

A sense of egalitarianism pervaded the individual matches. Fighters choose one another with the help of others from their community. An equal match in terms of size, age and, probably, ability was de rigueur. If one chose a fighter that was too small or too different in age, the other group could refuse or, more often, the fighter’s own group would encourage him to pick a more equal match. Some considered unfair the use of a montera by only one participant. “If one is wearing a ch’ulo, the other should have a ch’ulo too. [The fight] has to be ch’ulo to ch’ulo,” in the words of don Ginner Andea, one of the town elders.35 That is, one should have to take off his montura (‘leather helmet’) if the other did not have a montura as well. Gary Urton distinguishes between the ideal enactment of the ritual battle and its actual enactment. Ideally, a fighter who carried a helmet would shed that helmet to fight another with only a ch’ulo. Often this is not the case. Nonetheless, many observers and participants conveyed this spirit of egalitarianism and fairness, whether in arranging an equal match between opponents or intervening in the fight when one combatant had fallen and appeared to be on the verge of more severe injury.

Participants and the presiding official acted according to decorum during the staging

35Original.: “Si uno tiene ch’ulo, el otro también tiene que tener ch’ulo. Tiene que ser ch’ulo a ch’ulo.” From an interview with don Ginner Andia, July 28, 2003, in Toro Toro. Ch’ulo-A soft knit hat worn by Northern Potosian campesinos for everyday use. The soft hand woven cloth of the ch’ulo offers significantly less protection than the hardened leather of the montera (tinku warrior helmet).
of the fights. Don Heber and other prominent mestizos watched and refereed during the actual fighting. Even when he was not refereeing, don Heber exercised his mestizo prerogative by placing himself at the center of the fighting area amidst the crowd. The crowd too participated in this regulatory capacity. “¡Basta, Basta!” (Tr.: “Enough! Enough!”) they yelled when one of the fighters fell and the standing fighter continued to kick or hit.

Women participate in the tinkus as well. Analysts have reported that sometimes women fight in ritual battles\(^{36}\), but in my experience this is rare. Most women act as the azutera whipping the men from behind so that they are brave during battle (see Figure 42. Azutera). Or, especially in the individual fights, women might look on while their husbands fight, watching attentively to assure that opponents do not treat their husbands unfairly should they be the first to fall in a battle. Many will intervene boldly if they feel that their husband has been wronged, as I saw in Toro Toro in 2003. One fighter kicked another while he was down and the wife of the second was irate, yelling at his still standing opponent.

The tinku battles can be an angst ridden time for some of the wives. One can imagine the difficulties that she might face of her husband were hurt. No women fought in the Toro Toro tinku in 2003, but I consider their vigilance of their husbands a form of participation in an extended sense. They, as the moderators/azuteros become an integral part of the ritual battles, just as the mestizos.

However, almost all assume that men will be the tinku warriors in their pre-festival conversations. On several occasions, I asked women if they too would participate in the

ritual fights. After responding negatively, some turned the question on me: They asked me if I planned to fight: “Maqanakuyta yachankichu?” and “Maqanakunkichu?” (Tr.: “Do you know how to fight?” or “Do you usually fight?” and “Will you fight?” [Qu.]). “Mana maqanakuyta yachanichu,” I would respond unabashedly (Tr.: “No, I do not know how to fight,” or “No, I will not fight.”).

Despite the gravity of the event, there was also an atmosphere of jocularity. Many laughed when one fighter tripped or fell in an awkward manner. Once, a pair stumbled into a nearby vendor’s wares spread on the ground, inciting uproarious laughter in the crowd. Doña Lidia, one of the town’s most conservative mestizas was irate that the tinku was being performed in front of her bakery shop. Several times she dumped water off of her second story balcony onto bystanders below while angrily exclaiming, “¡Háganse por el otro lado!” (Tr.: “Go to the other side!” [Sp.]). This action, much to the chagrin of the few who were doused, caused great amusement in the crowd. And yet, as much disgust as doña Lidia professed for the event, her actions betrayed a veiled curiosity. She would glimpse out of the corner of her eye when a tinku warrior took a particularly hard spill or ended up with a bloody nose. “¡Que barbaridad!” (Tr.: “How brutal!” [Sp.]) she continually said, sometimes wringing her hands or shaking her head.

A crowd of perhaps 100—both fighters and viewers—dispersed within five minutes of the announcement of the end of the event each of the two days. Throughout the event, all
comers had been allowed to battle. If headmen or community leaders fought\(^{37}\), it was not apparent to me and neither the crowd nor the officials made any distinction. The order and controlled environment of the individual fights of the *tinku* in Toro Toro, which is a valley or *likina* community, contrast greatly with the more open and unpredictable group fights in the streets of Macha and Ocurí, the highland or *suni/puna* communities.

**Challenges to the Tinku**

One sees evidence of continued church discouragement of the *tinku* in the “Misión Extraordinaria-Norte Potosí” Evangelical poster, which an informant collected in October of 2002 from a *casa comunal* (Tr.: ‘community meeting hall’ [Sp.]) in the small community of Viscachani, which is about two hours by footpath outside of Toro Toro (see figure 13). The poster comprises two panels with the phrase “Entremos a la Misión: Hagamos Nuestro el Camino de Jesus.” The upper panel shows pleasant, healthy and happy characters engaged in productive activities apparently because they follow the “path of Jesus.” The bottom panel portrays a stark contrast as people appear ill, unhappy, angry, venal, etc., apparently because they have not chosen to follow the path of Jesus, who appears as fallen and weeping in the panel. In the upper left-hand portion of the bottom, ‘bad’ panel, four or five people are engaged in what appears to be a *tinku*-like fight. One angrily hurls a rock as three others charge toward him, while another twirls a *honda* (Tr.: ‘slingshot’ [Sp.]) in his hand, ready to sling its rock at his opponent. The *honda*, as stated before, is the traditional Andean

\(^{37}\) *Campesinos* refer to ‘headmen’ as *alcaldes* (Tr.: ‘mayors’ [Sp.]) or *presidentes* (Tr.: ‘presidents’ [Sp.]) in the Charcas province.
weapon\textsuperscript{38}, and rock throwing fights are associated with modern \textit{tinku} battles as described above. The resemblance of the image on the poster to modern \textit{tinku} battles in the region is striking. One could interpret the stark contrast and complete separation of the two panels as a didactic aid used to convey the concept of absolute good and absolute evil characteristic of Christian Manichaeism, which differs from the Andean concept of dualism in the spiritual realm. While the latter recognizes both benevolence (Tr.:≈‘sumaj’ [Qu.]) and malignance (Tr.:≈‘saqra’ [Qu.]), allows one to bleed into the other\textsuperscript{39}; Manichaeism would brook no such ambiguity.

In 2000, the Catholic church and the \textit{Campe\~{n}ino Central} in Toro Toro lowered their resistance to the performance of the \textit{tinku} in Toro Toro’s town center, but not necessarily of their own volition. The townsfolk and the \textit{tinku} participants exerted force to expel one of these individuals from town (the priest) and to wrest power from the other (the CSUTCB President). After a row and insinuations over unrelated behavior that many felt inappropriate for a clergyman, a popular movement procured the expulsion of the aforementioned Catholic priest. Many \textit{Torotore\~{n}os} (inhabitants of Toro Toro) disparaged the priest who had continued the \textit{tinku} prohibition and who had tried to prohibit the parading of the Santiago

\textsuperscript{38}\textsuperscript{38}Sallnow, 138; Bolin, 82.
\textsuperscript{39}\textsuperscript{39}Platt notes, “South Andean Christians [i.e., adherents to Andean religious beliefs and rituals] do not […] oppose an ‘absolute evil’ (Parkin [ed.] 1985) to a separate realm of benign celestial divinities emanating from the Godhead. Macha theology strikes a more psychoanalytic note: the inner deities are invoked and placated as potentially voracious sources of hostility, pestilence, accident and death, but which also promise (if they are fed and cared for) the renovation of prosperity and desire, and the regeneration of individual and collective life (Nash 1979; Taylor 1980; Harris 1982; Platt 1983; Boyusse & Harris in press),” “Andean Soldiers”, 145; For example, according to the logic of Andean religion, a tin miner may appease the \textit{supay} (a malignant being of the \textit{ukhupacha} [Tr.: ‘inner world’ (Qu.)], often incorrectly identified as the Christian Satan) with offerings in exchange for the minerals that he will take from the inner earth, the domain of the \textit{supay}; see also Platt, \textit{Persistencia de los Ayllus}, 34 and Izko, “Magia espacial y religi\~{o}n,” 74.
When I asked them (from 1997-99). Certainly this resentment would have informed the sentiments and actions that eventually led to his expulsion from town in 2000. Similarly, the largely campesino constituency of the CSUTCB voted out its anti-tinku president around the same time.

However, it is a passive captiousness more than an active—and sometimes sensationalized—prohibition of Andean rituals that informs the response of many Christian religious sectors toward indigenous religious traditions conducted in open public spaces in or near towns. In Toro Toro, for instance, on Todos los Santos (Tr.: ‘All Saints Day’ [Sp.]), campesinos construct torres (Tr.: ‘towers’ [Sp.]) in the cemetery with offerings to their deceased relatives. Some mestizos disparagingly referred to the torres as being of ‘las creencias antiguas’ (Tr.: ‘the old beliefs’ [Sp.]). Spier classifies such rituals as modern ancestor veneration linked with ‘supernatural nature’ religions.40 This practice is similar to the mummy worship that the Incas practiced, but it is most closely linked to the cult of the mountain spirits who are literally spirits of deceased loved ones and responsible for controlling the elements. Equally, one prominent member of the community in 1998 remarked to me that the huacas outside of the cemetery (see Figure 60. Huacas of Toro Toro) were of the ‘creencias antiguas’ (Tr. ‘old beliefs’ [Sp.]) and that they should be destroyed. Indeed, when I returned to Toro Toro in 2003 to conduct fieldwork, the huacas had been removed.

During the Todos Santos festival, some townsfolk also complained about how the

40Spier, 43.
"campesinos" were ‘very proud because they want to build their towers very high. They have to be better than us in whatever activity.'

That is, in addition to engaging in a pagan ritual in the midst of hallowed ground, the *campesinos* built their shrines high so as to tower over the more modest shrines that *mestizo* townsfolk (in this case, mostly visitors from Cochabamba) had arranged around the tombs of their deceased loved ones. These *mestizos* uttered this complaint in the same breath that they associated the *campesinos’* feeding of the dead with the ‘creencias antiguas.’ Here, however, we are already slipping toward tensions that rise along ethnic and class lines, as much as those that rise religious lines.

Community members—not limited to *tinku* participants—sometimes reciprocated the scorn for the Christian religion. The community myth that surrounds the Festival of *Santiago* in Toro Toro captures one facet of this antagonistic attitude toward the Catholic church. It goes something like this: In olden times, there was a great deal of fighting and there was no peace in this region. The three sister towns of Toro Toro, Anzaldo, and Huanyuma were always fighting. This fighting was not the fault of the people, but the Spanish priests. The priests fomented the fights and caused the unrest between the people. But “Tata” Saint James came and killed the priests, [killed] all [of them]. “Tata” Saint James killed the priests and brought peace to the region. The fighting that the tale mentions does not refer to the *tinku*, so far as I can tell, but rather to some notion of civil unrest fomented by the

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41Tr.: ‘…muy orgullosos porque tienen que construir sus torres muy altos. Ellos tienen que superarnos a nosotros en cualquier actividad.’ [Sp.]

42Tr.: En los tiempos viejos, había mucha pelea y no había paz en esta región. Las tres pueblos hermanos de Toro Toro, Anzaldo y Huanyuma siempre estaban peleando. Esa pelear no era culpa de la gente, sino de los curas españoles. Los curas fomentaban la pelea entre la gente y causaban el desorden. Pero Tata Santiago vino y mató a los curas, todos. Tata Santiago mató a los curas y trajo paz a la región.
priests.

But all of this portrays a very stark picture of one religious/cultural position pitted against another. Many episodes and observations belie this simplistic representation of the religious tensions that surround rituals such as the tinku.

In the case above, by popular demand, the tinku was restored in Toro Toro during that town’s festival in 2000. The new Catholic priest, padre Nicanor, a person with a reputation as “un tipo muy simpático” was amenable to the tinku’s performance in town. This particular priest, from Spain originally, was a twenty-year resident of northern Potosí, and, by many accounts, viewed indigenous rituals as a cultural heritage of the region. With the opposition to the tinku gone, Torotoreños staged the event once more in the center of town during the Festival de Santiago in 2001.

Protestantism displays a similarly ambiguous relation to the tinku and other festival activities, despite the stark scenario portrayed in the Evangelical poster presented above. Far from the stereotypic image of Protestant missionaries’ imposing an unwanted doctrine on passive inhabitants, this new religious presence in rural areas probably does more to diversify religious options for people than it does to coerce them into abandoning cultural traditions. Spier notes that Protestants have less coercive power than Catholics, even if Protestants were to want to impose their religious views. The evidence from the case study in Toro Toro supports this interpretation. The Catholic priests were successful in prohibiting the ritual battles by the very powers vested in their positions. The evangelical leader of the CSUTCB,

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43Tr.: “a very nice type [i.e., person]” [Sp.].
44Spier, 208.
however, needed the power afforded by an elected office to exert coercive influence to the extent that we can assume that religious affiliation/beliefs influenced his actions.

Additionally, the Protestants in the region are local converts with local Quechua-speaking pastors, not foreign missionaries. In my experience, the coercive tools that Protestant missionaries might have in rural areas—posts notwithstanding—are solicitous smiles and musical prayer sessions.

In fact, many analysts explain conversion to Protestantism as a means by which ‘peasants’ escape the religious fiesta system and avoid the expenses in Catholic rituals as well as the heavy drinking. An aversion to the tinku might be a factor in someone’s decision to ‘hacerse hermano.’ One might demure on participating in the tinku by hiding behind the cloak of his new religious affiliation: ‘Mi religión no me permite,’ the person would say, while breathing a figurative sign of relief at not having to participate in what he has come to see as a cruel ritual. Problematic for my conjecture is the fact that most tinku participants are campesinos and most evangelical converts are vecinos, whose previous assimilation to mestizo culture means that many would not expect them to participate in the tinku or other such rituals in the first place. The dynamic that I describe might be more

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46 Tr.: ‘make one’s self a brother [lit.],’ i.e., ‘to convert to Protestantism.’

47 Tr.: ‘My religion does not allow me [to partake in this activity]’ (Sp.). This is a common refrain in rural Bolivia. It is used to escape all manner of drinking obligations and festival responsibilities.
applicable in considering the pressures return migrants face upon returning to their communities and attending rural festivals after a long period of absence, perhaps in the city (see Rural-Urban Migration below and Louis Wirth theory). Paerregaard notes that repudiating traditions, fiestas, symbols and rituals is not easy for return migrants.\textsuperscript{48}

Affiliation with a Protestant organization does not automatically translate into opposition to indigenous religious practices. An interaction that I had with the \textit{mestiza} caretaker at the Evangelical Hostel of Toro Toro during the \textit{tinku} of 2003 is illustrative. She was a devout member of the church and very involved in church activities such as prayer sessions and services. Curious as to her opinion of the \textit{tinku}, I asked what she thought, expecting some sort of a denunciation. “Es interesante,” she said. “La gente tiene sus costumbres, ¿no?”\textsuperscript{49} She talked for several minutes about the \textit{tinku}, and she seemed genuinely sympathetic to its performance and interested in its importance for its participants. While not considering herself of the same social status as “la gente” [i.e., \textit{campesinos} who were \textit{tinku} participants], she did not deprecate the bloody ritual. The condescension and censure that I had expected was absent from her response. While difficult to reconcile with the judgments clearly represented by the poster above, I took this episode as a subtle reminder that attitudes and opinions toward traditional practices such as the \textit{tinku} were most often individual in nature.

\textit{Pueblo/Mestizo Attitudes}

\textsuperscript{48}Paerregaard, 194.
\textsuperscript{49}Tr.: “It is interesting. The people have there customs, no?”
Three main social groups compose the pueblo populations: *criollos*, *mestizos*, and *vecinos* (*campesinos* who have moved from the rural communities to the town center). Tensions between *campesinos* and these groups who live in the town centers, especially the *criollos* and *mestizos*, have been noted by numerous authors (see below) and can come to the surface around the *tinku*.

On the political front, Olivia Harris and Xavier Albó have written much about the historical antagonism between *campesinos* and the *mestizos* of the *pueblos* in Northern Potosí, especially in the context of *campesino*-led revolts against *ex-hacendados* (Tr.: ‘ex-plantation owners’ [Sp.]) in the Charcas and Chayanta provinces in 1927, 1947, 1958 and 1960, as well as the indigenous uprising led by Tomás Katari in 1780 that began in the Chayanta province.\(^5\) Harris and Albó mention that in Charcas province where Toro Toro is located in particular (which is in the lower *valles*) there has been a pronounced antagonism between *campesinos* and townsfolk, probably due to consolidation of the *mestizo* holdings in *ayllu* territory. Tensions between these two groups in Bolivia is longstanding and has been historically exacerbated by events such as General Mariano Melgarejo dictatorship’s (1864-1873) attempts to expropriate *ayllu* lands for government auction to would-be *hacendados* (1866-67).\(^6\)

Specific to the *tinku*, Albó mentions that from the perspective of the *mestizo* class, the

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tinku is an expression of violence.\textsuperscript{52} In certain areas of northwestern Potosí tinku-like battling between campesino groups has been associated with cannibalism, and Platt notes that “acts [of cannibalism] that many people in Bolivia—in accordance with the mestizos of San Marcos—attribute to the brutality of a horde of degenerate ‘savages.’”\textsuperscript{53}

In addition to some mestizos, some vecinos renounce campesino traditions such as the tinku (although others do not, as we shall see below), despite their recent links to the campesino class. Albó notes:

The opposition campesino/person and non-campesino/q’ara has its most chronic expression in the relation between the comunarios [i.e., campesinos] and the old vecinos of the traditional pueblos. Overall in the most isolated and peripheral regions [i.e., like northern Potosí] the latter are those who disdain and oppose most [in a] pertinacious [manner] against the comunarios, to whom they refer as “Indian” and consider “uncivilized,” in spite of all that they might have in common with them.\textsuperscript{54}

On the other hand, as seen in the quote above, campesinos at times reciprocate these ethnocentric attitudes toward other groups as they consider themselves runa, or human, while they consider mestizos, criollos, and, according to the Albó quote, vecinos as being q’ara (Tr.: literally ‘naked,’ or figuratively ‘uncultured’ or ‘uncivilized’ [Qu.]).\textsuperscript{55} Also, some campesinos use the term ‘k’anka,’ or ‘dirty gringo,’ for fair-skinned people.

However, ambivalence exists here too. Platt mentions that mestizos in the Macha

\textsuperscript{52}Albó, Violencia, 15.
\textsuperscript{53}``[A]ctos [de canibalismo] que mucha gente en Bolivia—en concordancia con los mestizos de San Marcos (locations)—asignan a la brutalidad de una horda de ‘salvajes’ degenerados; Saavedra 1901; cf. Demelas 1981; Platt 1982\textsuperscript{a}; Stern (comp.) 1987; cited in Platt, Los guerreros, 85.
\textsuperscript{54}Albó, Para comprender, 75: Original: “[L]a oposición campesino/persona y no-campesino/q’ara tiene su expresión mas crónica en la relación entre los comunarios y los vecinos antiguos de los pueblos tradicionales. Sobre todo en las regiones mas aisladas y periféricas [like Northern Potosí] estos últimos son también los que manifiesten un desprecio y oposición mas pertinaz contra los comunarios, a los que siguen llamando “índios” y considerando “incivilizados”, por mucho que dichos vecinos compartan con los comunarios a los que tanto rechazan.”
\textsuperscript{55}Mannheim, 19.
The tinku of 1971 were torn between an urge to enter the fray and a sense of duty to uphold a higher, ‘civilized’ standard: “The mestizos resented the clash between, on one side, their burning desire to take part in the battle beside ‘their’ respective Indians and, on the other hand, the exigencies of the dignity that they should show as members of a ‘superior civilization,’ that which they shared with the priests and the sub prefect of the Province.”

This ambivalence characterizes the mestizos’ and vecinos’ attitudes toward the tinkus of northern Potosí, as seen in the case study of Toro Toro. On the one hand, many defend the tinku and consider it a unique element in Torotoreño identity, an identity that they share, even if they do not fight themselves. Many participate as mediators and azuteros, or watch as interested and sympathetic observers (Figure 61. Watching the Tinku).

**Government/Police Stance**

In a 1996 article entitled “Gasificando en Macha a los Guerreros del Alba. ¿Un caso de etnocidio estatal?” printed in La Presencia (La Paz newspaper with a large circulation), and reprinted as an appendix in Los guerreros de Cristo\[57\], Tristan Platt describes an incident in which the police officers gassed participants—including Platt himself—without sufficient provocation. The article charges that, although police were allowed to gas participants when rock throwing breaks out, no such activity occurred in this case and therefore the use of...
teargas was unjustified. As the title of the article suggests, Platt links these events with state genocide.

While the actions described in Platt’s article do suggest that the police may have overstepped their authority in the incident in question, most often the case is otherwise. In the use of tear-gas that I witnessed in the Macha tinku in 1999, the Bolivian police used old and improperly functioning tear gas canisters that (see Figure 62. Tear Gassing in Macha), when they did not malfunction completely, were so weak that participants picked them up and hurled them back at the police. They often receive a paltry salary, poor training, and antiquated equipment to do their job. Malice on the part of the police officers, if it existed at all, was insignificant, as they often seemed to be perfunctorily performing their duty. This was certainly not the crack force of a repressive state apparatus. The participants eagerly sought opportunities to grab a sputtering canister and hurl it back towards the police in a form of pujllay (Quechua for “to play”, “jugar”), a word that is often used to describe the inter-participant violence of the tinku itself.58 This “violent repression” of the tinku bordered on farce more than it did on grave repression. In no way did it resemble “genocide.” Indeed, police usually intervene in the violent melees that occur during the group tinkus in the highlands (but not in the valleys) only when they feel that participants might be severely injured. Crowd dispersion by means of tear-gassing has probably saved the participants from some head injuries.

In my experience most police officers in northern Potosí view the tinku with a

58Cereceda, “Aproximaciones a una estética,” 342.
favorable eye, and, I suggest, participate in the *tinku* themselves, much as the *mestizos* of that valleys. Often, police act as the *azuteros*, just as the *mestizos* of the valleys, intervening only when one participant has fallen and the other, caught up in the excitement of the moment, does not stop his aggression. While the police cum *azuteros* do not whip participants from behind during battle—as a female community member might—they do, I suggest, become an integral part of the *tinku* by acting as a mediator/azutero. Most officers (if *pueblos* even have police presence, and many do not) are themselves *vecinos*, or people of recent *campesino* background, and therefore might retain a sympathetic view of the *tinku* (or might not, in certain cases, as Albó suggests).

Similarly, municipalities sometimes promote the *tinku*. The Municipality of Macha is promoting its *tinku* as a tourist event. In an article dated May 5, 2002, the Sucre newspaper, *El Correo del Sur*, ran an article titled “Macha se promueve como capital del tinku” in which it reports that the *subalcalde*, Tomás Coria, proudly declares Macha as the home of the original *tinku*. The town of Toro Toro, as we have seen, promotes the *takiy tinku*, or ‘dancing’ *tinku*.

Ultimately, though, one must consider the prohibitionist influence of municipal governments against the *tinku*. In 2003, my friends in Cachuyo lamented in a non-descript manner that it was becoming harder and harder to stage the *tinku* in Ocurí “a causa del

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Albó suggests a ‘positive’ instance of government discouragement of the *tinku* by claiming that over the last three decades the *tinku* has been decreasing as a means of dispute resolution due to increased internal campesino organization and the development of other channels of conflict resolution. Although he does not mention these channels by name, one would assume that he is signaling an increased enfranchisement on the part of the campesinos in the municipal government or judiciary systems, which would lessen the reliance of campesinos on the *tinku* as a means of dispute resolution. This interpretation, however, admits more of a value judgment than a distanced analytical stance might. Additionally, we shall see that the *tinku* does still fulfill an important role as a mechanism to ameliorate tensions over border disputes in a region where campesinos are still distanced from the state apparatus.

**The Tinku and Rural-Urban Migration**

Rural to Urban migration is perhaps one of the most prominent factors influencing social and cultural change in the rural areas of the Andes, including traditional ritual practices. The sociologist Lewis Wirth in his seminal study of rural to urban migration notes that “rural life will bear the imprint of urbanism in the measure that through contact and

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60 Tr.: “because of the municipality.” Jimmy Knowles, a Peace Corps Volunteer stationed in Toracari (Charcas Province, First Section), observes similarly that participants are finding it more and more difficult to stage the *tinku* in that town because the municipal government is discouraging its enactment; Jimmy Knowles, interview by author, 18 February 2004, via email correspondence, Austin, TX.

communication it comes under the influence of cities. In a highly pertinent study of rural-urban migration in the rural Peruvian *pueblo* of Tapay in the Caylloma province of the Arequipa Department of Peru, Karsten Paerregaard argues that the influence of visiting rural to urban migrants is the primary influence in the transformation of rural rituals, which are “intimately tied to the agricultural calendar and the rural villagers’ non-Catholic belief system.”

The “contact and communication” with urban areas that Wirth identifies as the causal mechanism for the influence of the urban sphere over the rural ritual exist increasingly for the rural hamlets in northern Potosí. Comuneros temporarily migrate to nearby cities to find work between crop cycles (approx. March-August). Young men make year-long migration to various locations within Bolivia for military service. Others undertake longer-term migration to far-away locals (i.e., other countries) for work purposes. Northern Potosí campesinos often journey cyclically to major cities such as Cochabamba, Sucre, La Paz, Santa Cruz, as well as to the coca producing region of the Chapare, and even as far as Argentina to seek work as wage laborers as manual laborers, construction hands, in very few situations, as factory workers. Additionally, improving infrastructure increasingly links northern Potosí to urban markets.

One underlying assumption in this hypothesis is that a rural individual’s worldview would tend to change in some fundamental way after living and working in an urban area for

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63Paerregaard, 24.
an extended period of time. Spier argues that “city-dwellers […] became less directly
dependent on the surrounding natural environment and more dependent on a growing
network of people, felt an increasing need for moral guidelines which stretched beyond their
own community.”64 Such changes in return migrants’ worldview might manifest itself in a
decreasing inclination to view their surroundings and interactions in terms nature. Wirth
further notes, “[In the city] we tend to acquire and develop a sensitivity to a world of artifacts
and become progressively farther removed from the world of nature.” This is the very world
of nature that Spier mentions as underpinning pre-Incan religious belief systems.

Karsten Paerregaard observed this phenomenon in Tapay. He notes in particular the
erosion of the importance of the ayni between rural-urban immigrants from Tapay living in
the cities of Lima and Arequipa. Only 16 percent of the families that he surveyed originally
from Tapay but living in those cities still practiced ayni compared with the majority who
continued to live in the rural areas.65 I attribute this to ayni’s close association with the
agricultural work sharing practices necessitated by subsistence farming techniques. Living in
a flophouse or an apartment in the city and engaging in wage earning activities obviates the
need to cultivate and maintain reciprocal work arrangements that are necessary for
subsistence agricultural practices.

Because most rural-urban migrants do not return to rural areas to live permanently,
changes in their values and/or worldview in relation to their rural counterparts often manifest

64Spier, 100.
themselves in and around punctual activities such as rural festivals.\textsuperscript{66} The \textit{pueblos’} saints’ name day festivals in particular attract the greatest number of non-residents per year. Paerregaard captures the juxtaposition of the two attitudes toward the festivals in this passage:

\begin{quote}
[T]he ritual and symbolic practice of non-migrant villagers [i.e., ‘rural’ villagers], particularly in Tapay’s remote settlements of the \textit{puna} estancias, is closely tied to a rural cosmology and a conceptualization of the Andean landscape as sacred and as inhabited by powers superior to human beings. In contrast with Tapeños living inside Tapay as well as many return migrants [i.e., ‘urban-influenced’ Tapeños], ritual activities serve as an arena to reaffirm Lima and Arequipa migrants’ ties with their native village and to readdress their conventional status in the cities.\textsuperscript{67}
\end{quote}

The proportion of the return migrants who would not have participated in the ritual and symbolic practices linked to rural cosmology had they stayed in Tapay versus those whose needs for such ritual and symbolism changed \textit{because} they lived in urban areas remains indeterminate. However, we must assume that at least some (and more probably, many) fall into the latter group. A ritual like the \textit{tinku}, being most closely linked with rural the beliefs of the supernatural nature associated with Andean cosmology, would probably appeal less to the Tapeños living in Tapay and the return migrant groups that Paerregaard mentions. I would submit the example of Gary, a Torotoreño of rural background that has lived and studied in Cochabamba for several years as an example of this dynamic. In 2003 upon return to Toro Toro for the festival, he eschewed participation in the \textit{tinku}. To the extent that someone in Gary’s situation might want to reaffirm his ties with his native village—

\textsuperscript{66}However, some do return permanently. “[A]lthough migrants may make a radical break with the rural life-style of Tapay by marrying non-Tapeños, redesigning inheritance practice and neglecting ayni exchange relations with fellow villagers in the city, many of them nevertheless want to return to their native villages, and indeed some do so,” Paerregaard, 157.
\textsuperscript{67}Paerregaard, 250.
something that I feel is fairly common—the very act of returning for the festival, at least, or participating in other rites that festival goers arrange would probably allow him to fulfill these needs.

On the other hand, Karsten Paerregaard notes that some individuals who returned to the rural community of Tapay in Peru after many years absence in either Arequipa or Lima actually embraced traditional Andean rituals more emphatically than some locals as a means of “reaffirming or symbolically reclaiming their runa heritage.” I saw an embrace of the Toro Toro tinku of 2003 by young men who returned to northern Potosí after years of absence working in Bolivia’s burgeoning cities (see Figure 66. Rural-Urban Return Fighters in Toro Toro) that, I feel, illustrates one facet of how the dynamic that Paerregaard describes might manifest itself. If not a ‘runa’ or ‘campesino’ identity, the participants might access a regional identity as Toroteños by participating in the tinku. Indeed, talking to rural migrant taxi cab drivers in cities like Cochabamaba and La Paz, they are much more likely to proffer the name of a pueblo or region as opposed to their specific community, much less an ethnic group or a something as abstract as a class and/or race-based ‘runa.’

Often however, the primary motivation for return to rural areas and participation in rituals is a more mundane concern over land rights.

Riuni is the quintessential example of the Bolivian rural-to-urban migrant, and perhaps soon, urban-to-rural return migrant. Riuni is from the small ranchito (Tr.: ‘hamlet’

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68Paerregaard, 11, 251.
69Indeed, the average person with a rural background that has become, say, a taxi cab driver in Cochabamba is much more likely to identify himself as a ‘Torotoreño’ or ‘Ocureño,’ i.e., regionally.
70Paerregaard, 146.
[Sp.] of Cachuyo. Only nine families live in Cachuyo, a collection of adobe huts with thatched roofs about forty-five minutes walking from Ocurí. I got to know this community over the course of a year that I lived in Ocurí as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Building a water system in that community provided me with a unique opportunity to see Riuni’s day-to-day life. As any other agriculturalist, he worked in the fields and engaged in other subsistence activities, such as transhumance (as seen in the picture). But in 2000 Riuni married Claudia, a girl from Qolqechaka (Tr.: ‘qolqe’=‘silver’ and ‘chaka’=‘bridge’ [Qu.]) (see picture). They soon left to find work in Argentina on a trip that would leave them separated from their families for three to four years. Riuni and Claudia do not seem to have been driven from their homes in rural northern Potosí by poverty as much as by a sense of wanderlust and individual initiative. If anything, the conditions in his community had been improving incrementally in the years preceding their leaving: I helped the community build a gravity flow water system (a very sought after improvement in rural communities in this area) and the Law of Popular Participation opened up a few employment opportunities in the nearby seat of municipal government in Ocurí. But the big city and its opportunities are more seductive for many than the prospect of staying in the rural areas. Despite the incremental improvement in the standard of living, Riuni and Claudia struck off for Argentina and were successful—evidenced by the length of their stay—in establishing a toehold in that country, something not all are able to do in such a high-risk endeavor that often involves paying a

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71Paerregaard argues, “Yet Peru’s current crisis is not the central cause for the explosive growth of Lima and the country’s other cities. Behind the rural-urban exodus which has been in progress in Peru over the past fifty years, lies a fervent desire on the part of migrants for education and a great hope for upward mobility,” 18-19.
loan-shark an extraordinary amount of money to cross the international border.

The interesting question is ‘How will Riuni react to the tinku when he returns?’ What are the chances that he will be like the Torotoreños-cum-Cochabambinos who embraced the ritual in 2003? And what are the chances that he will be like Gary, who did not embrace the tinku? To answer these questions more fully, a consideration of the changing sociopolitical and economic structures in northern Potosí might help us understand the changes.

**The State of Today’s Ayllu of Northern Potosí**

The impact of markets on the vertical ecology of the region, along with other formal political changes, have all affected the ayllu system. Before the examining the tinku in sociopolitical terms, we must take one final look at the contemporary vertical ecology of northern Potosí, especially the effects that markets both city based and pueblo-based have had on said vertical ecology.

**Changes in the Ayllu System**

Ayllus in the region have changed since pre-Incan times, and many scholars have noted the decay of the ayllu system over time, although most emphasize post-Columbian changes.\(^2\) Klein captures this evolution (dissolution?) of the ayllu by distinguishing between three rough periods that characterize changing ayllu constitution. The first was a pre-Columbian “tightly-knit fictive kin organization” which was not defined by a single residential community and relatively unstructured geographically. The second iteration,

\(^2\)See Platt, *Persistencia de los ayllus*, 20-23, 28, 39, 43-44; Mendoza, et. al., 8-13; Bastien 190; Klein, *Concise History*, 22; Harris; Platt, Urton.
emerging in the post-Conquest period, was characterized by a closed corporate-style community. Republican era Indian peasant comunidades emerging from the free communities initially organized by the Spaniards and called ayllus after the Conquest represent the third iteration.\(^{73}\)

Among the many measures contributing to this phenomenon, the first of significance in the area of northern Potosí, probably would have been incorporation into the Tiahuanaco civilization, which according to several scholars was principally economic and ceremonial, not based on domination.\(^{74}\) The ayllu, after all, has historically been principally an economic entity constructed around resource procurement and allocation in the context of a vertical ecology. The Incas too would have changed the sociopolitical structures of the ayllus through forced relocation in the mitmaj system.

The Incas required members of the ayllus\(^{75}\) to relocate to other areas of the empire as mitmaq (Tr.: ‘settler’ [Qu.]). This tactic guard against rebellion by settling newly conquered territories with the more loyal mitmaqs.\(^{76}\) The Incas defeated the Charka in a battle in what is now the valley of Cochabamba\(^{77}\) and incorporated the region that would become modern northern Potosí into the Incan Empire in the first wave of expansion. The

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\(^{73}\)Klein, *Concise History*, 22.

\(^{74}\)Sallnow, 22; Klein, *Concise History*, 12; Mendoza, et. al., 8; Klein, however, lists the understanding of the religious/economic links binding ethnic groups to the Tiahuanaco civilization as the third of three possible explanations. The first, which has been all but discarded by analysts, emphasized military domination. The second emphasized primarily religious incorporation.

\(^{75}\)Interchangeable with ‘ethnic group,’ such as the Charcas and the Qaraqara.

\(^{76}\)Sallnow, 36; Sallnow’s sources include Moore1958; Rostworowski de Diez Canseco 1976; Murra 1980; Pease 1982; Rowe 1982.

by AntonioVasquez de Espinoza, the Incas almost certainly would have required *mitmaq* from other areas to settle in the northern Potosí region. Additionally, the Incas would have forcibly relocated religious idols from the *ayllus* to the Qoricancha in Cuzco, thereby reconfiguring the socio-religious relationship between the shaman/ethnic lords of the *ayllus* and their populations. In the modern province of Bustillos, the Incas relocated settlements of the Charkas from ridges and mountaintops down into the valleys.\(^78\)

Spanish rule radically affected the *ayllus* with the establishment of the Toledan reductions that forced many indigenous people to live in concentrated settlements, many towns of which, as noted herein, are towns in contemporary northern Potosí. Despite mixed results of this settlement (many people fled from the towns, back to their settlement in the mountains\(^79\)), Toledo’s reforms fragmented the social structure of the *ayllus*.\(^80\) During Republican times, the expansion of the *hacienda* system during 1866 under president Melgarejo usurped *ayllu* (or ‘free community’) land, especially in the valleys.\(^81\) The more recent reconfiguration of some *ayllu* land into *sindicatos* (syndics) after the Agrarian Reform of 1953 and, especially, its assignation of private, individually owned titles further eroded the *ayllu* system.

The encroachment of haciendas in the Toro Toro region wrought its changes on the *ayllus*. The area roughly equivalent to the today’s borders of the Second Section of the

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\(^{78}\)Hyslop 1979; in Mendoza, et. al., eds., *Atlas de los ayllus*, 11.

\(^{79}\)Indeed, the small community of Sak’ani (First Section, Charcas Province) has cultivated a oral tradition of their highland settlement as being founded by rebellious groups that did not want to settle in the reduction town of Toracarí.

\(^{80}\)Harris, “Los limites como problema,” 366.

Charcas province was, in pre-Incan times and probably through Republican times, the lower moiety of the Laymi likina ayllu. Hacendados during the first part of the 19th century usurped these lands that include the fertile Rio Caine Valley, the Toro Toro valley, and Carasi. Platt notes that “the process of erosion of the ayllu advanced most in the Charcas Province, populated with small ayllus [i.e., the likina], or vertical fragments of the ayllus with their nucleus in the puna.” These were the first to ally themselves with the Banduriri Federation of sindicatos after the Agrarian Reform of 1953.

_Campesinos_ today, however, still identified themselves according to the moiety divisions of upper and lower, but, assumedly, changed the monikers attached to each: The upper moiety (prev. ‘hanansaya’ or ‘alasaya’ [?]) of the Laymi likina became simply, the ‘Laymis’, and the lower moiety (prev. ‘urinsaya’ or ‘alasaya’) of the Laymi likina became the ‘Pampas.’ It is not surprising that the area occupied by the haciendas would adopt a Spanish name.

To be sure, some of the corrosive influences and characteristics listed above work at cross-purposes with historical cultural characteristics of the region: the probable erosive effects on the ayllu upon incorporation into Tiahuanaco civilization and domination by the Incan Empire, that I claim would have affected the ayllu, stands in contrast to the region’s ostensible historic resistance to assimilation that Fernando de Ayaviri asserted.

As a result, today’s formal political system(s) of northern Potosí reflects these

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82 Harris; i.e., the lower half of the likina moiety. The Layme likina moiety itself is split between hanansaya (‘upper’) and hurinsaya (‘lower’) moieties. This is an archetypal instance of recursive hierarchy.
83 Platt, _La persistencia de los ayllus_, 47; Harris notes as much in “Vertical Ecology and Kinship”
changes, complexity and contradictions. *Sindicatos* and *centrales* have largely replaced *ayllus* as the means of social organization and representation for *campesinos*, especially in and around Toro Toro. *Campesinos* organize themselves by *centrales* that correspond roughly with the borders of the provinces from the Napoleonic system, but not. The *Centrales* are sub-divided into *sub-centrales* that correspond with *cantones*. The political organization of the *centrales* is redundant with that of the municipality, represented by the Napoleonic designations. But the *Centrales* are also allied with the pan-Departmental CSUTB.\(^84\)

The *Campesino Central* organizations and the Napoleonic divisions exist uneasily with the *ayllus*. The *ayllus mayores* themselves are divided between different provinces and sub-divisions of provinces. Platt notes that in 1831 troubles arose for tax collectors in the region because some *cantones* contained several members of two or more ethnic groups and, and some ethnic groups straddled several *cantones*.\(^85\) The importance of the *Campesino Central* organizations is evidenced by the Toro Toro evangelical president’s influence in the banning of the *tinku*. This dynamic persists until today, to the extent that individuals might identify themselves with both. However, participants in the Toro Toro *tinku* still identify themselves according to their moiety divisions during the ritual battle.

**Today’s Vertical Ecology of Northern Potosí**

As noted above, the traditional form of Andean political organization that

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\(^{84}\)See also Platt, “The Andean Experience,” 287-288, 293.

\(^{85}\)Platt, La persistencia de los ayllus, 287.
accomplishes multiple-zone access is the *ayllu* system (see figure 14). Tristan Platt and Olivia Harris have documented and mapped the *ayllus* of northern Potosí. The five *ayllus mayores* of northern Potosí (or five ethnic groups) run in a southwestern to northeastern orientation. The *ayllus mayores* of northern Potosí are almost archetypal in their orientation to cover multiple ecological zones, especially those ecological zones defined by altitude. The southwestern portions of the *ayllu* lay in the highlands, or *suni,* and the northeastern portions reside in the lower valleys, or *likina.* These terms are correspondent to *hanansaya* (Tr.: ‘upper moiety’ [Qu.]) and *hurinsaya* (Tr.: ‘lower moiety’ [Qu.]) terms, respectively, that we saw in the colonial chroniclers’ testimonies of ritual battles. However, while the above terms appear in studies, locals often refer to the regions as *altiplano* (Tr.: ‘high plane’ [Sp.]) and *valle* (Tr.: ‘valley’ [Sp.]), respectively (make table?). Additionally, a middle buffer-zone (‘chawpirana’=‘in the middle’ [Qu.]) exists between the two upper and lower halves. Pre-Incan capital cities were concentrated in the *suni* portion of the *ayllu* (Sakaka, Macha, Pocoata, etc.). More than a few of these cities host the most vibrant and popular *tinkus* today, especially Macha.

Trade between the *suni* and *likina* zones of the *ayllus mayores* still takes place today, but a comparison with past levels of trade is difficult.86 Riuni’s trip to the valleys in 2000 to trade *ch’uño* for maize offers one example of continuing trade between the *suni* and *likina.* During my last trip to the region in 2003 I undertook a four-day hike from Ocurí to Toro

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86“The system of multiple zone exploitation suffered alterations after the conquest but it is still prevalent in many parts of the eastern slopes of the Andes, including Northern Potosí” (Brush 1977: 9); in Godoy, 28.
Toro that mirrored the route that Riuni would have passed with his llamas. Several llama trains from the suni region were returning from the lower valleys (*likina*) carrying maize to the highlands\textsuperscript{87} through the river basin in which I traveled by foot. However, I cannot make a comparison to the level of traffic in times past. Similarly, in one of my several working trips to the likina moiety of the Laymi ayllu in the years 1997-99, the community members of Pocosuco Grande, in the Laymi *likina*, told me that they still “had land” and made trips to an “area near Oruro” (i.e., the suni moiety of the Laymi ayllu) (see Figure 68. Ayllus of *Northern Potosí*.) On the other hand, Francisco Sola is a friend of mine from Laymi Kotani\textsuperscript{88} who now lives in Toro Toro as a vecino. He confided to me in 1999 that, though trips to communities near Oruro (i.e., the Laymi suni) were once common, he now goes less frequently.

In theory, each of the suni and likina divisions of the larger ayllu (*ayllus mayores*) is sub-divided into upper and lower moieties, although terms to identify these divisions differ. For example, the Layme likina moiety itself (near Toro Toro) contains both upper and lower moieties, as mentioned before identified as the ‘Laymi’ and ‘Pampa’ areas. Similar exchanges take place between these moiety divisions. Seberino Durán, of Estrellani, a community near the ‘Laymi’ sub-moiety, trades potatoes and wheat that he produces for peanuts with individuals in the Rio Caine, part of the ‘Pampa’ sub-moiety (see Figure 70. *Seberino’s Cleaning Wheat*). The Rio Caine lies at about 2100 meters above sea level, and

\textsuperscript{87}Tr.: ‘puna’ or ‘suni’ [Qu.]. Northern Potosians usually prefer the term ‘altiplano’, or ‘high plane’ [Sp.] to the more traditional terms employed by contemporary academics. The term ‘altiplano’ might be a geographical misnomer when applied to the high valleys.

\textsuperscript{88}Laymi Kotani is located in the Laymi *likina* moiety.
Estrellani at about 3200 meters. The great variation in altitude means that the respective ecological zones are substantially different in terms what inhabitants can produce. The distinction between the suni and likina barter on the ayllu mayor level and intra-moiety barter between the upper and lower moieties on the sub-ayllu mayor level (e.g., between the Laymi [upper] and Pampa [lower] moieties of the old Laymi likina moiety) is significant.

**Widening Resource Networks**

The changes outlined in the “Changes in the Ayllu System” sub-section are largely formal political changes. Despite some continuities in the vertical ecology and barter system of the region, ultimately, economic reorientation toward markets and larger resource networks seem to account more for changes in the ayllu system.\(^8^9\) Certainly not a new phenomenon, this integration to larger resource networks—such as the Aymara Kingdom—stretches back centuries, and probably even millennia.\(^9^0\) Economic integration and specialization might provide a more compelling explanation for some of the changes we see in the ayllu and rituals associated with it, such as the tinku.

Harris offers an illustrative case in the Laymi likina near Toro Toro. She argues that economic activities are important for identifying the Laymis as a single group.\(^9^1\) To substantiate this claim, Harris notes that “two Laymi likina hamlets to the north of Laymi

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\(^8^9\)While I am conscious of the great demographic reduction, I do not consider it herein due to space limitations and pertinence to the issue at hand. Additionally, Godoy argues that population growth is the primary contributing factor to the breakdown of communal lands in the Jukumani ayllu of northern Potosí, “From Indian to Miner.”

\(^9^0\)See, for example, Gerald Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: Norton, 1997). This study examines, among other things, the affect of the spread of technology across human societies over a very long time horizon.

\(^9^1\)That is, the larger Laymi ayllu, including the suni (upper) and likina (lower) moieties.
territory […] that] are only a short distance from a pueblo [Toro Toro] from which is the final stopping-place of a weekly truck from Cochabamba, and their economic activities have gradually turned away from the ayllu to the city […]” This turning away from ayllu barter relations has important implications for their relationship with the Laymi ayllu. “But in the process, they have ceased to be Laymis. That is, they have systematically broken the endogamic rule […] They have given up their suni holdings, and now try to avoid exchanges with kin who come in search of maize from the suni. They no longer fight with the Laymis in the tinku, and in fact now call themselves Pampas, like their, northern neighbors, rather than Laymis.”

This passage, buried in a note at the end of the article, is fascinating.

Increasingly, infrastructure, changing economic relationships and expanding and differentiating resource networks have changed ayllu relationships as the above passage illustrates. Within the last half century, Toro Toro has become increasingly linked to a larger network of markets and resource networks, mostly by improved infrastructure. The main road that now connects the town to Cochabamba was built in 1949. Before that, one had to travel two weeks by burro, usually carrying cargo, to make the 140 km. trip to Cochabamba. The municipality constructed a bridge across the Rio Caine in 1999 obviating the need to pass the river in an arroyo (a wheeled basket on a metal cable) during the rainy season (see Figure). Before, the river had separated the town from Cochabamba during the rainy season, completely cutting it off for weeks (and months) at a time. The construction of the bridge reduced the number of days each year that transportation could not pass the road. The

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92Harris, “Kinship,” 176, n. 9.
municipal government, by popular request, recently constructed three new roads to areas in the internal parts of the province, such as Carasi. Transportation service to and from Toro Toro reaches these internal areas usually at least once a week, and from there people may go to Cochabamba.93

Given the increasing turn to markets, the social dualism and economic ties of the ayllus mayors seems to be fading. The pan-ayllu (i.e., sunillikina) dual resource exchanges of the ayllu mayor are eroding most quickly. The suni moieties are more dependent on trade with the relatively resource rich likina moieties, as evidenced in the episode narrated by Harris. Puna communities initiated two of the three instances of ayllu mayor trade between the suni and the likina that opened this section. The third instance (“We still have lands near Oruro”) seemed weak evidence for continued trade relations between the moieties. The fourth case—that of Francisco Sola, who no longer journeys to the Laymi suni as much—supports this argument. His case is particularly compelling considering that he is a vecino (campesino cum pueblo resident), who is more linked to Cochabamba and wider resource networks by merit of his living in town. My sense, from the time that I lived in northern Potosí, is that the vast majority of economic activity has turned from the ayllus mayores toward the cities and the pueblos. Harris’s narrative supports this interpretation.

Trade based on the vertical ecology within the Laymi likina (i.e., between the Laymi and the Pampa regions is more intact, as we saw with the case of Seberino Durán. However,  

93Bastien similarly notes that, in the ayllu Kaata near the Altiplano,“[v]ertical exchange is being replaced by horizontal links (trucks and airplanes) to economic centers where goods are purchased at competitive prices and sold by middlemen at profitable gains (Buechler 1968, Doughty 1970) in Bastien 191; See Paerregaard, 178, for a similar description of how “infrastructure links rural areas to urban centers, promotes travel both ways, to the city and back to the country.”
even when exchange based on exploitation of vertically differentiated resources does take place, it often does so increasingly in an open market in pueblos such as Toro Toro on days that transportation arrives. For example, within the Laymi likina moiety, the Laymi likina (highlanders) trade their papa or oca (highland or ‘Laymi’ products) for guayaba or mani (Rio Caine or ‘Pampa’ products) (see Annex). More and more, this exchange takes place through an intermediary utilizing money in Toro Toro on market days. In a market atmosphere, a Laymi (or any other group) can trade for (or buy) goods brought by a person from a valley ethnic group through the intermediary, often a mestiza or vecina tienda owner. In this arrangement, it would hardly matter if either party in the trade were members of rival or ethnic groups or of the same ethnic group.

Finally, barter based on the vertical ecology is increasingly turning away from the communal networks toward the domestic unit through the practice of doble domicilio (Tr.: ‘double housing’ [Sp.], see above). Doble domicilio consists of maintaining two houses, one in at least two widely varying ecological zones. Seberino remarked to me on more than one occasion that he went to another region to cultivate his chaqras there (Tr.: ‘fields’). Additionally, Seberino’s trade with the Rio Caine valley was on an individual basis, not a community wide basis. Olivia Harris notes that the domestic unit is the primary means of procuring resources for many.\(^94\) Lastly, Seberino’s house, while near the Laymi moiety, is actually in the area that belongs to the Pampas (see Figure 71. Intra-Moiety Vertical Trade). That is, he was trading intra-moiety, not inter-moiety.

\(^{94}\)Harris, “Kinship.”
These economic changes undermine the notion that the *tinku* primarily helps maintain and sponsor the dual social structure of the *ayllu* in northern Potosí today. To the extent that participants still use the *tinku* in Toro Toro to maintain the dual social structure for such purposes, this probably takes place more at the sub-moiety level that of the Laymi *likina* (i.e., between Pampas and Laymi groups) not the *ayllu mayor* level that comprises both the Laymi *suni* and *likina*. Hence, the *tinku* warriors in Toro Toro’s *Santiago* festival identify themselves as Laymi or Pampa (sub-*ayllu mayor*), not Laymi *suni* or Laymi *likina* (*ayllu mayor* level). Laymi *sunis* do not participate in the *tinku* in Toro Toro.95 I suggest that the identification of *tinku* warriors based solely on the internal moiety divisions of the Laymi *likina* reflects the attenuation of economic relations between the Laymi *suni* and Laymi *likina*.

Two traits, I suggest, characterize the Laymi/Pampa identification in the *tinku* of Toro Toro: 1) Continued, but somewhat atrophied economic and barter relations between the moieties of the Laymi *likina* and, perhaps most importantly, 2) “older patterns of participation,” to the extent that those economic relations have eroded or been replaced by market incorporation.

**The Tinku Challenged**

Despite the ambiguity of the forces that act on the *tinku*, a definite trend appears:

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95Or if they do, they do not identify themselves as such, which presumably would be the purpose of their participation.
ritual battles across the Andes are not as common as they once were. A cursory review of the plotting of former ritual battle sites presented in this study plus several more from other secondary studies reveals a striking trend toward ritual loss (see Maps-Former and Current Tinku Sites). While not exhaustive, this plotting is, in all probability, representative of a wider trend (see Figures 73 a-b: The Challenged Tinku).

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96 Zecenarro Villalobos, 155.