(Re)turning home:
Narratives of Bolivian transnational migrants

Maria Eugenia Brockmann Rojas
Department of Anthropology
McGill University, Montreal
October, 2003

A thesis submitted to McGill University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of Masters of Arts

© Maria Eugenia Brockmann Rojas

Library and Archives Canada

Published Heritage Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives Canada

Direction du Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-612-98419-2
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 0-612-98419-2

NOTICE:
The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:
L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

This thesis is an exploration of how particular Bolivian men and women who have migrated from Bolivia to Argentina, and have recently 'returned' to Bolivia, define, negotiate, and (re)create their identities in the migration experience. I argue that both the narratives and experiences of transnational migration for these migrants varies according to gender, age, economic possibilities, and legal circumstances. Furthermore, I suggest that this experience varies according to the multiple encounters with 'others' along the transnational circuit. By using a conceptualization of "migration" in transnational terms, my work has centered on how these migrants conceptualize the social conditions in which they live and how they actively search for ways to improve their living conditions in both Bolivia and Argentina. In this sense, the concept of 'home' has been critically explored in order to grasp the complex narratives of belonging and displacement.

Résumé

Cette thèse explore comment certains Boliviens et Boliviennes qui ont migré de la Bolivie en Argentine, et qui sont récemment "retournés" en Bolivie, définissent, négocient et (re)créent leur identité à travers l'expérience migratoire. J'avancerai que les récits et les expériences de migration transnationale varient selon le genre, l'âge, les opportunités économiques et les circonstances légales, ainsi que selon les multiples rencontres avec l' "autre" tout au long de ce circuit transnational. En utilisant une conceptualisation transnationale de la "migration", mon travail s'est concentré sur la manière dont ces migrants conçoivent les conditions sociales de leur vie et cherchent activement à améliorer leur situation en Bolivie et en Argentine. De cette façon, le concept du "chez-soi" a été exploré de manière critique afin de saisir les récits complexes d'appartenance et de déplacement.

Acknowledgements

There are many people to whom I am grateful for kindly and generously offering their time and support throughout the master's program, and especially in preparing this thesis.

I am utmost thankful to my supervisor, Kristin Norget. I thank her for her insight and guidance all along the master's program. I also thank Kristin for generously sharing her time, trust, support, and encouragement in the process of writing the thesis. She may not understand the impact that her "you can do it" had on me, especially in the last month of work (!!). I also thank Adaeze for graciously offering her mom's time. I am sure that she will be happy now that this thesis is completed.

I must also thank several professors at McGill from whom I learned personally and intellectually: Laurel Bossen, Sean Brotherton, Nadia Ferrara, John Galaty, Sandra Hyde, Carmen Lambert, Toby Morantz, and Colin Scott. A special thank you to Philip Oxhorn for your constant concern and interest in Bolivia, for helping me figure things out in my country. A very special thank you to Rose Marie Stano, for her permanent concern for my overall wellbeing in Canada and at McGill. Thanks to Cynthia Romanyk, for her patience and timely help in dealing with bureaucratic matters that McGill puts students through.

My gratitude also goes to the people who make the Center for Society, Technology, and Development (STANDD) possible. Generously they have given me financial support to conduct research in Bolivia, and have also provided a space for encounter and exchange of ideas with fellow colleagues and friends.

I must thank my professors from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, especially Maria Teresa Marshall, Teresita Matus, and Patricio Miranda, for their moral support and encouragement in my project to come "up here" to study.

A big thanks to my friends and colleagues from the Anthropology Department: Nesrine Bessaih, Sean Brotherton, Gillian Chilibeck, Mark Dolson, Julia Freeman, Ari Gandsman, Margaret Garrard, Hannah Gilbert, Annie Jaimes, Olivier Laroque, Manon Levesque, Stephanie Lloyd, Susan Lofthouse, Scott Matter, Karen McAllister, Tony McNichol, Pierre Minn, Stephen Moiko, Beatrize Oliver, Jason Paiement, Isabelle Poulin, Sarah Powell, Rémy Rouillard, Rosemary Sharples, Takeshi Uesugi, and Tahirih Walsh. Stimulating discussions and exchanges of crazy –and not so crazy- ideas, hopes, dreams, gossip, proved to be be kst around a hot bowl of soup at Thompson House. Through this sharing osoups and (of) ideas, I have learned from each of you. Thank you!

A very special thank you to Annie Jaimes. With humor and sensitivity, you have taught me to ask different questions. For sure, this master's adventure would not have had the same colors without your friendship and wisdom. Merci. Thanks so much to Rosemary Sharples. I have learned from your spontaneity and benefited from your wisdom...and yes, I hope, someday, to be able to express my ideas as clearly and bravely as you can. I am also grateful to Hannah Gilbert, for your interminable and stimulating energy, for encouraging me to keep going. Thank you to Rémy Rouillard and Tak Uesugi for your endless humor. Thanks to you all for teaching me with great generosity.

I am very grateful to Neil McMurchie, the best roommate someone could have. KitKats in the middle (and all along) of writing a paper was the strength and inspiration I needed to get the job done. Gracias. A big thank you to Karen McAllister, not only for attempting to answer all my silly "English-spelling" questions, but for being a friend and support in writing this thesis. My deepest thanks to friends in Bolivia and Chile that supported me without hesitation, especially Catalina Delpiano, Verónica Pizarro, Marisol Morales, Pablo Laguna, Anita Rodríguez, David Huepe, Mariella Conte, Moira Machicado, Hugo José Suárez, Ruzzena Martinic, Daniela Viscarra, Rodrigo Trigosso, Leandro Zamorano...The distance was short and finding you guys 'connected' was like spring in the cold winter. Yayito Crespo, a special thanks to you, wherever you are.

Muchísimas gracias to the Bolivian men and women who shared their time and part of their lives with me. This project could not have been possible without your cooperation.

Above all, I want to thank my parents, Carl and Maria Eugenia, for your unconditional support, love, trust, inspiration...I do not have the words, nor in Spanish nor in English to sum up my thanks. Gracias to my brothers and their families, for dancing your life with mine. Gracias to Telé Marshall for supporting me from a near distance. Both my families, Brockmann and Rojas, took this project as their own. I thank each one of you for sending newspaper accounts, articles, books, and so on. Special thanks to my aunts Alicia, Toya, and Jimena. Gracisimaximuchas to Eric Dannenmaier for the humor, trust, patience, support with which you have accompanied me throughout these years, despite the geographical distance. I also want to thank Arlo for reminding me that life is a fun game to play, always.

Introduction: Bolivians returning home

Don Pedro lives in Cochabamba, Bolivia. He has lived 'here' since he was born 55 years ago, except, (we may think), for a few months every year that he worked in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Don Pedro first went to Buenos Aires in the late 1960s: he went to work in the construction sector; an area, as he was told by friends, that was in 'need' of Bolivian workers. Because he was a trained marble- and stonemason, he decided to go. After working for a year or so, don Pedro returned 'home' to Cochabamba where his wife and young children were expecting him. As he liked Buenos Aires and his work was much appreciated by Argentine bosses, after three months he decided to go back there. This time he spent only eight months in Buenos Aires and returned to Bolivia. He does not remember how many times he repeated this pattern, how many times he travelled back and forth between Bolivia and Argentina, but he remembers the first time he took his oldest son with him: it was during the first presidency of Carlos Menem, around 1992-1993. During that time the pay was good and both could save since they shared a rented room and other expenses. In the years that followed, each time that he 'returned' to Buenos Aires, he was accompanied by one of his sons or daughters. Five of them live there now, all of them married to a Bolivian partner, and all of them have Argentine born children. At one point, seven of his eleven children lived in Buenos Aires, but the youngest ones returned to Bolivia, in January of 2002 because of the bad economic situation. Two other daughters were planning their return to Bolivia for December of 2002. Don Pedro 'returned definitively', that is, not to travel again to Buenos Aires (at least not with the purpose of working) in 1999, because he has young children that need a father by their side. His two teenage daughters, Roxana and Zulma, along with a growing number of Bolivians, are planning to travel to Spain next year to check out work prospects there.

Don Pedro's experience poses several important questions to migration theorists. What kind of migrant is he? Is he a migrant or an immigrant? Is he engaged in a seasonal, temporal or cyclical migration? How can we understand the fact that he has been working in Argentina for more than twenty years, but he still says that he has 'lived' all his life in Bolivia? Has he 'returned' 'definitively' 'home'? Have his teenage daughters 'returned'? What is the significance of 'home' for him? What does it mean for him that he has five of his eleven children in Argentina? What are the meanings that he gives to his migratory experience? Is migration just an experience or a state of being, as some theorists argue? This ambiguous situation of don Pedro is further complicated by the fact that don Pedro's experience is not unique.

Tomás, Julieta, Enrique, and Rita, are Bolivian men and women who, like don Pedro, have migrated to Buenos Aires during the 1970s, 1980s and/or 1990s. They are among the more than 400,000 Bolivians estimated to have migrated to Argentina in the last thirty years; but they are also part of the 'unknown' number of Bolivians who have returned to Bolivia in the last three years, when the Argentine economy went into crisis. The particular experiences of these men and women challenge the notion that migration is a unilinear or permanent process between bounded communities. The multiple linkages and networks developed by these Bolivian migrants, in both Bolivia and Argentina, and their continuous comings and goings, raise our awareness of the transnational character of their movement and prompt us to question their particular experiences insofar as they manage to live simultaneously in two countries.

This thesis is an exploration of how particular Bolivian men and women who have migrated from Bolivia to Argentina, and have recently 'returned' to Bolivia, define, negotiate, and (re)create their identities in the migration experience. By using a transnational analytical framework, I examine some of the concrete practices through which cross-border links are developed and maintained by Bolivian transmigrants, and how in that process, migrants (re) shape multiple identities that challenge the hegemonic constructions that define them as marginal 'Others', in both Bolivia and Argentina.

Central to this thesis is the argument that, although structural forces, such as differential access to economic power, inequality, and poverty, influence and shape the migration experience; migrants are global actors insofar as, through their movements and practices, they link together places and people of Bolivia and Argentina. In this sense, the complex processes of identity building for Bolivian transmigrants, are seen as part of a series of encounters with multiple 'others': Bolivians 'home', older generations of Bolivian migrants in Argentina, Argentines, and other Latin American migrants in Argentina. Therefore, it is not a single 'identity' that is (re) created, but rather multiple ones which operate at different points of the migration process.

In this introductory chapter, I present the general scope of this thesis and review how Bolivian migration to Argentina has been studied by both Argentine and Bolivian social scientists.

In Chapter two, I present a brief description of how ethnic identities have been socio-culturally constructed in Bolivia. I do so only in order to show how the broader historical context frames and influences both my role as a student of transmigration processes of Bolivians to and from Argentina, and the experiences of the migrants themselves. The chapter ends with the presentation of the urban research setting where my fieldwork took place, and the methodologies I used to gather information.

In Chapter three, I examine critically how different theoretical approaches have been used to study migration movements. I argue here that the transnational migration theoretical framework permits the analysis of the migration process of Bolivians to and from Argentina at distinct, yet interlinked levels -social, economic, and symbolic-- as well as allowing for the practices and agency of migrants in shaping their own migration experience.

Chapter four describes the historical context and current political landscape that inform the experiences of migration of Bolivians in Bolivia and Argentina. In this chapter, I argue that the transnational movement of Bolivians to Argentina has to be viewed in terms of historical continuity, and not as something new and 'massive' as argued by certain studies, government discourses, and print media.

Chapter five focuses on the analysis of the narratives collected through interviews that I did with Bolivian migrants who had recently returned from Argentina. In this chapter, I present the way in which Bolivian migrants narrate and interpret their experience of migration, and their recent 'return' home to Bolivia. The last chapter presents the conclusions of this thesis and also poses some questions, that I hope, can promote a constructive intellectual debate among students of migration.

a) Bolivian migration towards Argentina, an overview

Bolivian migration to Argentina is not a new phenomenon. Although the international migration of Bolivians to Argentina has been registered in Argentine censuses since the mid-nineteenth century, it did not become the focus of study of social scientists until the mid-1970s. In fact, there is a vast bibliography of studies on European migration to Argentina, yet comparatively little study of migration by Bolivians or nationals of other neighbouring countries.

A study done by Gloria Ardaya (1978) appears to be the first systematic research dealing specifically with Bolivian migrants in Argentina. Ardaya shows that Bolivian migration is highly selective according to the migrant's place of origin. People from Potosí, Tarija, Sucre, Cochabamba, and La Paz, for example, tend to locate in the north-western provinces of Argentina, while most *cochabambinos*[1] migrate directly to the city of Buenos Aires. Jorge Dandler and Carmen Medeiros (1985, 1988) also emphasize the importance of place of origin with respect to the type of insertion of the migrant in the Argentine labour market, and his or her likely place of residence. From their perspective, social networks at home and in the host society play a fundamental role in the lives of migrants in Argentina.[2] Similarly, other studies show how there are differences in where and how Bolivians locate themselves in Argentina depending on the place they come from (Cortés 2002, 1998, Hinojosa 2002, 2000, Karasik 2000, Hirsch 2000, Georgis 1999), and according to Balán, even within Bolivia, one finds regions, towns and villages that specialize in migration, while others do not (1999:281).

If their 'place' of origin is so important in the way Bolivian migrants understand themselves, and their relations with others from the same community, in both home and host society (entailing kind of a 'common root', to use Dandler and Medeiros's words),

---

[1] People from Cochabamba.

[2] "...If we consider that a migrant from Cochabamba may arrive for the first time in Buenos Aires to find work in the construction industry, he will generally stay with a kinsman or a *'compadre'* from his village who, at the same time, will guide him into a network of *'cochabambino'* contacts to secure a particular job ...He can do all this because they share 'common roots' and a common recognition of 'belonging' to the same place of origin which carries with it a certain moral obligation" (Dandler and Medeiros 1988:12).

how does the 'experience' of migration affect migrants' understanding of themselves and their relation to others at home and in the host society?

Most of the studies of Bolivian migration towards Argentina, carried out during the 1990s use Sassone and De Marco's classification of 'periods' of migration (c.f. Benencia and Karasik 1994, 1995, Grimson 1997, 1999, Hinojosa 2000, Zalles 2002). These are:

1. Seasonal migration towards the sugar cane harvest in the north-western provinces of Salta and Jujuy;

2. Seasonal migration combining the work of migrants in the harvest of sugar cane, tobacco leaves, and in the fruit-horticulture area;

3. Increased presence of Bolivians in the 1960s and 1970s in the sugar mills of Ramal, at the same time there is a presence of Bolivians in the grape harvest in the Mendoza oasis and a 'permanent' presence in the province of Buenos Aires;

4. From 1970, a major spatial distribution of the Bolivian population and the search for a permanent job and socio-economic climbing.

Attached to this description of 'periods' is a classification of a 'type' of migrant for each period as either 'seasonal' or 'permanent'. In addition, there is the assumption in most studies, that the migrant is a male. This perspective not only appears to reduce the historical complexity of the constant movement to and from Argentina of Bolivian migrants, but also views the migration process in a teleological modernist narrative of progressive phases, which leads from a 'seasonal' migration labour phase to a 'permanent' urbanization phase (see Ferguson 1999:43-48), denying the coexistence of variouss mobility strategies over time.

This is not to deny the existence of a pattern of seasonal migration, for certainly such a pattern is identifiable in the type of job that the sugar cane harvest demanded, that is, strong physical labour. It is also the case that male migrants outnumbered those of women. Yet migration patterns were not just seasonal, and the extent of the gender disparity cannot be known for sure. The description of men as primary migrants, and of women as 'followers' of men, is assumed in most of the studies of Bolivian migration

towards Argentina (c.f. Balán 1990, 1995, Dandler and Medeiros 1985, 1988, Whiteford 1981). As shown by feminist scholars on migration (Brettell 2000), this particular conceptualization of the relationship between women and men in the migration process, suits modernization theory in that women, can be seen to represent the 'traditional' pole of the continuum, and men the pole of 'modernity'.

Most of the studies carried out by Bolivian social scientists focus on the impact of migratory process in 'sending' and 'receiving' societies in terms of demographic change, use of remittances, and economic activities (c.f. Ardaya 1978, Cortés 1998, 2002, Dandler and Medeiros 1985,1999, Hinojosa 2000, 2002). However, most of the studies carried out by Argentine social scientists focus on the creation and re-creation of social and cultural 'traditions', such as religious rituals and fiestas in the host society (c.f. Grimson 1999, Giorgis 1999, Karasik 2000). An exception to this trend is the series of studies carried out by Roberto Benencia (1995, 1996), that focus on the jobs done by Bolivians in the horticulture of Buenos Aires. Another line of studies made by Argentine social scientists focuses on how the (Argentine) media, especially newspapers, build discriminatory discourses against Bolivians and other migrants from neighbouring countries (Courtis 2000, Grimson 2000, Oteiza, et al., 1997).

It is interesting to note that most of these studies assert that upon arriving in Buenos Aires, Bolivians position themselves as members of a broad national category: they *become* 'Bolivians' (Grimson 1999, Giorgis 1999, Hinojosa 2000, Zalles 2002). I argue however, that the construction of this broader national identity (in a national space other than Bolivia) serves to promote solidarity and strengthen political organization while migrants are in Buenos Aires. Yet it does not erase gender, class, ethnic and regional identities among migrants, either in Bolivia or Argentina.

Although most of the studies recognize that Bolivians in Argentina maintain affective and/or economic links with their kin in Bolivia, and that the many organizations of Bolivians in Argentina enthusiastically participate in the economic, social, and political events of both Bolivia and Argentina, there are no systematic studies of the nature of these transnational links –a lacuna I hope to help fulfill with future research.

In sum, most of the studies on Bolivian migration to Buenos Aires analyze demographic data such as number of migrants, sex, age, educational background, type of employment upon arriving, and remittances sent to home communities. Other studies focus on the effects of Bolivian migration on Argentines, accusing discriminatory and xenophobic attitudes towards Bolivians. Still, other studies are concerned with the way Bolivians organize their life in Argentina as workers and as a community of 'Bolivians'. More fundamental questions about how the identity (identities) of Bolivian migrants are being influenced, changed, and transformed in the migration process, however, are conspicuously lacking. My research aims to be a step toward addressing these questions.

These concerns seem especially relevant in today's context where wider economic discourses of 'integration' between MERCOSUR member countries (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) are taking place. Because this 'integration' discourse coexists with particular experiences of 'exclusions' and 'marginalization' of people that are supposed to be actors of the 'integration' processes. Migration becomes a critical site for examining the encounters and (de) encounters of people of different societies, and it might be a step forward in understanding how these 'integration' processes may evolve in the future.

Chapter Two: Place and Ethnographic Methods

In 1985, my family and I returned to Bolivia after four years of being away from 'home'. Our return coincided with the 'transition' towards democracy that the country had experienced since 1982, and with the hope of millions of Bolivians that things would be 'better' under a democratic regime. In 1985, the newly installed government implemented a New Economic Policy (NEP) which introduced austerity measures and installed a neoliberal economic model of growth that brought hyperinflation to a halt[3]. But, the NEP had other consequences as well: between 1985 and 1989, around seventy-thousand jobs were eliminated in state-owned mines, public administration, and factory closures (Stephenson 1999:188). As the political center of Bolivia, La Paz witnessed the arrival of thousands of newcomers from the mining areas who suddenly found themselves without homes nor jobs[4]. I was in La Paz when all of this happened. The situation was delicate and the uncertainty about what would come next made us feel vulnerable.

As other years, we (my family and I) travelled to Cochabamba that summer. It was at this time that I heard for the first time that Bolivians were migrating to Argentina. I heard also that the migrants were mostly indigenous peoples from the valley of Cochabamba and ex-miners escaping poverty from the *altiplano* (highland). Since then, the whole phenomenon of migration, of migrants, and of Bolivians leaving the country intrigued me deeply. In the years that followed, and as I was growing up, I learned that the things I had 'heard', had to be situated in line with my position within Bolivian society. Class, gender, age, family history, ethnic background, education, are all (some) factors that influenced what I heard and what was said to me.

---

[3] Bolivia's annual inflation rates between 1982-1985 ranged from 8,000 to 22,000 percent (c.f. Mayorga 2002:47, Veltmeyer and Tellez 2001:91).

[4] According to Farthing (1991), as a consequence of these economic measures more than 60 percent of the urban population was suddenly forced to support itself in the informal sectors of the economy (in Stephenson 1999:188).

In this section, I present a brief description of how ethnic identities have been historically built in Bolivia in order to situate this study of migration processes of Bolivians that returned from Argentina. I do so in order to show how the broader context frames and influences both my role as a student of transmigration processes of Bolivians to and from Argentina, and the experiences of the migrants themselves. I also present the urban research setting where my fieldwork took place, and the methodologies I used to gather information. As will be discussed, one of my special methodological considerations was to give primacy to the individual's experience. In doing this, I also place myself as an important actor in the 'field of experience', as Jackson argues. That is, who I am and how I am considered by others in Bolivia, was not neutral. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that during the interactions of fieldwork, I was both continually being changed, but was also changing the experience of others (in Sharples 2003:30). This thesis is in large part an exploration of those interactions, of the narratives that I collected through interviews, and of how Bolivian men and women experience, define, and (re) create multiple identities while engaged in transmigration to and from Argentina.

a) Bolivia: ethnic identities and multiple boundaries

Located at the heart of South America, Bolivia[5] occupies a territory of 1,098,581 square kilometers. It borders Paraguay on the southeast, Brazil on the north and east, Peru and Chile on the west, and Argentina on the south. Its political constitution[6] recognizes the multi-ethnic, pluri-cultural, and multi-lingual reality of the country. According to the 1992 census, 58 percent of the population speaks a native language *(lengua originaria)*, 46 percent also speak Spanish, 12 percent does not speak Spanish at all, and 42 percent speaks only Spanish (Albó 2002:21)[7]. Behind these numerical data are ethnic identities that are hard to quantify and classify, especially because the

[5] In Appendix 1, a politico-administrative map of Bolivia is presented.
[6] Art. 1: "Bolivia, libre, independiente, soberana, multiétnica y pluricultural, constituida en República, adopta para su gobierno la forma democrática representativa, fundada en la unión y la solidaridad de todos los bolivianos" (Bolivia-CPE 1994).
[7] Compared to other Latin American countries, Bolivia is third, after Mexico and Peru, in terms of population speaking native languages (Albo 2002).

boundaries of ethnic groups are rather flexible and fluid. Besides, there are no objective criteria that would allow us to distinguish between 'indigenous' or 'indians', '*mestizos*', '*cholos*', or 'white' people.

The fact that there are 2.5 million Bolivians who speak Quechua, and 1.6 that speak Aymara, does not mean that the people who speak one of these languages consider themselves to be 'indigenous'. The same can be said of more than forty-five languages that are spoken in the Bolivian territory. Indeed, there is no direct correlation in Bolivia between language spoken and ethnic identity: many people do not speak a native language but consider themselves *originarios* (original inhabitants). Skin color also says little in determining if someone is 'indigenous', '*cholo*', '*mestizo*', or 'white'.

What is clear though, is that these categories historically have had spatial, economic, political, and racial implications. While in colonial times, the category of 'Indian' was used as a fiscal category, it was progressively used to identify people who lived in rural areas and who maintained a subsistence agriculture. The category of '*mestizo*' also suffered changes during the colonial period. While denoting a biological racially mixed group (Spanish father and Indian mother), it quickly became a cultural category determined by external markers such as speech, dress, and consumption. It is not my intention to present a discussion of how these categories were used and transformed during the colonial period: entire books are written about this (eg. Larson 1995, Harris 1995, Klein 1993), and to be sure, there is much more to be said. I want to underline however, that the colonial period was decisive and constitutive of the shaping of ethnic identities and ethnic relations and that many of those constructions still pervade Bolivian society of today.

Signifiers such as clothes, food, level of education, place of residence, all play a role in the complicated matrix of ethnic boundaries in Bolivia. At the same time, class divisions are also race divisions. The 'whiter' a person is, the better the chances he or she has of access to education and access to and control of decision-making power. Race in this sense plays an important role in the reproduction of the social class system. In

Bolivia, there is an overlapping of race, class, and ethnicity that determine invidious or preferred phenotypic perceptions in the classification of individuals and groups. Thus, Bolivia's social class structure and ethnicity overlap and reinforce each other since social class mobility is impaired by ethnicity –which itself tends to be a determinant of social class position (Albó 2002, Kearney 1982). While elites (usually 'white' people) will rely on this reinforcement and be motivated to protect their interests and maintain closed economic, politic, and social boundaries, 'indigenous' and *'mestizo'* social groups struggle against it, challenging the cultural division of labour and trying to gain access to the means of production and decision-making power.

b) Methodologies and techniques

I arrived in Cochabamba in July of 2002, with the intention of collecting narratives of identity and lived experiences of Bolivian men and women that had migrated to Buenos Aires, and had recently 'returned' home. Cochabamba[8] city, also called *'llajta'* (my land, *mi pueblo,* in Quechua) by its people, lies in a fertile valley at 2,558 meters above sea level. Cochabamba has also been labelled as *granero de Bolivia* (Bolivia's granary), because of its important role in the production of corn and wheat, and in cattle-raising. According to the national census of 2002, Cochabamba[9] is the third largest city in Bolivia in terms of population, with 763,827 inhabitants.

I would like to mention at this point that this thesis has suffered some detours since its inception. These detours were much influenced by the political and economic situation which influences migration processes of Bolivians towards Argentina. When I started reading different studies about the migration process of Bolivians towards Argentina, I found that most of the studies lacked the perspectives of the migrants themselves. Studies referred to demographic data –which also presented contradictory data-- or to discriminatory governmental policies in Argentina. At that time, my first concern was to study how Bolivian migrants organized and defined or negotiated their

[8] The name Cochabamba is derived from the Quechua terms 'khocha' or lagoon or lake, and pampa, meaning plain.
[9] In the Department of Cochabamba inhabit 1,455,711 people of which 59% live in urban areas.

identities while in Argentina. Nevertheless, as I will describe in the next chapters, as the economic and political crisis exploded in Argentina on December of 2001, thousands of Bolivian migrants began a 'return' process to their home towns and cities in Bolivia. That was the news I could gather from newspapers, but no systematic study existed either on the number of Bolivians returning, or on the impact in Bolivia of this return.

After reading a number of studies of Bolivian migration to Argentina, I realized that the 'return' process, which had been described as 'massive' in newspapers, had to be read and interpreted carefully. First, because historically, Bolivians have moved back and forth continually to and from Argentina, therefore 'returning' multiple times to their natal country. Secondly, even if we assume that economic factors are the primary determinant of the movement of people, Bolivia is in no better economic or political situation than Argentina. If indeed there were 'thousands' of Bolivians 'returning' to their towns and cities of origin, what seemed important was to understand how particular Bolivian men and women experienced this 'return' process, how they defined 'home' after an experience of migration, and how in that process, which involves multiple encounters with 'Others' (Bolivians at home, Bolivians in Argentina, Argentines), they define, negotiate, and (re) create their identities.

My decision to carry out fieldwork in Cochabamba and not elsewhere in Bolivia, was based on three interlinked reasons. In the first place, my family's origin is in Cochabamba, which means that many summers of my childhood were spent there. I am very familiar with the city and its surrounding areas. It is here where, as a child, I heard for the first time that Bolivians were migrating to Argentina and met some people who had family members participating in that migration. Therefore my assumption, which proved correct, was that through these acquaintances I could contact people who had returned from Argentina. In the ten weeks that I had to develop this project, these connection proved fundamental. On the other hand, most of the newspaper accounts of the first months of 2002 that mentioned the 'massive return' of Bolivians were *cochabambino* newspaper, or referred to *cochabambino* migrants. Some of the articles' titles were *'El valle ya recibe a sus hijos migrantes'* [The valley (Cochabamba) receives

its migrant sons and daughters], or *"Remesas disminuirán en 70%"* [Remittances will diminish in 70%][10]. The *cochabambino* newspaper articles reflect a deep concern for the situation of the Bolivian migrants and the meanings circulating in the broader society, so I thought that Cochabamba would be a perfect fieldwork site. The third reason why I chose to do fieldwork in Cochabamba was based on my review of the migration literature: studies carried out in Cochabamba (Dandler and Medeiros 1985, 1988, Balán 1990, 1995, Cortés 1998, 2002) argued that the place of origin of the migrant was fundamental in their migration experience because of the kind of networks they establish in Argentine society. As I am interested in how migrants understand and define their return to Bolivia after migrating to Argentina, Cochabamba seemed the perfect place to begin this research.

Before arriving to Cochabamba on July of 2002, I spent the month of June in the city of La Paz doing library and media research. I visited the two biggest public libraries of Bolivia, as well as university libraries. I was able to collect many articles and books on issues of identity, migration, and ethnicity that I would not have been able to find in Montreal. I also visited the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)* (National Statistics Institute), and contacted professionals, demographers and statisticians, responsible for quantifying the flow of people in and out of the country. After a couple of meetings with these professionals, I learned that international migration had not been 'officially' quantified in Bolivia. There are official statistics regarding the number of people who leave and enter the country as 'tourists', but there is no way of knowing if these tourists are eventual migrants or not.

In addition, the category of 'tourist' is very ambiguous. As used by the INE, a Bolivian tourist can be someone who leaves the country for up to a year. Clearly, there could be an overlap between those considered migrants and those considered tourists. According to these professionals, the INE had just signed an agreement with the *Dirección Nacional de Migraciones (DNM)* (National Department of Migration) in May of 2002. This new agreement would allow the INE and the DNM to quantify the number

[10] In Appendix 4, I present few newspaper articles that touch upon 'returning Bolivian migrants'.

of Bolivians who entered or left the country, and who also had documents from other countries either to work in them, or live there as permanent residents. When I expressed my surprise at this void of information, Jorge Soruco of the INE replied: "You know how things are in our country. Nothing works". In June of 2003, that is, one year after the agreement between the INE and the DNM was established, there was still no data produced regarding the number of Bolivians entering or exiting the country who possessed papers from other countries allowing them to work, study, or reside permanently in them (personal communication with Jorge Soruco from the INE).

Presidential elections were taking place on June 30th of 2002, and La Paz was certainly an exciting place to be. I had not been in Bolivia for presidential elections since 1989, and I had never voted due to being under twenty-one, the voting age[11]. The political context, including debates and discussions concerning the different candidates and their political platforms were the topics of conversation with whomever I spoke. It was during one of this conversations that I realized how I was seen by other Bolivians. While riding to downtown La Paz in a taxi cab, I asked the taxi driver what he thought about the upcoming elections. He responded something like, "I think it's time that you white people step out of the government". I was very much surprised and confused by his comment, not only because I do not consider myself as 'white', but because he considered me 'white' and therefore a member of the sector who governed the country. This man's comment reminded me that how one speaks and dresses in Bolivia, the level of education one has, and who one's friends and family are, are never neutral; instead they are always 'read' by others. These were aspects of differentiation, aspects both embodied and lived, that I had to consider when I conducted interviews.

Once the presidential elections took place, I travelled to Cochabamba where I spent six weeks. Besides library research and visits to institutions like the INE and the DNM, the methods and techniques I used to gather information included informal or more

[11] In 1994, several amendments to the political constitutions of Bolivia were made. One of them being that the minimum age to vote changed from twenty-one years old, to eighteen.

casual conversations with migrants' family members, and semi-structured interviews with people who had migrated to Argentina and had recently returned 'home'.

I chose to use the format of semi-structured interviews since this type of interview allows the interviewees more freedom to suggest phenomena that I would not otherwise have considered. Following the topics that they brought up, I was able to listen to the silences, gaps, and shifts in their narratives of the past, of change, movement, and return. My interviews topically centered on why and when people decided to migrate to Argentina, about their lives and work in that country, the factors that motivated them to return to Bolivia, and what it meant to them to be 'back'.

As most of the people I interviewed had travelled back and forth from Cochabamba to Buenos Aires several times, the interviews did not follow a particular sequence of questions. For example, once we started talking about the type of jobs they carried out in Buenos Aires, interviewees would typically describe the last job they worked at before coming to Bolivia. Later on the interview, they would refer to other jobs that they had done in previous trips, so we would return to this topic. I interpret this as both part of the subjective character of the transnational migration experience, but also as a reflection of the non-linear character of the migration process. That is, the narratives collected through interviews reflect the fluidity and flexibility of the connections –social, economic, religious, political-- that Bolivian migrants maintained with both Cochabamba and Buenos Aires. Therefore, the interviews show that migrants are historical subjects who move between multiple places wherein space and temporal boundaries are continually negotiated.

I conducted a total of twenty-three in-depth semi-structured interviews with fourteen women and nine men of different ages (between 19 and 55 years-old)[12]. Most of the men and women I spoke with were born in Cochabamba city. All of them were at least bilingual and spoke Spanish and Quechua, and four of the interviewees also spoke Aymara. Two men and two women were born in the rural areas of Potosí, and had

[12] In Appendix 3, I present a table which contains general information of the people I interviewed.

migrated to Cochabamba in the early 1980s, a fact that suggests that movement from one place to another was not new for them. They still maintained links with their home towns; in fact, the two women each owned land in these places which was being worked by their brothers.

I used a 'snowball' method in contacting the 'returned' migrants I interviewed. The first person I interviewed was Tomás, a 19 year-old man that had returned to Cochabamba in late May of 2002, that is, only a month before I contacted him. Tomás was working as hired help in the house of one of my aunts. I presented myself and explained to him that I was conducting a research on the migration process of Bolivians to Argentina, and hence was contacting persons who had gone through the process of migration and return. I told him that I was interested in learning about his experience of migration and asked him if he would accept to be interviewed. I explained that the interview was a question-based conversation in which he was free to answer the questions he wanted, and decline where he felt uncomfortable or would prefer not to answer. I gave him a written letter[13] that I had prepared for the occasion, and we scheduled an interview for a Thursday afternoon, so as not to interfere with his work. I asked his permission to tape record the interview, and explained that this was to ensure accuracy. I also explained that if at any point during the conversation he wanted to talk without the tape recorder, that would be fine, and that he just had to let me know. As my concern was that no adverse effects would result from participating in this study, I assured him that in order to protect his identity, I would use pseudonyms in my final report and not his actual name. I also assured him that any information he gave me would only be used for my research study. Tomás accepted to be interviewed, but insisted on having his name in the study; he explained that one of the things he had learned in Buenos Aires was to speak openly about what he thought, and he felt it was important that other Bolivians learned from his experience. I explained that in order to avoid any

[13] See Appendix 2, for the letter that I gave to the people I interviewed explaining my project.

adverse and unexpected consequence it was better to use pseudonyms, and explained that his experience would be (re) presented as accurately as possible[14].

Tomás put me in touch with his sister, and other friends from his neighbourhood who also accepted to be interviewed. In order to incorporate a wide range of voices, I also contacted old friends from girl-scouts who I knew had migrated to Buenos Aires; they in turn contacted me with their friends and family members. I contacted other people through informal conversations I had with market vendors, taxi drivers, and building janitors. To my surprise, it was not difficult to contact Bolivians who had returned from Buenos Aires in the last months of 2001 and first months of 2002.

All of the interviews were conducted in Spanish, and tape recorded with the consent of the men and women I spoke to. As I had done with Tomás, I explained to each of my interviewees what the interview was about, gave them the information letter, ask for their permission to tape record, and scheduled the interview. The interviews took place in venues selected by the interviewees: some in plazas, others in their workplaces, others in the street sitting on a side-walk[15]. Most of the interviews that I carried out with women were done in their home on a Sunday. As most of them were working as housemaids during the week, this was the only time they were able to offer me. I was very thankful to all of my interviewees for sacrificing so generously their time to speak with me.

While I did not have difficulty in gaining cooperation and engaging in what I consider fruitful conversations with Bolivian men and women who had migrated to Buenos Aires, limitations and biases have to be recognized. In first place, it must be recognized that expressions of identity and experience as captured by my interviews need to be contextualized, and therefore their contingency acknowledged. As Katherine Ewing proposes, the self "experienced as whole and continuous, with its own history and

[14] I share with John van Maanen the conviction that carrying out an ethnography implies "serious intellectual and moral responsibilities, for the images of the others inscribed in writing are most assuredly not neutral" (1988:1, in Brotherton 1998:54)

[15] This is not unusual in some neighborhoods of Cochabamba where people commonly sit and talk with neighbors and friends in the street.

memories that emerge in a specific context, [can] be replaced by another self representation when the context changes" (1990:253, in Sharples 2003:29). In this sense, the particular relationships I established with the men and women I spoke to, were in large part the result of how I was perceived by the interviewee, how our relationship was established, and the context in which our interviews took place.

As I am concerned with how the identities of particular men and women who have migrated from Bolivia to Argentina are defined and negotiated in the migration experience, I do not make a claim that this study is 'representative' of what other Bolivians might experience in Argentina. Thus, although I use the general category or label of 'Bolivian' migrant to refer to the people I interviewed, I do so solely with the purpose of using a broad and inclusive category that describes country of origin. But I do not equate this label with identity or see it as referring to a wider nationality. In other words, I do not use the label of 'Bolivian people' in the same way as other authors who examine definitions, criteria, and typologies for nationhood and nationality.

In most of my interviews, people identified themselves and their experiences to me by saying things like, "You too are away, you know how it is to be away from home...". The way in which some migrants identified with me, suggests that as a Bolivian I was able to collect information that another anthropologist, an Argentine, for example, might not been able to. I am thinking here especially of the highly charged manner in which the people I interviewed spoke about other Bolivians and Argentines. As will be presented in the following chapters, the men and women I interviewed strongly criticized many attitudes of older generations of Bolivians in Argentina. At the same time, many complained about the discriminatory attitudes of Argentines towards Bolivians. I believe that because I was Bolivian, they felt comfortable talking to me about these issues.

At other times, instead of being considered as an equal or an insider, I was reminded of the privileges that I enjoy compared to the migrants I interviewed and to other Bolivians. Comments like, "People like you who can have education, understand other things that we do not"; left me speechless and well aware of my status within

Bolivian society. Nevertheless, rather than assuming dichotomised relationships between insider-outsider, observer-observed, I follow Narayan in her assertion that multiple identities are involved and negotiated in these relationships, and "[f]actors such as education, gender, sexual orientation, class, race, or sheer duration of the contacts may at different times outweigh the cultural identity we associate with insider or outsider status" (1993:114).

I want to end this section by arguing that despite the subjective character of this thesis, its results should not be discarded. Particular identities and experiences are very much framed by and related to the broader historical, social, political, and economic contexts. This holds true for the experience of migration. There are 'real' conditions of poverty and inequality that shape the lives of many of the participants of this study, and it is through migration that these conditions are contested, challenged, experienced, and in this process, identities formed.

Chapter Three: Theorizing Migration

The objective of this chapter is to analyze critically the major theoretical frameworks through which migration movements have been studied in anthropology. A review of the existing migration literature will show that the character of the movement of Bolivians to and from Argentina challenges our understanding of migration movements as uni-linear and one way –that is, from one place to another—and of our view of cultures as neatly bounded in time and space. In this sense, rather than the linear metaphor, a new metaphor, one that allows for fluidity, permeability, and flexibility, needs to be created in order to understand the multiple connections – political, economic, social, religious – that migrants maintain transnationally, with both home and host societies, and to understand how in those connections, identities may be (re) created, maintained, and/or even contested.

a) Theoretical approaches towards Migration

Four major theoretical approaches have influenced the research of migration movements of anthropologists: modernization theory, historical-structural approaches (dependency and world systems theory), articulation theory and network analysis. I wish to situate my study within these theoretical approaches. I will argue that they present conceptual categories that do not allow us to grasp how Bolivian migrants develop networks, activities, social relations, patterns of living, ideologies, and identities that span both sides of the border. While recognizing its limitations, I propose that a transnational migration perspective will allow us to study migration flows in their complex and fluid character, that is, as a movement of people that is not bounded in time and space, but rather is a complex process whereby people maintain links, networks, social relations that cross borders.

According to migrant theorists influenced by 'modernization theory', migration occurs by a rational decision that an individual makes based on a cost-benefit calculation that leads him or her to migrate because the expected monetary net return is positive and

greater if she stayed where she was. This perspective is associated with a macroeconomic approach that assumes that the 'sending society', with its large endowment of labourers and high unemployment rate, would 'push' people to migrate abroad, leading to a relief in local unemployment and a boost for the economy through migrant remittances. In addition, it is assumed that the receiving society has a demand for labour (the 'pulling' factor), and will therefore benefit from the migrant workers. This process will eventually lead to an equilibrium in the development of both societies because there would be a more equitable balance between resources and population pressure. (Brettell 2000, Massey 1998, 1999, Kearney 1986). Modernization theory emerged first as a model that focused on the migration from rural to urban areas. It therefore postulated a polar distinction between the country and the city, "a distinction that corresponds to developed versus underdeveloped and modern versus traditional" (Kearney 1986:333-334). In this bipolar framework, migration to the city or urban centers was a means to attain development, to be 'modern'.

This perspective has many problems. First, it assumes that individual migrants will earn enough income to save, invest, and become agents of change in their home communities, thereby encouraging development. Several studies show, however, that remittances and savings are used mostly by migrants to buy things, and are not invested in productive projects. At the same time, migrants do not necessarily learn new skills in the 'developed' environment that they can apply at 'home', since they often have access only to unskilled or industrial jobs that require mechanical skills which cannot be applied in their own society, in case they return.

Second, the much-desired progress and development have not been achieved through the migration of people from the countryside to the cities. Indeed, in much of Latin America, the evidence showed that urbanization was occurring without development, and migration was recognized as being part of the problem of underdevelopment rather than its solution[16]. At an international level, "[r]ather than being a form of development

[16] One example is Brasilia. 'Planned as the "ultimate modernist city", within a decade after its completion it was surrounded by an immense shantytown of poor rural migrants that has displaced its social,

aid given by rich countries to poor countries, population movements often resulted in migration-dependent communities and the generation of further migration through the diffusion of consumerism" (Brettell 2000:103). Moreover, the economic equilibrium posited by push-pull theorists was strongly contested and challenged as a result of the recognition of the existence of more 'pushing' forces than 'pulling' ones (Massesy et al. 1998).

During the late 1960s, a historical-structuralist approach emerged which criticized the dichotomized world portrayed by modernization theorists where migration was seen as a rational choice made by individuals, and motivated by 'push' factors of traditional societies and 'pulled' by factors located in developed (or modern) societies. Historical-structuralist theorists, inspired by the writings of Andre Gunder Frank, argued that migration should be studied in the historical context in which it occurs, and that the focus of analysis should be the economic, political, and social structures, informing a particular phenomenon of migration, not the individual. From this perspective, scholars argued that the world was a single system united by a capitalist economy wherein poor countries, located at a peripheral and disadvantageous position within the geopolitical structure, depended on core and powerful capitalist countries. This line of thinking is referred to as 'dependency theory'. Its main proposition is that global capitalism produces the development of underdevelopment of Third World or periphery countries, by extracting surpluses from them and encouraging international migration. In this sense, underdevelopment is not another stage of development, as argued by modernization theory. Rather, it is a historical product, and part of the same process that made development possible in some countries and not in others.

A line of thought in the historical-structuralist approach that tried to go beyond the limitation of the dualistic perspective of core-periphery economic relations, was the 'world systems theory', proposed initially by Immanuel Wallerstein, which created a new category of 'semi-periphery' countries. From this perspective, international migration was seen as a structural consequence of the expansion of markets, where the

---

economic, and cultural center of gravity and neutralized the planners' futuristic vision of the city' (Kearney 1996:117)

penetration of capitalist economies into non-capitalist societies inevitably created disruptions and dislocations, motivating populations to migrate (Massey 1999:41).

Like modernization theory, dependency and world systems theories also dichotomized the world – in this case into core and periphery countries. Since the historical-structural approach focuses on macroeconomic relations and the global market, it overlooks the culturally mediated agency of migrants in determining where and how to migrate. Indeed, under the historical-structural approach, migrants are seen as passive actors manipulated by the world capitalist system and other structural forces. This perspective reduces the migrant to a mere worker and eliminates the discussion of racial, ethnic, or national identity which shape people's actions and consciousness (Glick Schiller et al. 1994:12). Indeed, even though migrants are searching for jobs and are providers of labour power, they are also political and social actors. Both frameworks – modernization and historical-structural – assume that migration is mostly a male phenomenon, and almost completely ignore the movement of women; if women are considered, it is as passive followers of men. As Brettell explains, "this particular conceptualization of the relationship between women and the process of migration suited modernization theory – women represented the traditional pole of the continuum and men the pole of modernity"(2000:109).

Trying to bridge the gap between modernization theory, the unit of analysis of which was the individual, and historical-structural approaches which focus on global structural forces, is 'articulation theory'. Articulation theorists of migration, demonstrated that non-capitalist forms of production persisted along with capitalists forms such that they were coexistent and articulated, and by virtue of this association they were also reproduced (Kearney 1996:81-85). This theory was built upon studies of migration from peripheral areas to core capitalist sites. But instead of focusing on the global structures, such as in the historical-structural approach, it focused on the individual, the household, and the community, and on how these (at a local level) were shaped by and responded to global economic conditions. As Kearney reminds us, the social agent at the core of this theory is not the rational individual as modernization theory considered, 'but instead, as

is consistent with articulation theory's primary attention to production, [the migrant] is a working individual whose identity and consciousness is embodied in a body that works to produce value in complex and varied ways at sites that are linked by migration' (1996:119). That is, the analysis is centered on 'specific' men and women who migrate between different places that have apparent distinct modes of production, for example, horticultural and industrial, and by the 'movement' of people overcome the spatial distinction between them and knit themselves "into a seamless fabric that is both developed and underdeveloped and yet, when taken as whole, is neither" (Kearney 1996:120).

Yet articulation theory also assumes a bipolar framework of analysis since it studies the articulation between poles and centers, between underdevelopment and development, and because it considers individuals as subjects whose identities are defined by the mode of production in which they are engaged, for example, peasants would be redefined as workers in the migration process from rural to urban areas (Kearney 1996:124 and 1986:355).

The problem with adopting a bipolar framework of analysis for making sense of migration, is that all of the above theories neglect or ignore the continuous and constant links that migrants and non-migrants maintain between home and host societies; they also ignore the dialectic interplay between the broad developments of global capitalism and the agency of migrants, as they make decisions and take actions that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states (Rouse 1992, Foxen 1996:9, Glick Schiller et al., 1994:7).

The realization that once people migrate, links are maintained with family and friends in their home and host community, led social scientists to focus on social networks. Although network analysis is not considered by many social scientists a theory per se (Brettell 2000), it is considered a research tool and method of analysis that studies how social relationships are forged between "migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and

shared community origin" (Massey 1999:44). Douglas Massey and his colleagues (1998, 1999) associate the concept of migrant network with that of social capital, arguing that once a person has migrated, his or her personal contacts can be used as another type of capital (especially financial), helping them to gain access to a job or a place to stay once they arrive to the new country. The existence of a migrant network raises the likelihood of migration, and therefore the network is self-perpetuated, since each act of migration creates the social structure needed to sustain it: "[e]very new migrant reduces the costs of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and some of these people are thereby induced to migrate, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad" (Brettell 2000:107, see Massey 1999:44). Although network analysis is a useful tool to understand how migrants forge and maintain social ties and connections across borders, it does not allow an examination of how ethnic, national, and political identities are created across borders. Even more, it precludes "an interpretative analysis of the subjective processes which form the migrant experience" (Foxen 1996:8); and as Kearney suggests, the network metaphor does not envision the complex and extensive spaces that are involved in identity and relationship creation in a globalized world in movement (1996:126-127).

b) Transnational migration theory

The limitations of the above theories, and the increasing awareness of the interconnectedness of the local and global spaces through movement of people, symbols, commodities, and ideas, led some social scientists to argue for a perspective that enables a reconceptualization of migration, culture, and identity. In this sense, 'transnational migration theory' grew as a perspective that builds upon, criticizes, and merges various theories on migration. The study of transnational migration is also influenced by and builds on studies of globalization processes and their effects on local cultures (Foxen 2001:35). Contrary to the arguments that cultures would tend to homogenize or Westernize (or even Americanize), by the flow of people, ideas, symbols, and commodities, this perspective accepts that "as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenized in one or another way"

(Appadurai 1996:32, see also García Canclini 1999, Kearney 1995). In anthropology, this approach grew as part of a broader intellectual movement that questions the notion that 'cultures' are discretely bounded, territorialized, relatively unchanging, and homogenous units typically associated with a people, a tribe, a nation (Abu-Lughod 1991, Appadurai 1996, Gupta and Ferguson 1997a, 1997b, Kearney 1995, 1996, Olwig and Hastrup 1997). Indeed, from the transnational point of view, the study of migration flows contributes to this critique and opens new perspectives on how to understand notions of place, space, time, and identity.

In this section, I want to introduce the case of Bolivian transmigration to Argentina. I argue that by using a transnational framework, it becomes possible to analyze the migration process of Bolivians to and from Argentina, from different perspectives that include the social, political, economic, and symbolic spheres. At the same time, the use of a transnational framework allows us to analyze the ways in which Bolivian's transnational social and economic practices affect and shape their identities and experiences.

Transnational theorists stress that structural forces, such as differential access to political and economic power, inequality, and poverty, influence and shape the migration experience (historical-structural approach). At the same time, this approach recognizes that "the axes of racial or ethnic hierarchy, class inequality, and other power struggles in both nations of origin and host countries inform the identities and strategies of transmigrants" (Foxen 1996:13). Yet, as Charles argues, while migrants are influenced and constrained by these structural forces, they are also historical agents "who bring their own conceptions, meanings and discourses that inform their 'subjectification' and transform the meanings of social categories" (1992, in Foxen 1996:13). In the perspective of Glick Schiller et al., (1994:7), the agency of migrants is seen in their transnational practices whereby migrants, through their actions and decisions, develop identities that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states.

Conceptualizations of immigrants as people who have moved from one place to another to stay and make a new home in a new country, and of migrants as people who have moved only on a temporary basis in order to work, are strongly criticized under the transnational analytical framework. In fact, this perspective recognizes that immigrants abroad maintain multiple ties to their communities of origin, not only economic, and that they move freely back and forth across international borders and between cultures. That is why Glick Schiller and her colleagues use the term 'transmigrants' to refer to "[i]mmigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political – that span borders" (1994:7). This conceptualization aims to surpass the limitation of the network analysis in that the latter precludes the subjective proces &ses of identity formation of migrants, as well as their relation to those networks and other national processes (Brettell 2000).

From a transnational perspective, conceptualizations of migration patterns as seasonal, temporary, continuous, returning, transient, or permanent are blurred, since the movement of people between home and host societies is continuous, making it difficult to "pinpoint clear, time- or space-bounded miant categories, which become, instead, part of a complex, and often ambivalent, process of negotiation and representation among various contexts" (Foxen 2001:32-33). Criticizing these migration patterns, Rousse (1992) proposes the use of the term 'transnational circuit', arguing that these categories - seasonal, temporary, permanent-- should be seen as fluid, changing, and overlapping. Poerregaard even argues that non-migrants in their home communities should be perceived as 'potential' migrants when he states that migration "is a *state of being* which any subject...may pass through during his or her lifetime" (1997:40, my emphasis).

As mentioned earlier, transmigration theory builds on the notion that cultures are not 'located' in particular places. It therefore shifts our thinking about migration from a primary concern with demographic issues of individuals moving through bipolar and bounded spaces, to another perspective in which migrants are seen as historical subjects moving between and among multiple sites where space-temporal boundaries are being

negotiated. These new images of migration imply a reconceptualization of the identity and consciousness of migrants (Kearney 1996:122). Gupta and Ferguson stress that "identity and alterity are produced simultaneously in the formation of 'locality' and 'community'" (1997:13). But this is a consideration of identity not as rooted in local communities, nor as something that belongs to an individual or to a collective group. Rather, identity in these terms is a mobile and unstable *relation of difference,* of "exclusion and othering [where] both collective and individual subjects are formed"(1997:13). Identities and places are constructed as part of this same process since "feelings of belonging to an imagined community bind identity to spatial location such that differences between communities and places are created" (Gupta, quoted in Glick Schiller, et al., 1994:34).

In my work, the meaning of 'place' and its significance will also be considered as a relationship of difference to other 'places'. But it is a significance that is manifested by individuals and not by the places in and of themselves. This assertion is shared by many of the place theorists cited: places are not inert containers. As Rodman notes, places are politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, and local and multiple constructions (1992, in Brotherton 1998:62). It is important to make clear that 'place' is not limited to physical place, but it can "encapsulate alongside both the 'space' of an individual identity and social relationships as a kind of space" (Sharples 2003:11).

Even though the transnational migration framework is a more sophisticated approach that allows us a more subtle and complex understanding of transmigration and the process of (re) creating transnational identities, its limitations must be acknowledged. The literature on transnationalism assumes that migration processes involve people from poor countries towards richer and capitalist countries. As such, it rarely addresses the issue of transmigration between two 'developing' countries and their vulnerable position in the world capitalist system. Here I am thinking particularly of the Argentine case and the economic and political crisis which emerged in that country on December 2001. The crisis triggered the return of countless numbers of Bolivian migrants to their communities, as I discuss in detail later in this thesis. But these 'returning' migrants still

retain links with what was once their host society. Not only do they have family members still in Argentina, but they also send monetary remittances to some of them. While transmigration theory tells us about remittances that are sent from the 'host' society to the 'home' society (assuming economic difference), the Bolivian situation inverts this process so that it is the 'home' society which is sending 'remittances' to family members located in the host society, a circumstance both ironic and counter-intuitive.

This study appears to be situated in a contradiction. While concepts such as 'deterritorialization' emerged in order to try to explain how identities become detached from local places (Appadurai 1996, Kearney 1995, Gupta and Ferguson 1997, Foxen 2001, Cortés 2002), individuals, from their particular position in the world, still give a central importance to 'place' as a reference point with which they may identify (Olwig and Hastrup 1997:12). Still, the question seems valid. If there is a relationship between place-making and identity, how is this relationship configured by Bolivian migrants now that they have 'returned' 'home'?

Chapter Four: Bolivians in Argentina.

Historical overview of transnational migration

Los mexicanos descendemos de los aztecas, los peruanos de los incas y los argentinos de los barcos.

Carlos Fuentes

My intention in this chapter is twofold. First, I aim to situate historically the migration process of Bolivians to Argentina. I focus on the last twenty years since the migrants I interviewed first began their migration to Argentina mostly during the 1980s and 1990s. In this sense, the thesis seeks to embed the process of transmigration within a more continuous sense of local history. Migration, while accelerated by more recent developments in local and global capitalism, has formed an essential part of cultural and physical survival for Bolivian Indians and non-Indians since the Conquest. At the same time it has been one strategy for Bolivians, among other strategies, aimed at fulfilling the needs of the family economy (Dandler and Medeiros 1985, 1988). As such, it is important to view transnational movement, and its emergent identity constructions, both in terms of the historical continuity and consciousness within which these are embedded (Foxen 2002:61).

My second objective is to present, in this historical context, how the discourses of national identity have been built in both countries, especially Argentina, where European migration was sought as the base for building a national identity in which, all the different peoples would 'melt' into a *crisol de razas* (melting pot metaphor). It is not strange then that migration to Argentina of Bolivians, and of nationals of other neighbouring countries, was regarded with some suspicion.

a) Situating migration of Bolivians to Argentina in history

The migration of Bolivians towards Argentina has a long history. The Argentine census of 1869 is the first 'official' document that records Bolivians in Argentine territory; at that time they represented only 2.9 percent of the total foreign population (See Table 1). This Bolivian population, whose origin was the impoverished areas of the *altiplano* (highland) of Potosí and the valleys of Tarija, settled mostly in the north-western provinces of Jujuy and Salta in response to the demand for temporary and unskilled labour for agriculture production, mainly sugar cane and tobacco plantations (Hinojosa 2000, Whiteford 1981)[17].

In 1876, under the presidency of Nicolás Avellaneda, the Argentine Congress approved the first Law of Immigration and Colonization, a law that defined the composition and characteristics of the Argentine nation-state. This law reflected the aspiration of the elites to promote a modern nation-state in which the European immigrant was considered as a fundamental protagonist. Considered a civilized and rational actor (in contrast to 'barbaric' indigenous peoples), the European immigrant had the mission not only to increase the population, but also to modernize and civilize the country (Grimson 1999, Melamed 2002, Guano 2003). The intellectual author of this dichotomy – *'civilización y barbarie'* – was Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, one of the Argentine founding fathers, who posited that the infusion of a superior racial stock would correct once and for all the barbarism of the *mestizo*[18] and rural indigenous

[17] Studies that refer to this first migration do not address the differences in the gender of the migrants; they usually assume that migrants are men in working age. When they make reference to women, they usually portray them as companions of men with no active role in earning money (see Whiteford 1981, Dandler and Medeiros 1985, Zalles 2002).

[18] The term *mestizo* was used during the colonial period to classify a biological racially mixed group, usually the offspring of a 'white' Spanish conqueror and an Indigenous woman; but it quickly became a cultural category determined by externalities such as speech, dress, and consumption. According to Herbert Klein, an Indian could pass as a mestizo and become a new socially intermediate class, known as *mestizo* or *cholo*. The *cholos* or *mestizos* took on all the urban labouring work tasks, they learned to speak Spanish, and often gave up their traditional costumes and began to consume Spanish-style foods such as bread. "They became urban *cholos (mestizos)* even though they were of a pure Indian stock" (1982:254). In using the term *mestizo,* I am raising many questions. While there is a wealthy terminology, both historical and current, to refer to the population that is 'in between' whites and Indians, *mestizo* is one of the most generally employed, both in colonial legal thought and in sociological and anthropological discourses today (see Harris 1995).

(Guano 2003:149, Grimson 1999:22, Courtis 2000). According to Alejandro Grimson, Argentine leaders instituted European immigration as a tradition that is the base of its national identity. The 'national culture' was based on the aspiration that through transculturation and acculturation, the diverse cultural groups would 'melt' in a *crisol de razas,* a type of a creole melting pot (1999:11). Between 1871 and 1914, 5.9 million European immigrants arrived to Argentina (mostly Italians, Spanish, French, and Portuguese) of which 3.1 million became permanent residents (Oteiza and Aruj 1997:14, Guano 2003:149).

Compared to this 'massive' flow of people from Europe, Bolivian migration, and that of other neighbouring countries, did not represent a menace, in quantitative terms at least, to the Argentine elite's project of a modern nation-state. Bolivians were seen and demanded as workers in an industry that needed unskilled and cheap labour that the native population could not fill (Ardaya 1978, Dandler and Medeiros 1985, 1988, Balán 1995); therefore the Bolivians' ethnic identity mattered little. Besides, their presence in Argentine territory was regarded as temporary or seasonal, thus implying that once the job was done the workers returned to their homeland.

After the Great Depression of 1929, the Argentine government began to develop a new mode of accumulation and growth based on a state led model of import-substituting-industrialization (ISI). As a result, the industrial sector grew rapidly, expanding the job market, especially in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires (MABA). The labour force was fed with increasing internal rural-to-urban migration of Argentines (Waisman 1999, Whiteford 1981), but also with migration from neighbouring countries – Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and to a lesser extent Brazil and Uruguay – whose increasing flows were initially a response to regional labour scarcity in the primary sector of Argentina's border areas (Balán 1995, 1990). In the cities, a xenophobic response emerged to the impression created by this internal migration; metropolitans called migrants *"cabecitas negras"* (black heads)[19] because of the dark

[19] There is no direct translation for this term. *Cabecita* is the diminutive for *cabeza* or head in English. The fact that they make it in diminutive is an euphemism perhaps meant to soften the pejorative and xenophobic sense given to the word.

color of their hair. Nevertheless, in 1946 a counter xenophobic discourse emerged through the political narrative of *'peronismo'*[20] (Peronism); Perón's populist national political project was to integrate the marginalized population through employment, wage increases, protection and credits to new industries, and a favourable legislation to the working class (Waisman 1999, Grimson 1999, Whiteford 1981).

As mentioned above, during this period, the migration of Bolivians towards the northern provinces of Argentina was considered 'seasonal' and 'temporal', since migrants spent from two to ten months working in the sugar and tobacco plantations and then returned to their rural communities in Bolivia. Although, as Scott Whiteford (1981:78-88) notes, by the 1950s after the *zafra* (sugar cane harvest), Bolivian workers increasingly moved to the cities of Salta and Jujuy in search for other sources of economic income. Therefore, according to students of migration, the 1950s and 1960s mark a turning point when Bolivian migrants, drawn by the burgeoning construction and manufacturing industries, started migrating to the major cities of Argentina, especially Buenos Aires, Cordoba, and La Plata (Benencia 1999)[21]. According to Susana Sassone, the search for a 'permanent' job and socioeconomic mobility characterized this period (see Grimson 1999, Hinojosa 2000, Zalles 2002).

Several factors seem to have influenced the migration of Bolivians to Argentina's urban centers at this time. The lowering of the price of sugar in the 1960s and the increased mechanization of the sugar industry left most of the workers in search for jobs, while at the same time the urban setting had a permanent demand for labourers to fill hard physical, unstable and unskilled jobs that the native population did not want to take

[20] Juan Domingo Perón was the political leader of the *Partido Justicialista*. He is considered a populist leader whose support was based on the lower and middle classes. He promoted an import-substitution economy and nationalized several industries, and he utilized the rhetoric of the *descamisados* [shirtless] against foreign imperialism. In Perón's government a corporatist state was created, yet Perón's utilization of the working class as a political base required a powerful labor movement – albeit under state control (see Guano 2003:164 and Waisman 1999:88).

[21] Most of the literature regards 'Bolivian migrants' as a homogenous group, implying that they belong to the same ethnic group, and also assumes that most immigrants are economically active men. In the following section I will touch upon these issues more fully. What is important at this point, however, is the historical trajectory of the migration process.

(Balán 1995, Dandler and Medeiros 1988). But also, Bolivia was undergoing several changes that can help understand this increased movement of its population.

Until 1952, Bolivia was dominated by a small oligarchy that enjoyed three types of monopolistic appropriation of the goods and resources of the Indian population: the monopoly of land, the monopoly of access to the market, and the monopoly of political power (Rivera Cucicanqui 1987:17). Despite constituting the majority of the population, Indian communities lacked decision-making power to challenge laws that allowed the usurpation of their lands, and thus their means of production. By the 1920s, the national tax system was reformed so that the contribution paid by Indians alone was enough to cover the departmental budgets[22]. Indians, however, were forbidden to move freely through the main city squares and streets, and the Road Service Act made it compulsory for them to work for a number of days each year in the construction of roads and bridges (Rivera Cucicanqui 1987:18-20). These were measures implemented by the liberal legislation that also made it possible for the owners of *haciendas*[23] to extend their holdings over the next forty years. All of these repressive laws and policies were sustained by social Darwinist ideas imported from Europe wherein "[t]he Inca Indians and *mestizos* [had] absolutely no place in the gradual evolution of modern society. Sooner or later, in the struggle for existence, they are doomed to extinction under the

[22] Administratively, Bolivia is divided into nine departments.

[23] The *hacienda* system was installed during the colonial period as part of the Toledo Reforms, and existed until the Land Reform of 1953. The *hacienda* was a large piece of land that was acquired by purchase from the Crown, by paying money into an increasingly depleted royal treasury. The system used by Spanish colonizers invited workers (Indians and later *mestizos*), to settle permanently on or near their new estates; they would undertake to pay their tribute to the royal authorities and to pay the Indians wages, usually in kind. In exchange, the Spanish would grant workers the right to purchase goods on credit or, as needed, advance small sums of money. The worker's account would be debited to the extent of the sums involved, in return for a promise to repay the money through labor; such workers became *peones* or *pongos* (Wolf 1959, Klein 1993). According to Herbert Klein, the *hacienda* was a much-hated institution that lasted three centuries, although not without disruptions and violence. The *pongos* were required to provide the tools to work the owner's lands, and even provided free transportation of the owner's crops to the markets (Klein 1993:17). Through this process, Eric Wolf argues that the Spanish became dominant over the indigenous population, and that the latter suffered a process of conversion or transformation: "the Indian was to be a peasant, the Indian community a community of peasants" (1959:203-204). This constitutes one of the starting points of the homogenization of the Indian people and the creation of boundaries, economic, political, and social between the Spanish and their descendants, and the Indians. In the Republican period, the *hacienda* kept its main characteristic, that is, the *pongos* were forced to work the land with their own tools and give the landowner or *hacendado* a part of their products and sales revenues.

reign of the pure or purified whites" (Moreno 1900, quoted in Rivera Cucicanqui 1987:18-19).

This dominant discourse of social Darwinist's ideas began to change as a consequence of a war lost with Paraguay (1932-1935) over the territories of the Chaco region. Soldiers (mostly Indians and *mestizos)* and widows and mothers of dead soldiers, demanded support from the State on the basis that they and their families were 'Bolivians'; on this basis too they argued publicly for improved working conditions, health and education institutions for themselves and their children. In this way, the Indians appropriated the incipient nationalist discourses to affirm their right to an education, publicly challenging the conservative agendas that positioned Andean peoples as modernity's 'Other' (Stephenson 1999:116). This post-war situation witnessed the exhaustion of the oligarchy due to the massive discontent of the Indian peoples, who were redefined by the education and politico-administrative policies implemented by the oligarchies in the first half of the twentieth century as "impoverished, hapless, illiterate, and uncivilized" subjects who remained economically peripheral (Larson 1995:29).

Bolivia was one of the few Latin American countries to experience a revolution in the true political sense of the word --that is, a complete collapse of the oligarchic system of government that characterized it since the Conquest. The Revolution of 1952 was the consequence of an instable economic, social, and political situation that could not be tolerated by Bolivians. The Revolution was headed by the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR)* (National Revolutionary Movement), a political party formed in 1941 with an anti-oligarchical ideology reflected in the heart-felt sentiment of national frustration born in the Chaco trenches (Rivera Cucicanqui 1987:47). The MNR, with support of armed groups of municipal police, tin miners, and other civilians battled and defeated the Bolivian army and on April 11 of 1952. Therefore the MNR established itself as the ruling political party of Bolivia.

Some of the major changes that the Revolution brought were the nationalization of the mines and major industries, the legalization and unionization of peasants and miners, and the granting of full citizenship to the Indian population with the right to vote. This latter right was also extended to women and illiterate people, who until 1952 had been banned from political participation. The Revolution also brought the blurring of the contours of ethnic identity because post-revolutionary leaders preferred to appeal to the Indians by using the general term of *'campesino'* (peasant). According to Crandon-Malamud, this change had a positive connotation since the State conceded the derogatory meaning of the word Indian, and acknowledged the racism underlying ethnicity that rendered social class invisible (1991:111). Several scholars argue, however, that this change was simply another attempt to homogenize the Indian peoples – and even more, as elsewhere in Latin America, it attempted to make the Indians disappear under a new national discourse of *mestizaje*[24] (see Albó 2001, García 2001, Rivera Cucicanqui 1993). This new national discourse, whereby all Bolivians were mestizos, was supported by a new education policy and one requiring compulsory military service, both designating the Spanish language as the language of instruction.

The growing mobilization and organization of the Indian peasantry pressured the newly installed government to enact a Land Reform[25]. With this reform, land was re-distributed on the basis of the principle "land belongs to those that work it"[26]; thus the *hacienda* system was destroyed, and Indian peasant forced labour eliminated. But not all

---

[24] The creation of this national *mestizo* discourse was influenced by a broader debate that was taking place in other Latin American countries, such as Mexico and Peru, whereby *mestizaje* was seen as a 'synthetic race'. The work of Mexican post-revolutionary leader, José Vasconcelos, *La Raza Cósmica* (Cosmic Race) (1925), was the ideological support of this quest: "The lower types of the species will be absorbed by the superior. In this manner, for example, the blacks could be redeemed, and step-by-step, by voluntary extinction, the 'uglier' stocks will give way to the more handsome. Inferior races, upon being educated, would become less prolific, and better specimens would go on ascending a scale of ethnic improvement whose maximum type is not *precisely the white* but that new race to which the white himself will have to aspire, with the objective of conquering synthesis" (quoted in Martínez-Echazabal 1998:34, italics in original).

[25] To give an idea of the unequal situation of the Indians in relation to land tenure: "[In 1951] 82.7 percent [of the Indian population] made their living in agriculture. Five per cent of the people owned 70 percent of the land. Sixty percent of the entire population took no real part in the economic life of the country" (Carter 1971:88). According to Klein, "The six percent of the landowners who owned 1,000 hectares or more lo land, controlled fully 92 percent of all cultivated land in the Republic. These estates were largely under-utilized (...) (1982:228).

[26] *"La tierra es para quien la trabaja"*. My translation.

Indian peasants benefited from the Reform, and those that did received only small parcels of land[27]. Furthermore, the Reform recognized only individual ownership of the land, therefore effectively destroying communal lands and organizations (Hahn 1991).

Scholars agree that the Reform is one of the factors that triggered the urbanization process in Bolivia through rural to urban migration, not only because many Indians were left with no land, but because they could move freely around the territory without having to serve the *hacendados* (Albó 1982, Balán 1995). In this period, international migration towards Buenos Aires also increased, although not substantially (Ardaya 1978, Balán 1995, Benencia 1999, Hinojosa 2001). These events helps explain why during the 1960s and 1970s studies of Bolivian migration indicate a slight increase in the number of Bolivians in Argentina (See Table 1).

Table 1: Evolution of Bolivian migration towards Argentina

Origin of population	1869	1895	1914	1947	1960	1970	1980	1991
Total foreign population	210.330	1.006.838	2.391.171	2.435.927	2.606.447	2.210.400	1.903.159	1.615.473
Population from non-neighbouring countries	80,3%	88,5%	91,4%	87,1%	83,1%	75,9%	60,4%	47,9%
Population from neighbouring countries	19,7%	11,5%	8,6%	12,9%	17,9%	24,1%	39,6%	52,1%
Bolivia	**2,9% (6,099)**	**0,7% (7,361)**	**0,8% (17,993)**	**2,0% (47,774)**	**3,4% (89,155)**	**4,2% (101,000)**	**6,2% (118,141)**	**9,4% (143,569)**

Source: INDEC Census data 1869-1991.

Different studies show that by the 1970s, the localization of the Bolivian immigrant labour force was highly concentrated in few economic sectors – generally farming, horticulture, manufacturing, construction, and services. These studies also show that that jobs available to Bolivian immigrants were differentiated along gender lines. In the

[27] Recognizing the poor implementation of the land reform of 1953, the government decided in 1996 to implement a second land reform.

north-western provinces of Salta and Jujuy, for example, men usually worked in the plantation and harvesting of tobacco and sugar cane, while women and children helped peeling and stacking the harvest; their contributions were neither paid nor accounted for. Nor at this point are there any reports of women migrating alone (without their family). In the city of Buenos Aires, men usually worked in manufacturing and construction, while women worked (in smaller numbers) in the informal sector selling fruits and vegetables in the streets, and to a lesser extent in domestic service. It is worth noting that the literature says that up to the 1970s, migration was fundamentally male; the few Bolivian women who migrated did so accompanying their husbands. The few unmarried women who migrated where considered secondary movers, because their migration (always temporary) was closely tied to relatives who integrated them into their households (Balán 1990 and 1995, Dandler and Medeiros 1985, 1988).

In 1980s, the number of Bolivian immigrants who settled in the Great Buenos Aires grew and, according to census material, it reached or surpassed in size the population that lived in Jujuy and Salta. This implies a change in the type of migration from rural-rural, to rural-urban from 1950s onward (Ardaya 1978, Balán 1990 and 1995, Benencia y Karasik 1995, Cortes 2002, Grimson 1997, 1999, Hinojosa 2000, Sassone 2002). Grimson adds it is possible that since the 1980s, Bolivian migration to Buenos Aires has had an urban-urban character, since migrants are going to Buenos Aires from Bolivian cities (1999:32).

According to the Argentine census of 1991, there were 143,551 Bolivians in Argentina[28]; and the Bolivian population there was the third largest after Paraguayans and Chileans. Although conclusive statistics of the number of Bolivians in Argentina are difficult to find, other sources of information suggest that the number of Bolivians in Argentina is higher than the one registered by the census. Between 1974 and 1994, the *Dirección Nacional de Migraciones de Argentina (DNM)* (National Migration Office of Argentina), granted a total of 199,903 *radicatoria* documents to Bolivians, that is, the document that grants the right of permanency in Argentina. These *radicatoria*

[28] Final reports of the 2002 Argentine Census were yet not available on July 2003.

documents were given to Bolivians that requested them directly to the DNM, or through different 'amnesties' [29], decreed by the Argentine government in order to 'whiten' the illegality of an 'unknown number' of immigrants from neighbouring countries (Novick 1992). The fact that most *radicatoria* documents were granted through amnesties suggests the difficulty of keeping track of undocumented migrants. But it also suggests that if it were not for the amnesties, Bolivian migrants would have remained 'illegal' or working without 'official' permits (See Table 2).

Table 2: Number of Bolivians that received *radicatoria* documents between 1974-1999

Year	1974*	1980	1984*	1990	1992	1993-1994*	1995-2000**
Total N°	22.596	14.314	18.739	1.528	2.218	110.253	16.839

Source: Oteiza, Novick y Aruj, 1995 from data of the *Dirección Nacional de Población e Inmigraciones Argentina*
* By amnesty decree.
** I complemented this data with data extracted from INDEC's webpage (www.indec.mecon.gov.ar).

Of the 110,253 Bolivians that received their *radicatoria* because of the 1993-94 amnesty, 81,605 received their papers in Greater Buenos Aires. This would indicate that a majority population of Bolivians is in this metropolitan area.

Some studies indicate that over the past twenty-five years, the migration of Bolivians to Argentina has intensified to the point that there are about 1.5 to 2 million Bolivians in Argentina, of whom almost half are undocumented. This means that one out of five Bolivians now live in Argentina, with Buenos Aires having the third largest Bolivian population (García Canclini 1999, CEDLA 2000, Hinojosa 2001, Zalles 2002). In these studies, the increase in the migration of Bolivians to Argentina in the last two decades is explained by politico-economic factors. For example, in Zalles' view, migration since the 1980s has been propelled by the economic crisis in Bolivia and

[29] Susana Novick (1992) argues that there is no coherent public policy regarding the entrance and status of migrants in Argentina. Argentina has a legislation that facilitates the entrance of migrants to the country, but not the *radicatoria* or permanency in it. In this sense, amnesties are an attempt to promote that 'illegal' migrants regularize their situation in Argentina, allowing them to obtain residency. There have been a total of nine amnesties decreed by the Argentine government aiming to regularize the situation of migrants from neighboring countries (1949, 1951, 1958, 1964, 1965, 1974, 1984, 1992, 1998).

structural reforms applied since 1985 whereby the privatization of national mines and enterprises left more than 30,000 people unemployed. On the other side of the border, following the implementation of neo-liberal reforms under the presidency of Carlos Menem, Argentina managed to recover from decades of instability and stagnation, achieving high rates of economic growth, especially from 1991 to 1997[30]. Menem also launched a 'Convertibility Plan' that stipulated the exchange rate of one peso per US dollar. Even though this measure prevented a relapse into hyperinflation[31], the Argentine government also promoted a politics of importation that damaged the already weak local manufacturing production sector (Guano 2003:151). This economic growth had an attraction or 'pulling' effect on unemployed and impoverished Bolivian migrants.

It is not only in academic circles that it is suggested that these 'pull-push' factors have caused a 'massive' migration of Bolivians to Argentina. A supposedly huge migration can also be 'read' in newspaper accounts from both countries, in the discourses of government leaders, and even from within the Bolivian community in Argentina. For example, the webpage of *La comunidad boliviana en Argentina* created by members of different Bolivian social organizations in Argentina, (http://www.comunidadboliviana.com.ar), also state that there are two million Bolivians in Argentina. This number might include the sons and daughters of Bolivians born in Argentina who are considered Bolivians by the community of Bolivians (Grimson 2000); therefore one's 'place' of birth might not have a fundamental role on how Bolivians see their own national identities.

Nevertheless, as it was presented above, all this data that indicate a 'massive' migration of Bolivians to Argentina in the last decade, contradicts the statistical and census data of both countries. Even if we recognize that census data might 'hide' the

[30] "From 1990 to 1995, the GDP grew by 40 percent, and exports increased by over 50 percent. Argentina also strengthened its integration with Brazil and other partners in Mercosur, the Southern Cone common market formed in the 1980'... (Waisman 1999:100). One of the consequences of this 'modernization' of the economy was the dismantling of the old *peronista* welfare system. "Formerly state-run services – health care, social security, transportation- were turned over to an emergent class of businesspeople mostly formed by close associates of the president and the ruling *Partido Justicialista*" (Guano 2003:151).

[31] In 1989 inflation was of 3,080 percent while in 1990 was 2,300 percent (Jelin 2003:4), by 1994, inflation was less than 5 percent (Pastor and Wise (2001:62).

'real' number of Bolivians in Argentina, or present an under-registry – due to their 'illegal' status– the number of two million migrants seems inflated. If we hypothesize that in the last decade, Bolivian migrants in Argentina have increased 100 percent, that is, by 286,000 persons since the 1991 Argentine census, and if we add to this number 150,000 undocumented migrants, and another 150,000 Bolivian migrants that might not be registered in any type of record, the total number of Bolivians in Argentina would, at most, reach 700,000 people. In a demographic study carried out by José Baldivia (2002), it is argued that it is not possible that there are more than 400,000 Bolivians in Argentina, because this number does not match the Bolivian government estimates of population growth for the past decades. In addition, in 1996 the number of Bolivians that travelled to Argentina was 25,112, of whom 17,510 returned. This means that only 7,602 people did not go back to Bolivia that year (2002:104, INE 2003).

A number of questions arise from the above: what explains the huge discrepancy between official data, certain academic studies, and informal numbers that appear in news accounts? Why does the 'number' of Bolivian migrants in Argentina matter? To whom does it matter? Has not the presence of Bolivians in Argentina been historically continuous? If there are so many Bolivians in Argentina, why have they not taken advantage of the several amnesties given by the government? What leads Argentine and Bolivian newspaper accounts to talk about a 'massive invasion' and 'flows' of Bolivian migrants?

I argue that the increased 'social visibility' of Bolivian migrants is a response to socio-cultural motives and not 'quantitative ones'. In this sense, not only in the study of migration of Bolivians in Argentina, but also in the experience of Argentines and Bolivians, there is much fear 'of the Other' that is regularly expressed in the public discourse of governmental leaders and of the inhabitants of both countries, fear that is also replicated in newspapers.

Alejandro Grimson (2000), Enrique Oteiza and Roberto Aruj (1997) have studied printed media containing political discourses regarding migration over the past decade,

and how political leaders address this issue. Grimson suggests that in order to understand the experience of migration processes, from the perspective of migrants, we cannot overlook the images and meanings that are circulating in the host society (2000:25). In this author's perspective, in the 1990s, two streams of xenophobic discourses in Argentina transcended the more daily forms of discrimination that migrants must endure. The first discourse constructed by the Argentine State, blamed migrants from neighbouring countries (Bolivia, Paraguay, Chile, Uruguay, and Peru) for social, economic, sanitary[32], and security problems (Grimson 2000, Oteiza et al., 1997.). The second discourse was constructed by worker unions; it echoed the government position on economic problems, and blamed migrants for unemployment and lower wages.

In June of 1995, the governor of the province of Buenos Aires, Eduardo Duhalde (who later became President in December, 2001), launched a Labour Plan to cover the streets with asphalt and to persecute illegal workers (Grimson 2000:26), arguing that jobs were only for Argentines or for foreigners who were legal. The *Unión Obrera de la Construcción (UOCRA)* (Construction Workers' Union) also launched a xenophobic discourse against migrants, claiming that the lack of job opportunities, labour accidents, and low wages were not the responsibility of the government, businesses, the union or the market economy, but instead

> [t]he fault belongs to the *bolitas*, the *paraguas*[33], who are robbing the jobs of Argentines. That is why the Union is demanding to the government more control of the immigration and an increase in the repression of illegal immigrants (Grimson 2000:27, my translation).

The government responded with a Law Project that restricted the entrance of Bolivians and other migrants from neighbouring countries, gave monetary incentives to Argentines who denounced illegal migrants, sanctioned enterprises hiring 'illegal' migrant workers, and allowed deportations. The law was not approved in the Congress

[32] Bolivian migrants were seen as the carriers of chagas [incurable heart disease caused by an insect bite], meningitis, and cholera, 'a disease unknown to our country'. Expressed by ex-minister, Amilcar Arguelles in 1994 (quoted in Oteiza et.al.1997:19).

[33] '*Bolita*' is a derogatory term by which Bolivian migrants are referred to in Argentina. In the same way, '*paraguas*' is used to refer to Paraguayans, '*brasucas*' to Brazilians, '*peruchos*' to Peruvians, '*chilitos*' to Chileans. I will elaborate more on this in the following chapters.

due to criticism from the Catholic Church, opposition parties, and the governments of other countries (FIE 2000, Grimson 2000). While this blame for job scarcity was promoted by the unions and the government, and reinforced by news accounts, the *Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos* (INDEC) [National Institute of Statistics and Census] of Argentina published a report that showed the inconsistency of this 'blaming discourse'. According to this report, in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, in 1998, there were 5,546 more foreigners than in 1994, a period in which the unemployment rate grew from 6.7 percent to 13.6 percent. Thus, statistics indicated that unemployment is not caused by immigration. At the same time, Argentine academics argued that migration is strongly influenced by the economy of the country, and that in recessive periods there is clearly a decrease in migratory flows (Grimson 2000). According to Grimson, it is not that migrants were 'guilty' of unemployment and the general crisis that began in the late 1990s in Argentina; rather the need to find or create a scapegoat for the crisis, helps explains the emergence of these xenophobic discourses. One might add that this may also influence the exaggeration of the numbers mentioned above: 400,000 migrants cannot be blamed for unemployment, but two million can more readily be seen as being at the root of the problem.

By the end of 1999, economic growth in Argentina reversed. From 1999 to 2000, the GDP fell by four percent and investment by ten percent (Melamed 2002). The Argentine peso had appreciated considerably, making its exports more expensive and therefore helping produce a boom in imports. In the first quarter of 2001, the household poverty rate in Buenos Aires hit nearly 21 percent, compared to 13 percent in 1993 (Pastor and Wise 2001). This economic crisis was accompanied by a political crisis that exploded in December 2001 when the government froze bank deposits, or *corralito,* by Decree 1570/01, in response to large bank withdrawals on November 30th. Popular protests and violence led to the death of several people and to the resignation of President Fernando De la Rúa on December 24, 2001. In the next twelve days, four presidents held office one after the other. The Legislative Assembly resolved to install Eduardo Duhalde as President of Argentina; Duhalde confirmed the freezing of bank deposits in a financial *corralito,* devaluated the peso, and converted dollar bank deposits

and contracts into pesos *(pesofication)* (Melamed 2002:78, Schuler 2002). Thousands of people around the country protested, many protestors demanding new presidential elections and to have their 'money back'. Indeed, with the devaluation of the peso and the *pesofication* of their bank deposits, Argentines and non-Argentines watched their savings disappear. As of September 2003, the dollar exchange ratio was 2.9 pesos per US dollar.

No systematic studies have being carried out on the impact of this recent economic and political 'crisis' upon the migration processes of Bolivians to Argentina, nor of the status of Bolivians in Argentina. Newspaper accounts of both countries suggest that there is a 'massive' number of Bolivians returning from Argentina, although the 'numbers' they present are unclear[34]. According to an interview done in early January of 2002, Oscar Jordán, the director of National Office of Migration in Bolivia, every day 800 Bolivians return to the country from Argentina (La Prensa, January 9, 2002). Another article from the same newspaper, states that the remittances have been reduced by 70 percent, and that the travel companies have seen an increase in the sales of returning tickets by almost 80 percent, while the sale of tickets to Argentina has decreased by 70 percent (La Prensa, January 2, 2002). In an analysis of the emigration of Argentines in the last few years –accentuated by the economic crisis of 2001 – Diego Melamed (2002) argues that many Latin American migrants were returning to their home countries. He argues that 15,000 Bolivians, 9,000 Paraguayans, and more than 4,000 Peruvians have returned to their countries in the first months of 2002; and according to official reports of the DNM, the *radicaciones* have decreased by 70 percent (2002:198).

Despite these data that suggest a huge return of Bolivians from Argentina, we should be careful not to jump to premature assumptions. Although the economic situation undoubtedly has had an effect on migration, the kind of migration of Bolivians to Argentina as described in other studies, has always been one of constant comings and

[34] In Appendix 4, I present some newspaper articles I collected regarding the 'number' of Bolivians returning from Argentina.

goings, not only understood in the classical terms of temporary or seasonal migration, but also as what has been considered 'permanent' migration. In fact, Bolivian migrants considered 'permanent' immigrants still keep a 'permanent' link with their home communities in Bolivia. In an earlier study conducted in the mid-1980s, Dandler and Medeiros, became preoccupied with how to distinguish methodologically between 'temporary' and 'permanent' migrants because of the constant back and forth movements that characterized the lives of the Bolivian migrants (1988, see also Glick Schiller, et al., 1994:7). So, how do we know that these 'returning' migrants are no longer 'potential migrants'? If, as the literature suggests, Bolivians have built a transnational circuit and have a *community* of Bolivians in Argentina (see Sassone 2002, Cortés 2002, Giorgis 1999, Grison 1999), how do Bolivians that have returned due to the economic struggles in Argentina experience, define, and respond to their life circumstances within the contradictions of a globalized society?

Chapter Five: Narrations of Place and OtherS

> ... *'[H]ere'* [in Bolivia], *you see things that you don't see ' there' or anywhere else. You see children working, and working in terrible conditions, children without shoes. In my neighbourhood you see naked children peeing in the street, and even if you don't want to look you see it and you think to yourself 'there's another way of living'. Before I travelled I didn't notice those things, that's why sometimes it's not good to learn other things; if you don't know the difference and that there are better places, if you don't know, then you don't suffer – Adela, twenty-seven years old.*

References to 'here' and 'there' abound in the interviews I had with Bolivian men and women who had travelled and worked in Argentina. Concepts and experiences of place, community, and identity were themes integral to the interviews themselves; these are also the themes I wish to develop in this chapter. Through the narratives of social actors involved in transmigration to and from Argentina, I want to try to make sense and understand the way people experience, define, and respond to the conditions of their everyday lives while engaging with the many contradictions of modern life.

In this chapter, I will argue that the complex processes of identity building for a transmigrant emerge from a series of encounters with multiple others who are 'located' in different points of the transmigrant circuit: Bolivians 'home', Bolivians that migrated to Argentina in the 1960s, 70s and 80s that are *bien ubicados* or well established, Argentine *porteños* (from Buenos Aires city) and Argentines of the provinces, Koreans, and other Latin American migrants. In this sense, it is not a single 'identity' that is (re) created, but rather multiple ones that operate at different points of the transnational circuit.

Using a transnational framework, I examine some of the concrete practices through which cross-border links are developed and maintained by Bolivian transmigrants. I also explore how in the migration process, migrants (re)create multiple identities that challenge the hegemonic constructions that define them as marginal Others, in both Bolivia and Argentina.

a) Transnational Identities and Place-Making

As described in previous chapters, the migration of Bolivians towards Argentina is not a new phenomenon. Although the total number of Bolivians in Argentina cannot be known for certain, there is enough evidence to confirm the existence of important networks and strategies not only to cross the border, but to support the newcomers to Argentina, by offering lodging and contacts to find work in the new country.

Home: why leave and how?

People's motivations to leave Cochabamba vary according to particular economic situations, family strategies, individual aspirations, ages, and gender. Economic reasons are usually given as primary motivation to cross the border by both, men and women. Most of the Bolivian men and women that were twenty-five years or older the first time they migrated, stated that they wanted to migrate in order to buy land to build a house, or buy a house, or pay for debts associated with construction or purchase of houses.

Among younger Bolivian migrants, those between thirteen and nineteen years old, reasons differ. The main motivation among them is first to "go to another 'culture' that is 'more advanced than ours", as Rodrigo stated, but also to save money in order to study for a professional career. Indeed, among young migrants there is the belief that through education they will achieve a higher social and class status so they can *ser alguien en la vida* (become someone), once they come back to Bolivia. Therefore, in the very idea of migration lies the aspiration of returning 'home'. Among young Bolivian transmigrants, the decision to go to Argentina is usually a family decision, not only because they are under age, but also because they are expected to send more remittances home since they do not have a family of their own to support. As Marcia told me,

> *It was a family decision, they didn't tell me that I was going to go. They made all the papers because I was under age, they also bought the ticket, and one week before the time came to leave they told me that I had to*

go...at the beginning I was mad and very sad, but my parents told me that if I went I could later come back and study, so I travelled... a job as a housemaid was waiting for me. My aunt Herminia got it for me.

All the transmigrants I interviewed had someone they knew in Argentina, be it a direct family member, in-laws, or *compadres y comadres*[35] (godfathers and godmothers). It is mostly these people who encouraged their kin to go to Argentina. As Valeria puts it,

The brothers of my father in-law came and told us to go. We asked them 'how is it there?' and they told us that 'there', there's always meat, fruit to eat...and they also told us that Buenos Aires was so clean that you don't step in mud like we do here, and I thought that maybe all the streets were covered with tiles, so we went.

Narratives replete with stories of success feed the imaginaries and hopes of migrants. In that sense, what is imaginary becomes a dimension of 'reality'. As García Canclini (1999) argues, not only economic remittances link people from two different places; but also through the narratives that cross national borders, cultural horizons expand, making borders more fluid, and diminishing the distance between them.

Valeria's statement also calls attention to the use of metaphors in the narratives of the people I interviewed. The richness of metaphors is that they allow us to capture the tension between "how we live and how we *could* live" (García Canclini 1999:58, my emphasis and translation). Metaphors play with what is both different and similar, and they help to build meaning not as something isolated on itself, but meaning for people who use them.

Once the decision to migrate is taken, social networks in Argentina and Bolivia are activated through these *conocidos* (acquaintances). In Bolivia, women who have children usually rely on their mothers, sisters or *comadres* to take care of their

[35] *Compadrazgo* relations are negotiated dyadic relations between the parents of a child and another couple who serve as godparents to the child at birth, baptism, marriage, and other occasions. In that sense, *compadres* and *comadres* are ritual co-parents. The ties established by *compadrazgo* relations are lifelong and can even be inherited. *Compadrazgo* is also based on a series of exchanges (material and symbolic) that serve to maintain and reinforce the relationship (Crandon-Malamud 1991, Albó 1994).

offspring while they migrate. The mothers usually send remittances every two or three months to cover the expenses of food, clothing and school supplies, and once they are settled in Argentina or decide to stay for a longer period, they return to take their children with them. The decision of who the children stay with belongs entirely to the mother, and is not questioned by the father.

At another level, it is the *conocidos* who give information on how to travel, how to talk with immigrant officials at the border, and who to contact at the border if the migrants are travelling by bus. The migrants I interviewed who travelled by airplane did not have any problems upon arriving to Buenos Aires. However, the ones who travelled by bus were susceptible to becoming victims of the 'mafia' that is present both sides of the border, and so they had to be very careful so as not to be robbed or tricked. Bolivian citizens do not need a visa to enter Argentina, but they must demonstrate that they have at least US$100 for each day that they declare they are going to remain in that country[36]. By paying US$150, Bolivians can 'rent' or borrow temporarily around US$ 1,500 to show at the border station. This is when the network of *conocidos* becomes useful. As *conocidos* have crossed the border several times, they know who to borrow the money from, or even better, they know how to cross the border without presenting any papers at all.

All of the migrants I interviewed had some sort of problem with the Argentine immigration officers: two of my interviewees were forced to hand over jewellery in exchange for letting them cross the border without having to show the required amount of money, others were insulted and forced to clean the toilets of the Argentine immigration office in order to be given entry, and others were robbed of part of the money they claimed to posses. The only person I interviewed who did not have problems crossing the border while travelling by bus was don Pedro:

> *They didn't think I was Bolivian, they never asked for documents, not even the police. I put a pack of cigarettes in my shirt pocket and I passed the border without any problem.*

[36] This is what Susana Novick (1992) calls the contradictory immigration policy of Argentina, since it permits the entry of migrants, but does not allow their stay. As in the case in immigration to the US, the entry of foreign population is highly selective and restrictive.

The apparent ease with which don Pedro passed the border might have to do with the fact that he is a tall man with fair skin --phenotypic characteristics that do not fit with the prototype that the host society has constructed of what Bolivians should 'look' like, that is, *enanos, redondos y morochos* (small, round and black). As Alejandro Grimson argues, the "radical ignorance of the Other creates a homogenization operation whereby [Argentines] cannot perceive the diversities in skin colour, ethnic, regional, and class identity that exists among the immigrants and inhabitants of Bolivia" (1999:51).

At the same time, don Pedro mocks and plays with the codes of the host society, thereby challenging these homogenizing constructions. It is very rare for Bolivians to smoke cigarettes. Argentines know that, and don Pedro himself is aware of this perception; so by putting a pack of cigarettes in his shirt pocket he not only shows his mastery of Argentine codes of identification, but he also manipulates the hegemonic constructions the host society has of Bolivians. As will be discussed later, from the border-crossing and into Buenos Aires, Bolivians contest racial configurations that conceptualize them as *enanos, redondos y morochos,* but also as ignorant, poor, and criminal.

Argentine society has built a stereotype of Bolivian migrants, one that labels them as *bolitas*, which could translate to English as 'small people'. When I asked my informants why they were called *bolitas* most of them answered: "because they say we are small, round, and black". As we will see, the meaning and use of the *bolita* metaphor changes depending on the context in which is used and who is using it.

Gran Buenos Aires!!!

If all forms of identities (collective or individual) involve a process of invoking sameness with and difference from others, the urban space is a privileged entry point where we can study the interaction between individuals and groups, and how in that process an "I-Other", or an "Us-Them", is created, negotiated, and contested (see

Barth 1969, McAll 1992). It is in the urban setting of Buenos Aires[37] that Bolivian migrants create a space of living or a space where, as individuals, they re-create and re-organize social and material practices oriented to both societies.

Upon arriving to Buenos Aires for the first time, the Bolivians I interviewed went directly to houses that their kin or *compadres* had in *villas*[38] (shantytowns) and in 'Bolivian' neighbourhoods, described as such due to the high numbers of Bolivians living in them (e.g., Sassone 2002). At this point it is worth remembering that the people I interviewed had travelled back and forth between Bolivia and Buenos Aires several times in the past ten years or so. Therefore, the importance of these contacts is fundamental. Once migrants know the route to Buenos Aires, the following trips are 'easy' as Enrique said, not only because they already know where to find cheap places to rent or share (usually rooms in a house owned by Bolivians), but also because they know who is in Buenos Aires and who can lodge them in case they do not have family there.

While the search for a job through *conocidos* who are in Argentina is the strategy used by the men I spoke with, women had made the contact when they were still in Bolivia, and had a job waiting for them in Argentina. This was the case for first time migrants. For example, upon arriving in Buenos Aires, Adela worked in a leather shop whose owners were her best friends' brothers in Cochabamba. Flora also worked in a small grocery store owned by her neighbours in Bolivia. Zulma and Marcia worked as housemaids in households that their kin had contacted for them. In following trips, as

[37] The Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires (MABA) is the principal urban center of Argentina. It is ten times bigger than Cordoba and Rosario, the two other urban centers that follow MABA in economic, political, and social importance. Alejandro Bunge, in his book "The New Argentina" (1940), named it *Gran Buenos Aires* (Great Buenos Aires). Since then, the MABA has been referred to as *Gran Buenos Aires* in innumerable books and people's accounts. The MABA comprises the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (Federal Capital) as its nuclear area, and twenty-five sections *(partidos)* that belong to the province of Buenos Aires (see Sassone 2002:95-6).

[38] The *villas miseria* or shantytowns were formed around the city of Buenos Aires from the 1930s. Most of the houses are small, built with carton or adobe (clay brick) and lack sewage systems, water, electricity. Today, some of the *'villas'* have become *'barrios'* or neighbourhoods, that is, the occupants are legal owners of the properties and have brick houses and services, such as drainage and electricity (Benencia y Karasik 1995, Sassone 2002).

these women developed contacts of their own, they did not depend as much on their kin. As Julia says,

> *...there is always work for women, I can go whenever I want and through the people I met in my previous trips I can easy find a job.*

Migrants see Buenos Aires as the place where jobs can be found; and they can be found without too much effort -at least that was the case until 2001. Despite the level of education of Bolivian migrants, the job market that Bolivians have access to is well described by Alicia:

> *...Men mostly work as masons in constructions or as tailors in small shops owned by Bolivians and Koreans. Women who don't know how to sew cannot work with the Koreans or the Bolivians who own clothing or leather shops, so we end up working as housemaids for other Bolivians. For the Argentines, women do the cleaning* [of the house] *since Argentines don't eat the same things we do, so we don't cook...Bolivian women who migrated in the 1970s or so, have fruit and vegetable stands in the market; some Bolivians work there too.*

In addition to the jobs Alicia mentions, four women I interviewed worked as caretakers for elder women in private houses. Rita and Adela told me about their schedules and kind of work with the women who employed them. Rita worked two months in a row, without any days off. After two months, she had two weeks free that she usually spent in Bolivia with her daughter. She worked like this for three years, earning US$900 a month. Adela, in one of her trips to Buenos Aires, also worked taking care of an older woman. She worked all week long, and had Sunday afternoons free. As Adela did not have 'papers' she earned around US$600.

The Bolivian women I interviewed were mainly employed within the domestic and cleaning sectors, whether they had legal working permits or not. Although further studies need to be done to determine this, it appears to be the case that the aging of the Argentine population[39], together with changes in women's employments outside the

[39] The Argentine census of 2001 shows an increase in the population of 65 years and older. While in 1895, the population of 65 years-old and above represented 2.5 percent of the population, in 2001, they represent 9,9 percent of the Argentine population. According to the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* of Argentina, this increase has to be seen in relation with the decrease in fertility, diminishing of mortality

home, might be the explanation for the particular kind of insertion of Bolivian women within the domestic sector in Buenos Aires. This might also explain Julia's comment on the fact that there is "always work for women".

In Table 3, I present a summary of the kinds of jobs that Bolivian women and men I interviewed had access to. I also present the average monthly pay that these migrants received. The information in the table, is built upon the information I gathered through the interviews I made.

Table 3: Types of Jobs and Average Monthly Pay, by gender

Type of Job	Women's Average monthly pay: 'legal' workers (in Argentina)	Women's Average monthly pay: *en negro* or illegal workers (in Argentina)	Men's Average monthly pay: 'legal' workers (in Argentina)	Men's Average monthly pay: *en negro* or illegal workers (in Argentina)	Average monthly wage in Bolivia
Housemaid	US$ 700	US$ 500			US$ 70
Cleaning	US$ 500	US$ 400			US$ 70
Caregiver for an elderly women	US$ 900	US$600			US$ 100
Sewing in workshops	US$ 400	US$ 200	US$ 400	US$ 200	US$ 70-150
Selling fruit & vegetable in market or grocery stores (as employee, not owner)	US$300	US$ 300			US$ 70
Cook-helper			US$ 600	US$300	US$ 80
Tailor			US$ 500	US$ 200	US$ 80-100
Mason apprentice			US$ 300-400	US$ 250	US$60-80
Qualified stonemason			US$ 800-900	US$ 800	US$80-150

As Table 3 shows, the pay a migrant receives depends on the kind of work that migrants are engaged in, and on whether he or she has 'papers' or not. Gabriela, a school teacher in Bolivia, worked as a housemaid *en negro* (without papers), earning

---

rates, and decrease in migration movements. Therefore, the ageing of the population has to be considered as a major issue in social policies (http://www.indec.mecon.gov.ar).

around $500 Argentine pesos a month, which was equivalent to US$500 until December of 2001. Compared to the US$80 that she was earning as a public school teacher in Bolivia, this salary was pretty high. Rodrigo, who was also working *en negro,* earned $300 a month, working as a helper in a restaurant. He told me that if he had 'papers', he would be earning double that amount. A 'legal' housemaid earned between $600 and $700 Argentine pesos, while the mason's salary depended on the category of mason. Severino, who was still a mason's apprentice, earned $400 pesos, while don Pedro, a qualified stonemason, earned around $700-800 pesos a month.

The salaries that Bolivian men and women received in Argentina were high when compared to what they would have earned in Bolivia doing the same kind of work. The pay that is usually given to masons, cook-helpers, and housemaids in Bolivia, is usually the minimum wage, which in 2000 was almost US$70[40]. Argentina was also attractive to the people I interviewed because, up to December of 2001, at least, the Argentine peso was pegged to the US dollar. Even though living expenses were high in Argentina, Bolivians managed to save and send money to Bolivia.

The 'ill' economy

November of 2001 marked a turning point in the history of Argentina and in the lives of Bolivian migrants. Economic measures such as the *corralito* or the freezing of bank deposits, the devaluation of the peso, the increased tax rates, and the forced conversion of dollar bank deposits and contracts into pesos or *pesofication*[41], had dramatic consequences in the lives of millions of Argentines and non-Argentines. Severino's words echo other opinions that I heard:

---

[40] According to statistics from the International Labour Organization (ILO), in 2001 the minimum wage in Bolivia was around US$70, but the *canasta básica* (basic consumption goods per month, eg. vegetables, milk, eggs, etc.) was worth US$124. Bolivians below the poverty line are 70 percent of the population (http://www.oit.org.pe).

[41] As described in Chapter Four, the *corralito* was an economic measure that froze bank deposits, thereby not allowing people to move their money from their bank accounts. The *pesoification,* was measure by which all the bank deposits that were done in US dollars, were converted into peso bank deposits. The devaluation of the dollar changed the equivalency from one US dollar- one Argentine peso, to a fluctuating value. In September of 2003, one US dollar was 2.9 Argentine pesos.

The economic situation was completely depressed and I noticed that it was never going to recover, so I came back.

Severino described the Argentine economic situation using the metaphor of an 'ill' person to make sure I understood the drama that both Bolivians and Argentines were enduring owing to the worst economic and political crisis that Argentina has experienced in its history (Oxhorn 2002). Severino and other interviewees explained the Argentine economic and political crisis in complex terms. They were well aware of the policies and measures implemented by the Argentine government, and the restrictions and conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). But most of all, they *lived* the horrific impact of the *corralito,* the *pesofication,* and the devaluation of the peso in their salaries and savings.

Up until December of 2001, when Bolivian migrants received their salaries, they would immediately change them to US dollars in order to save or send the money to Bolivia. But when the devaluation of the Argentine peso was implemented, Bolivians saw their money literally disappear. For example, Rodrigo's salary of $300 pesos was reduced to almost US$100, and the same thing happened with the salaries of all the migrants I interviewed. Adela and her husband could not take their savings out of the bank, and were afraid of losing years of savings due to the *pesofication.* In addition, the prices of consumer goods fluctuated hourly, making it impossible to plan, in the words of Gabriela, even "what we would eat and buy the next day".

In response to this critical situation, most of the Bolivian transmigrants I interviewed decided to 'return' 'home' to Bolivia. Being in Buenos Aires made sense for them while they could earn enough money to save and send to Bolivia. However, once this situation changed due to the economic debacle, the meaning of 'Buenos Aires' changed and the most negative aspects of their lives in the city became apparent and intolerable. Discrimination, strenuous work schedules, insecurity, and the uncertainty associated with an undocumented legal status, became unbearable to the point that, as Rodrigo described, "there was no life there...life was terrible".

Bolitas and 'the golden tooth'

The lives of Bolivian migrants in Buenos Aires were spent between the workplace and 'home', a home that was temporary and shared with family members or with *compadres* who arrived in Buenos Aires before they did. Rather than a home in the deeper sense, we can say that their place of residence in Argentina was the site where they slept, ate, and washed their clothes.

In their accounts of their lives in Argentina, Bolivian migrants said that their existence was focused on work and when they had some time free, they spent it *encerrados* (locked in) in their new homes. José explained this in the following way,

> *...I love the tranquility that we live in* [here, Cochabamba]. *There* [Buenos Aires], *you go from your house to work and then back to your house again. And in your house you have to be encerrado (locked in). If you go walking around, they* [the police] *can take you as a suspect* [for a crime]. *It is like that. You can't walk in peace. If you walk around the same place three times, the people that have stores around, get scared; 'it must be a choro' they think, and they call the police and they take us* [to the police station]*...that is how it is. That is how it is.*

José and other Bolivian men embody the vulnerability and contradictions of a discourse that criminalized immigrants to Argentina from neighbouring countries. Indeed, one day when José and Enrique were walking down the street where their workplace was located, they were apprehended by the police as *sospechosos* (suspects). They were released one day later when the police could not prove any of the suspicions they had against them. Both men had legal documentation permitting their work in Argentina, and did not understand why they were incarcerated[42].

[42] Bolivian newspapers reported similar accounts. In one article a Bolivian man interviewed said *"they take us because of the face we have" [nos llevan por portación de cara]* (Los Tiempos, October 30, 1999). In another article in an Argentine newspaper, a reporter asked a police officer about the criteria they use to stop or request papers of people; the response of the police officer was, "because of their physiognomy" (La Nación, January 21, 1999).

During the first months of 1999, Hugo Franco, director of the Argentine Migration Office, stated that sixty percent of minor crimes were perpetrated by immigrants from the countries neighbouring Argentina (Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, and Peru). This information appeared in all major newspapers in the city of Buenos Aires. As a response to this *extranjerización* (foreign identification) of delinquency, a systematic campaign to detain immigrants was carried out in Buenos Aires. According to Roberto Garvarino, spokesman of the Argentine Federal Police, the police does not keep statistics regarding the nationality of proven criminals, or the type of crime committed; but from a preliminary analysis, the Federal Police concluded that only around five to seven percent of minor charges were the responsibility of foreigners (Grimson 2000).

While being identified as criminals by the discourses of government leaders, Bolivian migrants in Buenos Aires are also victims of assault and robbery[43]. The contradictions of the discriminatory discourse constructed by government leaders, and presented in the media, had been internalized by the Bolivian migrants I interviewed. On a daily basis, all of the migrants had been asked for a coin or a cigarette by *choros*[44], so they had learned they had to carry with them spare change and a package of cigarettes in order not to be bothered further. As Zulma explained,

> *The worst are the 'chorros', ' choros', or whatever that they call them. They drink and take drugs; they are always in street-corners waiting for you and if you don't give them the money they want or a cigarette, they can kill you.. they sometimes had guns or big knives. I had to have my brother walk with me to the bus-stop, he also picked me up every day.*

It is not only women who are particularly vulnerable to the *choros*, Severino was robbed six times in three years that he lived in Buenos Aires.

> *They knew that I was Bolivian...once I didn't have a coin with me and one choro said, kind of joking, 'bring the pliers', because he wanted my golden tooth.*

---

[43] In Appendix 5, newspaper articles that describe discriminating and xenophobic practices are presented.

[44] Argentine slang word usually used to describe people with no jobs, who are asking for money in the streets, but *choro* can also refer to members of a gang or common robbers.

Of the twenty-three interviews I conducted, only don Pedro had not been a victim of a major robbery or assault carried out by *choros* or another common robber. It may not be a coincidence that, as mentioned earlier, compared to the people I interviewed, don Pedro is the tallest and has fair skin. As Gabriela said, "they knew I was Bolivian, they always know"; and the way they know is by phenotypic characteristics that recognize Bolivians as *bolitas, --'round, small, and black'.*

What for me was clearly an issue of racial discrimination, was not for the Bolivian men I interviewed. When I asked them if they ever felt discriminated against by Argentines, they commonly responded no. I was puzzled. Had they not just a moment before told me that because they were Bolivian they were being robbed? Maybe I was not asking the right question. Or maybe they were not saying what I wanted to hear. Or perhaps there was simply no straightforward answer. Complicating matters further was the fact that the Bolivian women I interviewed all felt victims of racial discrimination. Why did Bolivian women feel racially discriminated in Buenos Aires and the men did not? The narratives of the experience of Bolivian migrants in their workplaces in Buenos Aires will help us understand the difference in perceptions between women and men.

Tall, white buildings and small, black, round people

> *Buenos Aires? In Buenos Aires everything is big. There are almost no small buildings. Everything was huge, immense. People were also immense, tall and white, very white, like their buildings...Mónica.*

The workplace is a key space in the construction of identities since it represents a space of encounter and relationship among workers of different nationalities and/or Argentine provinces. All of the men I interviewed had worked at some point as masons in cosnstruction-sites where most of their co-workers were Argentines, Paraguayans, and Peruvians. The Bolivian men I interviewed made a distinction among Argentines, between *porteños,* or people from Buenos Aires city, and Argentines *del interior* (from the outer provinces). As Diego said:

> *Porteños are kind people, they know how to speak to you, they teach you things and the bosses keep their word. Argentine bosses always search for Bolivian workers because their money is worth the work we do... what I've seen is that we go to work at six in the morning and the Argentines arrive at eight, and they 'matean'* [drink a type of herb tea], *so they begin to work at nine or nine thirty; and then again they are taking 'mate' at eleven...As the shift ends at six, ten minutes before that time, they are ready to leave. Bolivians don't leave, we stay until we're finished with the job...*

Gervacio adds,

> *I liked the job, and the Argentine bosses liked me, but other fellow workers told me 'you are doing too much'; so the boss, seeing that I worked* [hard] *he liked me. But others called me names...they called me bolita, forro...I liked my job, they never discriminated me, only some that are from Jujuy, they are a little bothersome.*

The *porteños* are seen not only as being well educated, kind, respectful, and sociable; most of all they are viewed as the middle or high class Argentine that is the preferred *patrón* (boss), or at least, potentially. The Argentine from *del interior* are depicted as lazy and relaxed individuals who drink *mate* and leave when the shift is over and not when the work is done. This image reinforces the self-definition of Bolivians as hard working people and as the ones that are preferred by Argentine bosses. But at the same time, because of these same characteristics, Bolivian men are criticized as doing *too much,* and they are insulted as *bolitas.*

The relationship between Bolivians and Argentines *del interior* is more complex than it appears; and within the migrants' narratives I heard much to suggest that broader identity struggles are taking place. In the migrants' narratives, Argentines *del interior* question why Bolivians are in Argentina. As Enrique recounts,

> *...they* [Argentine del interior] *think that Bolivians go there to take away jobs that belong to them, because we work hard, and we work for whatever amount of money that is offered to us. They insult us, they always told me 'you Bolivians, why do you come and take our jobs?'*

Argentines *del interior* are also migrants to Buenos Aires. Historically they were labelled as *cabecitas negras* by the *porteño* society when the Depression of 1929 incited a rural to urban migration. Nowadays, the label of *cabecitas negras* is used by

the Argentine *porteño* society (and Bolivian newspapers[45] alike) to group migrants from different nationalities, mostly Bolivians. It must be recognized however, that although this homogenizing discourse groups all migrants as *cabecitas negras*, there are important contestations from among Bolivian migrants themselves. An exploration of how Bolivian men narrate their relationship with co-workers from other nationalities, will help us understand how these men negotiate, contest, and shift their identities.

Among Bolivian migrants, there is a common perception that Paraguayan co-workers are "mean and always wanting to show themselves to be better than Bolivians", as don Pedro recounts. Gervacio adds:

> *Paraguayans think they are better than us; when a bunch of them gathers they are kind of abusive, but when they are alone or it's only two or three* [of them], *we share the situation.*

Gervacio does not understand why Paraguayans "think they are better than us", since most of the time Paraguayans live in the same *villas* than Bolivians, and work in the same jobs than Bolivian do. He concluded that it might be something of their *forma de ser* [how they are].

Regarding Peruvians, the opinion of Bolivians are similar to Enrique's:

> *...some Peruvians say that they are Bolivians* [in order to get jobs], *but they are different...we are hard working, we are not of those who steal, we are trustworthy people and we work hard to earn our money.*

Here, Bolivians define themselves as hard workers and trustworthy people, and they want to make that clear by differentiating themselves from Peruvians and Paraguayans. In narrations collected by Alejandro Grimson (1999, 1997), Bolivians complained about Peruvians because they claimed that Peruvians obtained residence

[45] In Appendix 5, I present a set of newspaper articles that use the label of *cabecitas negras* to refer to Bolivian migrants in Argentina.

status by "making the Argentine authorities believe" that they are Bolivian[46]. In the perspective of Bolivian transmigrants, Peruvians do not work as much as they do, so by *pretending* to be Bolivian in the workplace, Peruvians threaten the image of hard-working people that Bolivians have constructed. In addition, Bolivians want to differentiate themselves from Peruvians because these are seen as "those who steal", not only jobs and money, but also Bolivian identity itself.

While the workplace is a space for negotiating and contesting identities among different nationalities, there appears to be a hegemonic discourse that does not recognize differences between Bolivians, Paraguayans, Peruvians, and Argentines *del interior.* For example, while conducting fieldwork in 'Korean' neighborhoods in Buenos Aires, Corina Courtis (2000) found that both Koreans and non-Koreans, referred or talked about 'Bolivians' as those who were born in Bolivia, but also to refer to Paraguayans, Peruvians, and Argentine migrants from northern provinces. Thus, the category of 'Bolivians' was used as a general category that comprised people from other nationalities besides Bolivians. Maria Carolina Feito, in a study of horticulture workers in Buenos Aires, found that the classifications of Bolivians made by local workers were extended to other workers who come from places near Bolivia: workers were classified as 'Bolivians' even though they were born in Argentina (in Grimson 1999:52 n.3).

In Alejandro Grimson's perspective (1999), there is a hegemonic construction in Argentine society that homogenizes migrants from Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, and Argentines *del interior,* based on phenotypic characteristics. If this is so, the Bolivian narratives that I have gathered show an active discourse which constantly defies the homogenizing construction made by members of Argentine society. Indeed, Bolivian migrants do not want to be recognized by the host society as *cabecitas negras, bolitias,* or marginals. Rather, Bolivians differentiate themselves from 'other' marginals by emphasizing attitudes and behaviours which they believe are distinct from others: in

[46] The 'amnesties' that legalized the status of illegal immigrants in Argentina were directed towards immigrants from 'neighbouring' countries, therefore Peruvians fell out of this category and did not have an opportunity to legalize their status.

that sense, Bolivians identify themselves as hard working and trustworthy people, different than Paraguayans, Peruvians, and Argentines *del interior.*

The metaphor *bolita* is not only used by Argentines to stigmatize and label Bolivians because they work *too much*, as Severino explains,

> *I had a boss that was Argentine, he treated me better than another one who was Bolivian... I don't know, well...he* [Argentine boss] *always called me 'bolita', 'bolita', but he didn't do it to insult me, it was like a friend. And once we got to know each other and he treated me well, he called me by my name and we almost ate the same things. What he ate, I ate, there were no differences in what we ate...*

While Severino was called *bolita* by his boss and perceived it as coming from a 'friend', Gervacio felt insulted by his co-workers who were Argentines *del interior.* The distinction between these two ways of understanding the term *bolita*, indicates that *bolita* can mean different things and have different connotations, depending on how, where, and by whom it is used. However, Severino's statement also describes a change in the attitude of his boss, that is, once the boss got to know him, he called him by his name and stopped calling Severino *bolita.*

Flavours of home

Food takes on a particular meaning in the case just described. While food is culturally constructed, food is also consumed by individuals, thus eating often implies an individual choice about connection with a group (Buckser 1999, Caplan 1997). One of the questions I posed to Bolivian transmigrants was if they missed something in Argentina; curiously, most of the men said they missed 'the meat'. As José and Enrique recall, at the construction site,

> *There was always a small grill and we ate meat. I miss that meat, we* [Bolivians] *will never have that meat.*

The fact that "there was always a small grill" suggests that this was a shared activity among workers, a space for encountering each other and for the formulation of shared identity through sociality. Eating *almost the same things*, as Severino

explained, was the first step to diminishing the distance between him and his boss. His comment that later, "what he ate, I ate", shows a process of negotiation, of recognition of difference and of sameness. Food is fundamental here, because it is used as a symbol that can break the differences between classes and nationalities at the time that can also express group membership and relationship.

Indeed, in the experience of the Bolivian women migrants I interviewed, group membership was also expressed through food. While most Bolivian men worked in construction at some point of their lives in Buenos Aires, most Bolivian women worked as housemaids for Argentine families. Alicia explained,

> *They don't eat as we do. They eat a beef, or a sandwich with a leaf of lettuce, and that's it!! At night, they drink tea...those people don't eat...my boss only ate salads and on weekends he ate meat. They don't make desserts. They like the pasta only with cheese, but for me, I prepared it like we do here, with aji and vegetables* [chili], *so I had to eat when they didn't see me.*

Gabriela also told me,

> *The lady of the house, the wife* [of the boss] *ate a cookie for lunch. They don't eat a thing!!! At night, to join her husband, she ate a salad. She did a lot of exercise and a masseuse even came weekly to give her massage. She told us 'don't be fat'... There, I was fat, because Argentine women are thin as sticks, as brooms...at the beginning I thought she was too thin, but as time went by, I too wanted to lose weight.*

Alicia's and Gabriela's statements echo other opinions I heard from Bolivian women who had returned recently from Argentina. Alicia, Marcia, Valeria, Julieta, Rita, and Adela told me that they had to cook for themselves when no one was home. Argentine *patrones*, they explained, do not like the smell of onions or *aji*. What seemed to bother the *patrones,* was not only the smell of the food, but also the 'amount' of food they ate. As Gabriela expressed, her boss was always telling her to watch her weight "don't be fat", something that Gabriela never cared about before she travelled to Buenos Aires. As she explained to me, she never thought of fat or thin bodies until she went to Buenos Aires, or how her hair was done, or if she used lotion on her skin or not. There are issues of power involved in these statements. Food is not

'just food' and it is clear that its significance is not solely nutritional, it is intimately bound up with relations of power, of inclusion and otherness. By cooking their 'own food', the Bolivian women I interviewed, constructed meanings around the food they consumed, and identified themselves as social actors different from the Argentines they worked for. But they were also actors in the sense that they maintained food habits that they learned in Bolivia. In this sense, food can be seen as a symbol of ethnicity, involved in the creation of a stable and familiar environment in a place in which migrants do not feel fully comfortable, such as the house of the *patrones*.

What does it mean that men 'eat meat' in the host society, and women do not? Does it mean that they identify more with the hegemonic group than women? Is food, or what is decided to be eaten a symbol of power that reinforces unequal relations between genders? How does the experience of migration for both Bolivian men and women, produce and/or reproduce unequal gender relations? What is the role of food in this process?

Although further studies need to be carried out that take into account the particular relationship between the migration experience of Bolivian men and women in Argentina, and how this influences gender relations in both host and home societies, we can make some preliminary observations. The difference in what is eaten, can give us clues as to why the Bolivian women I interviewed felt racially discriminated, while the men did not.

Anthropological and sociological studies of gender and food (e.g., Caplan 1997, Kershen 2002) reveal that there are particular foods that are associated with one gender rather than the other. This is particularly notable in the case of the consumption of meat which is usually linked with masculinity. For Bolivian men, eating 'meat' was a shared and public activity, something that was done in the workplace. Thus eating 'meat' linked them to Argentines, and created a sense of integration and sameness, and arguably, of masculinity. As Bolivian men ate the same food that Argentine men ate, they understood their relationship as those between equals, therefore they did not feel

discriminated against by Argentines, or at least they felt that the sharing of meat was a significant gesture that overrode any discrimination they did sense.

For Bolivian women the situation was different. Eating for them was largely a private and hidden activity: not only they did not eat the same food that the Argentine bosses, they ate different quantities. In the case of Bolivian women, the contradictions of power relations are embodied; while they ate and cooked their own food --thus manifesting their difference with Argentines and agency- Bolivian women also were more vulnerable to power relations and racial discrimination: they were constructed as *bolitas,* as "round, black, and small" in the private, domestic space of the household. How else can we understand that Gabriela was constantly told by her boss that she should not be fat? Gabriela does not see herself as fat now that she is in Bolivia, but she did so in Argentina, especially when she compared herself to Argentine women.

For Bolivian women, food marks cultural identities in a distinction 'what we eat' versus 'what they eat'; but for men, eating was a statement of inclusion, of sameness: 'here we eat', linked Bolivian men with their *patrones*. To be sure, this topic needs to be further explored in order to understand how gender relations are affected by the migration experience in both Bolivia and Argentina.

Bolivians in Argentina: more 'other' than the 'other'

As mentioned above, the Bolivian men and women that I interviewed travelled back and forth between Cochabamba and Buenos Aires numerous times. This was emphasized by don Pedro and Rita, who were among the older migrants I interviewed; but even Roxana and Zulma, who were only thirteen and fifteen years old the first time they migrated, moved back and forth between these two cities. In that sense, their experience challenges conceptual categories utilized in migration literature which see migration as either seasonal, temporary, recurrent, continuous, or permanent. In actuality, these categories are fluid, changing, and overlapping, since the movement of Bolivians from one city to the other involves different forms of migration which

include temporary, permanent, and return migration, but which cannot be reduced to any one category.

All the transmigrants I interviewed also had family members, friends, or *compadres* who gave them shelter, advice, and connected them to job opportunities in Buenos Aires. These were Bolivians who migrated during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, I was told. Therefore, they were *bien ubicados* (well established) in Argentina. As Severino recalls,

> *Bolivians in Buenos Aires are very bad people. They try to exploit those who arrive after them because they are bien ubicados* [well established, in a good position]. *They have their sewing-shops, or grocery stores, or stands at the market...so the Bolivians that are there from before, twenty or more years, that have machines, or cars, or are patrones, they come to Bolivia to take workers and they tell us that they'll pay us a good salary. But once you're there* [Buenos Aires], *they exploit you, and they don't pay you what they said.*

Valeria's statement complements the perspective of others whom I interviewed:

> *...I started working for other Bolivians in a grocery store, but even though they are Bolivians, they treated us bad* [Valeria and her friend Julieta]. *They threatened us to denounce us to the migración* [migrant officials] *and tell them that we were 'illegal', so we had to work quietly and not complain... they also took our passports, so we could not leave without them knowing...*

In the narratives of the people I interviewed, there appeared to be a contradiction regarding the opinions and feelings they had towards Bolivians who migrated to Argentina in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, as opposed to the present generation of migrants. While this older generation of Bolivian migrants helped the migrants I interviewed in different ways, by offering a place to stay in Buenos Aires, by getting them jobs or offering to hire them, and even convincing them to travel to Argentina; they also exploited the 'new' migrants, by not paying the salary they promised to, by taking their passports away from them, by threatening to denounce them to Argentine

immigration officers, or by betraying their trust as members of a Bolivian community[47]. As Miriam told me,

> *Family members told us that 'there'* [Buenos Aires] *work was good, and they offered us help, and they told us that they would give us this and that. But once the moment came for them to give us what they offered, they turned their backs on us. I don't know if it's envy or shame, but I am disappointed with my family. I don't know what happens to Bolivians in Buenos Aires, maybe it's because they've lived there for years and they earn a lot* [of money]*...at least at that time they earned good money, they had cars and houses, and they want to make you feel down.*

The general opinion of the transmigrants I interviewed was that Bolivians that went before them were *mean* and took advantage *(se aprovecharon)* of the newcomers. This puzzled me due of the theoretical constructions I had previously read regarding 'Bolivians' in Buenos Aires. For example, in Dandler and Medeiros' (1985,1988) study of *cochabambino* migration to Buenos Aires, central importance is given to the existence of networks that connect *cochabambinos* in Buenos Aires. In Dandler and Medeiros' perspective, as *cochabambinos* share a common root and a common recognition of belonging to the same place of origin, it is considered a moral obligation to help the arriving migrant; in this way, family and community links and networks are maintained and reproduced in both cities.

Alejandro Grimson (1999) also studied how Bolivians in Argentina organize and build a discourse whereby a new 'Bolivianness' *(bolivianidad),* is created. This 'new Bolivianness', according to Grimson, serves to promote solidarity and strengthen political and social organization of Bolivians in Buenos Aires, and thus operates to blur class, ethnic, and regional identities among migrants. Instead of using the Bolivian state as its major referent, this 'Bolivianness', is built upon a process of ethnicization *(etnización)* that allows Bolivians to present themselves as members of a community who can dialogue, resist, accept, and accommodate themselves within the larger Argentine society. While Grimson's fascinating study allows us an understanding of how different social, cultural, and political organizations of Bolivians create a politics

[47] In Appendix 6, I present newspaper accounts that touch upon the relation of exploitation of Bolivians by Bolivians, in Argentina.

of identity in Buenos Aires, it does not give us clues as to why Bolivian migrants talk of a rather fragmented community of Bolivians.

Indeed, the narratives I gathered on the whole reflect a disappointment with Bolivian family members, friends, neighbours, *compadres* and *comadres*, and other Bolivians who are in Buenos Aires. If, as identity theorists suggest (e.g., Foxen 2001), identities are based on contrasting oneself with a constructed Other, the self-representations and narratives of the Bolivians I interviewed reveal that the Bolivian men and women who migrated to Argentina in previous decades are constructed as Others with whom bonds of sameness and bases of differentiation intertwine. Rodrigo's and Monica's statements clarify this ambivalence:

> *...Bolivians in Argentina think that they are Argentine, but they are Bolivian.*

> *Bolivians in Argentina are too Argentine* [son demasiado Argentinos]. *They behave like Argentines, they talk like Argentines. Being Bolivian they are more Argentine then the Argentines* [siendo Bolivianos, son más Argentinos que los Argentinos].

Here 'too Argentine' refers to embodied practices that older generations of Bolivians have acquired in Argentina. That is, "they behave like Argentines, they talk like Argentines". Argentines have a particular accent that is not appreciated by Bolivians. Nancy echoes the opinions I heard regarding this: "I do not like how they speak, I don't understand them". But it is not only the accent they dislike, it is also the high volume the Argentines customarily use to speak. Many Bolivian migrants commented that Argentines 'spoke too loud'. Speech may function then as another signifier of ethnicity. While the Bolivians I interviewed differentiated themselves from Argentines by their way of speaking, by their accent, it seems that the older generation of Bolivian migrants seek to be recognized as 'legitimate' others who speak the same way the Argentines do.

Other opinions I heard about Bolivians that are *bien ubicados* in Argentina are explained by Adela,

> *...[I]t is sad, because many Bolivians go there* [Buenos Aires] *to find a job and they find other Bolivians that have gone there earlier...you know the misery that Potosinos live in, and people from Oruro, and Cochabamba too. We don't drink milk, we don't eat meat. But Bolivians, once they are well established there, they get used to living a good life, they forget their past.*

Rita also explained this,

> *We have fellow countrymen who don't want to be Bolivian any more. There's a girl I knew and she told me, "I don't want to know anything about Bolivia, Bolivians are dirty..." that's what she said. She was ashamed of saying that she was Bolivian, but me, I am not ashamed. I always say that I am from Potosí, Bolivia.*

In many of the narratives of Bolivians I interviewed, older generations of Bolivians in Argentina are seen as those who have forgotten their past, and as Zulma told me (echoing the above statements), they have "stopped being like us". I did not collect enough material to allow me to analyze how the Bolivians who migrated during the 1960s-1980s negotiated their self-perceptions in their migration experience, but I would suggest that what is being contested in this case is also a defence and claim to authenticity. That is, the migrants I interviewed define themselves in contrast to and in relation with an older generation(s) of Bolivians who migrated to Argentina; they place themselves as the ones who have not forgotten their past, who are proud of being Bolivian, who would not exploit their *paisanos* or countrymen. That would leave the older generation of Bolivian migrants in Argentina, as 'others' who were ashamed of being Bolivian. But 'shame' does not necessarily carry a negative connotation; it can be a response to sufferings of poverty of their past in Bolivia, or a way to cope with the Argentine hegemonic society. By mimicking the Argentines in speech and behaviour, struggles and resistances for recognition may be at stake. It would be fascinating to study in depth how in the continuous comings and goings of the older generation of Bolivian migrants, changes in family, gender, and community relations were forged and are still ongoing today.

'Returning' 'home'?

The Bolivian men and women who narrated their stories of migration to me in Cochabamba had recently returned from Buenos Aires. Each narrative reflects multiple adventures and dramas, multiple encounters with multiple Others. But each narrative also revealed that this particular 'return' trip to Cochabamba was different from others they had done in previous years. This time, their 'return' was very much influenced by the critical economic and political situation Argentina is experiencing, as described earlier.

The return of Bolivian transmigrants has to be seen as a conscious and planned effort to overcome both the negative impacts of the global economy in their lives and the associated high amounts of insecurity. The narratives of these Bolivian migrants clearly show that while affected by the flux and uncertainty of the global economy, they responded actively by 'moving' to and from places, challenging the notion that they are passive subjects trapped absolutely by global forces.

But, can we conclude that these Bolivian transmigrants have 'returned' permanently to Cochabamba? What does this 'return' mean for them? Have they returned 'home'?

'Home' has multiple and contradictory meanings for the transmigrants I interviewed. The narratives of home created by the interviewees places home as a contested terrain that is not equated with a 'house', 'city', or 'neighbourhood'. On one side, Cochabamba is seen as the place where freedom, safety, and tranquility are lived, where you have a better time *(se la pasa major),* where "you can do things" outside the house. In that sense, Cochabamba is conceived as a place where actions can take place with freedom.

But Cochabamba is also constructed in emotional terms. Not only family members 'live' there; it is also where people 'like oneself' *(gente como uno)* live. It is a place of familiarity. Nevertheless, this familiarity can now, after an experience of migrating, be put into question. And it is in that questioning that what was familiar, becomes strange. Adela's perception of 'returning home' expresses this idea,

> ... *'[H]ere'* [Bolivia], *you see things that you don't see ' there'* [Buenos Aires] *or anywhere else. You see children working, and working in terrible conditions, children without shoes. In my neighbourhood you see naked children peeing in the street, and even if you don't want to look you see it and you think to yourself 'there's another way of living'. Before I travelled I didn't notice those things, that's why sometimes it's not good to learn other things; if you don't know the difference and that there are better places, if you don't know, then you don't suffer.*

For Adela, the 'return home' has a meaning that resonates with what Stuart Hall refers to as the impossibility of homecoming (1987, in Chambers 1994). In Adela's case, this impossibility takes on a metaphorical sense, migration as a one way trip. The place 'home' has changed because the meaning given to it has transformed, that is, because she herself has changed. Poverty is now visible, she has 'learned', and she finds poverty difficult to acknowledge. Adela's understanding of herself has transformed, and it is by moving, and seeing other places that the meaning of home has changed.

If, as Chambers argues, the difference between migration and travel is that travel "implies an itinerary from a fixed point of departure to an equally stable point of arrival...and migrancy involves a movement in which neither the points of departure nor arrival are immutable or certain" (Chambers 1994:5), then Adela will never be quite back home. It might not be surprising then, that Adela and her husband are planning to migrate to Spain in the near future.

Paradoxically, other Bolivian men and women I interviewed perceived 'home' in a more positive way now than when they first migrated to Buenos Aires. Rodrigo was one of those who told me that his motivation to go to Buenos Aires was to be in a "culture that was more advanced than ours". In a way, for Rodrigo, and others like

him, Buenos Aires in his imaginary represented 'progress'. Progress was spatially located in Buenos Aires because there were jobs there, the city had tall buildings, and there were many people. But the sense of belonging to Buenos Aires was never achieved by Bolivian migrants. The paradox lies in that through the experience of displacement, of strangeness abroad, Bolivian migrants learned that to be home was "where one should be, where one is free", as Mónica put it.

Another major contradiction seems to underline the process of 'returning home'. While migrating abroad is motivated mostly by the wish to improve one's status 'home', which therefore implies the desire to return to Bolivia, the success of a migrant is very much determined by his or her *not* returning home. The 'return' is desired in the sense that most of the Bolivian migrant wanted to materially and symbolically enjoy, show, and display the wealth they achieved in Argentina, and by doing this, improve their situation in Bolivia. For example, some of the men I interviewed were building for themselves two-story brick houses in a neighbourhood that is characterized by a majority of adobe houses. While this can be seen as a sign of success in the eyes of the community, the fact that these migrants have returned is not well regarded by some people.

For example, in some conversations I had with market vendors in Cochabamba, I learned that many of their neighbours that migrated to Argentina had returned. For these women, even though their neighbours had returned 'with money', they had still returned. That is, despite the fact that migrants had returned with money to Bolivia, they were seen with suspicion because they had come back. The impression that I had by these women's comments was that maybe the 'returning' migrants *failed* abroad and that was the main reason for their return. For sure, further studies need to be carried out in order to understand how family members and other Bolivian non-migrants, receive these 'returning' migrants.

While Cochabamba is perceived as the perfect shelter, and where Bolivian migrants feel safe (especially compared to their daily lives in Buenos Aires and the continuous threats that *choros* put them through), Cochabamba is also the place where there are no jobs. As Enrique asked me,

> *In Bolivia everything is better, but we have no jobs... what are we going to do?*

The particular vulnerability of Bolivia in the global economic system, the lack of job opportunities in the country, and the process of migration reproduces the vulnerable place that Bolivia has in the world system. How else can we explain that Gabriela, a school teacher with a university degree in Bolivia, worked as a housemaid in Argentina? Or the case of Juan, also a high school teacher, who told me that his students now talk about migrating to Spain, rather than continuing their university studies.

In this context, Enrique's question is frightening and pertinent to our understanding of the social, economic, and cultural context, "what are we going to do?" Migrating to Spain was seen as an alternative way to answer to this question.

All of the Bolivian men and women I spoke with, knew someone who was either in Spain or someone who was preparing to go there. According to them, now that the United States was 'closed' because of September 11, 2001, Spain and Italy were the preferred places of destination for Bolivians searching for a job. It seems that it is easier for women to find a job as a housemaid, that is what Bolivian migrants told me.

For Nancy, the experience of migrating to Buenos Aires was like a 'school'. As she put it,

> *I might go to Spain, I have a sister there. I have learned in Buenos Aires, now I can go anywhere. I know what it's like to be outside of the country...besides, now that I have built the first floor* [of the house with savings from] *Buenos Aires, maybe I can build the second* [floor] *with Spain.*

Spain and Buenos Aires are the 'places' where money can be earned and saved. At 'home', in Bolivia, Nancy, with her salary of US$ 80 a month, she would never have been able to build the house where she, her mother, and niece live. Indeed, Nancy's is taking care of her sister's daughter, while she works in Madrid in the cleaning services of a hotel...

Transnational families, transnational ties... Maybe in the near future we will begin to ask how do Bolivians organize themselves in Madrid, Barcelona, or Bergamo. Or, how are Bolivian migrants 'received' in these countries? Or, what are Bolivian's relations with the new places they inhabit and how do they change their conceptualizations of home?

Chapter Six: Conclusions

This thesis explores what Bolivian men and women say about themselves and others, and how they relate to these 'others' in the migration experience to and from Buenos Aires, Argentina. In that sense, this thesis is an exploration of how particular men and women define and negotiate their identities in the migration experience between Bolivia and Argentina. I argue that both the narratives and experiences of transnational migration for these migrants varies according to gender, age, economic possibilities, and legal circumstances. Furthermore, that this experience varies according to the multiple encounters with 'others' along the transnational circuit.

While many transnational studies of migration (eg. Glick Schiller et al.,1994) focus on migrants' participation in nation-building processes across countries, my analysis has privileged voices and reflections of Bolivian women and men who have returned to Bolivia after an experience of migration in Argentina. By using a conceptualization of 'migration' in transnational terms, my work has centered on how these migrants conceptualize the social conditions in which they live and how they actively search for ways to improve their living conditions in both Bolivia and Argentina. In this sense, the concept of 'home' has been critically explored in order to grasp the complex narratives of belonging and displacement.

For the Bolivian men and women I spoke to, home is constituted in the relationship and awareness of two places that supply different and complementary resources that are fundamental for the development of their lives[48]. On one side, Bolivia is the place where one is free, where family and others like oneself live. But it is also the place where there are few jobs and political instability, thus limited resources to build a home. Therefore, 'home' has to be sought in another place. Buenos Aires is the place where jobs can be found, but no sense of belonging is achieved there. Nevertheless, Buenos Aires provides the means and the resources to

[48] I am borrowing from Ruba Salih (2003), the notion of different and complementary resources that constitute home.

build a home in Cochabamba, both materially and symbolically. This resonates with what bell hooks says about home: it is no longer just a singular place. Rather, home is the place "which enables and promotes varied and ever changing perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality..." (1991 in Salih 2003:1). Thus, we encounter a contradiction: while concepts such as 'deterritorialization' have emerged in order to explain how identities are detached from local places, the Bolivian migrants I spoke with still give a central importance to their 'place' of origin as a reference point with which they identify and in which they long to be.

However, the belief that some migrants express that they cannot build a home in Bolivia because of the depressed economic and political situation, opens the possibility for migrating again, this time, further away and across the Atlantic. Questions about the type of relations Bolivians establish in these new places they inhabit, from which a return migration is much more difficult, and how they change their conceptualizations of home because of those relations, are pending and crucial to understand broader transnational movements.

We can also question the fact that homes may be built in two or more countries. As I have presented, Bolivian women that migrate have the primary responsibility over their children, even if they are married or have a partner. Some of them migrated with their children, while others have left them behind with other family members and/or *comadres y compadres.* Particularly the women who left their children in Bolivia have tried to travel back and forth as often as they can between Cochabamba and Buenos Aires, therefore trying to reduce real distances between themselves and their kin. They do not seem, however, to forge a sense of belonging to either country and thus, seem to be trapped in a cycle where movement from one place to another is seen as a temporary answer to their living conditions. It seems that transnationalism is not a neutral space, that gender differences intervene to shape practices and ambitions for both women and men on both sides of the border. An analysis of the relationships between gender, agency, and socio-politico-economic structures should be pursued in order to grasp broader transnational movements of Bolivians.

The migration experience is bringing about changes in family and gender relations in Bolivia and Argentina that need to be further explored. How is the relationship forged between parents that work abroad and their children that are raised by *compadres* or other family members? Are bonds of respect and trust between couples and different generations (re) produced across borders? Are the children of migrants more likely to be migrants themselves?

Bolivian migration to Argentina has a long history and thus needs to be seen as part of a process of historical continuity that links both countries. I want to call the attention to the broader context of both countries, and how it influences the migration process. During the course of this thesis I have tried to illustrate why I think that the exploration of how identities are built in migration processes are important, and why they should be the focus of further study.

First of all, the identities of the Bolivian men and women I interviewed are not only shaped by national discourses formulated by intellectuals and governmental leaders (such as the *mestizaje* discourse). Material processes intervene in the identification processes of people, such as participation in the labour market, working conditions, access to citizen rights, and movement from one place to another. These material processes are very much determined by globalization processes of the economy, communication, and technology. As Appadurai reminds us, we are now living in a world of *ethnoscapes* and *deterritorialization,* where a new landscape of persons is shaped in a world of people constantly moving, and "where money, commodities, and persons unendingly chase each other around the globe" (1991:194).

Since 1991, a regional economic cooperation and integration agreement, MERCOSUR, has been instituted among the heads of states of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. The MERCOSUR (Southern Cone Common Market) envisions the creation of a free-trade area between member countries, intraregional investment, and regional macroeconomic stabilization (Richards 1997). Bolivia and Chile became special members of MERCOSUR in 1997.

In December 6 and 7 of 2002, the ministers of Justice and Interior of MERCOSUR's members agreed on a plan for the free circulation of people throughout the member countries, therefore extending the region's integration process, so far limited to trade, into the social and labour spheres as well. If this agreement is approved by the Chamber of Deputies of each country, it will allow the citizens of the six countries to obtain permanent residence in any other country, requiring only documents that prove nationality and lack of criminal record.

Allow me this long description in order to explain why I think that the study of migration experiences are fundamental in our understanding of the broader political and economic projects in which we are embedded.

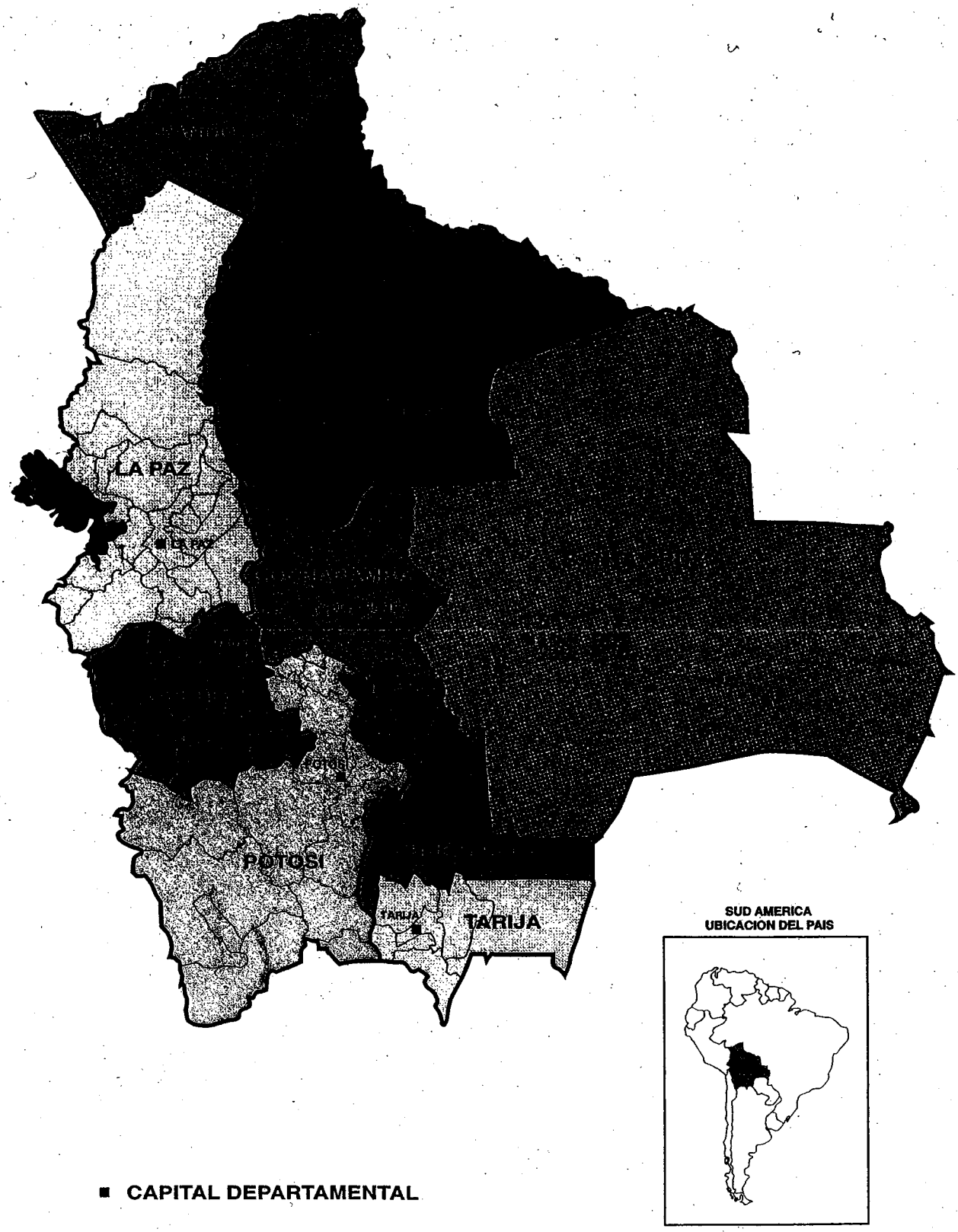
The discourse of economic and regional 'integration' coexists with real practices of 'exclusion' and 'xenophobia' that migrant workers go through. As my study has presented, Bolivians suffered in their daily lives in Argentina, not only from physical violence (being robbed), but they are also insulted and stereotyped as *bolitas* and criminals. The stigmatization of Bolivians by Argentines (as black, round, and small, and as those who steal Argentine jobs), contradicts the same notion of 'integration'.

If the free circulation of people is a political measure that will be approved in each of the Chamber of Deputies of the MERCOSUR member countries, what kind of 'integration' are we talking about?

In order to begin to talk about a comprehensive 'integration' process, we have to recognize, as García Canclini (1999) does, that in Latin America there are marked ethnic, regional, and national differences between and within countries. And as far as we can see, neoliberal reforms do not seem to be bridging the gap and distances between us, but rather exacerbating them. Migrants are constantly reminding us of these distances...

Appendices

Appendix 1
Map of Bolivia



■ CAPITAL DEPARTAMENTAL

FUENTE: Bolivia: Atlas estadístico de Municipios.
INE, MDSP, COSUDE (1999)

Appendix 2: Information letter

Cochabamba, July of 2002

Information Letter
Study of Bolivian migrants to Argentina

Dear Mr./Mrs.

My name is Maria Eugenia Brockmann and I am a masters student in anthropology at McGill University in Canada. As part of my program, I am studying the migration process of Bolivians to Argentina, focusing on the process of return to the country.

In order to complete this research, I am contacting persons who have gone through the process of migration and return. I understand you may have been through this process, and therefore I was hoping to speak with you to learn more about your experience. Specifically, I would like to learn about your migration and travel, about your life and work in Argentina, and the factors that motivated you to return to Bolivia. I also want to know your general perceptions of Bolivia in light of your experience in Argentina. I should emphasize that my research is focused on collecting information from a large number of people and not on any one person's experiences or opinions, so any information you provide will only be used in a general and anonymous sense.

In order to learn from your experience, I would like to have an interview with you. The interview is a question-based conversation, in which you are free to answer the questions you want and to decline where you feel uncomfortable or would prefer not to answer for any reason. The interview will last about one hour and it can be held in any place you deem appropriate (coffee place, your house, a park, other). If you accept, the interview will be tape recorded so that I can assure accuracy and aid my memory. I will take all my tapes back to Canada to keep in my files there and they will not be copied or distributed for any other purpose. If at any point during the conversation you want to talk without the tape recording, that is fine. You can just let me know.

Again, my work is intended to develop general analysis and conclusions from a range of individual experiences. The findings from my interviews will be aggregated and not addressed at an individual level. Any details provided by you and others with whom I speak will be used only by me and only to promote a broader understanding of the migration and return process. If I refer to any individual experiences to provide details or examples in my notes or my report, I will use only initials or pseudonyms – I will never use actual names. Your identity will always remain anonymous and will not be reproduced in any final report or other public document.

If you have doubts, please contact me:
Phone: 429-7035

I hope you accept to participate.

Sincerely,

Maria Eugenia Brockmann

Cochabamba, Julio del 2002

Carta Informativa
Estudio sobre migrantes bolivianos a la Argentina

Estimado Sr. (a)

Mi nombre es Maria Eugenia Brockmann. Estoy realizando una maestría en Antropología en la Universidad McGill, en Canadá. Como parte de la maestría, estoy estudiando el proceso migratorio de bolivianos hacia la Argentina, focalizándome en el proceso de retorno a Bolivia.

En este sentido, estoy contactando personas que hayan migrado a la Argentina y que han regresado al país. Entiendo que usted ha vivido esa experiencia y por eso espero poder conversar con usted para así poder conocer su experiencia. Específicamente, me gustaría conocer su experiencia de viaje, estadía, trabajo u otros en Argentina; y el proceso que incidió en su regreso a Bolivia. Asimismo, me gustaría conocer cuál es su percepción acerca de Bolivia, luego de la experiencia de viaje a la Argentina. Quiero enfatizar que mi trabajo tiene como objetivo recolectar información de un amplio número de Bolivianos y no sólo de unas cuantas personas; por eso cualquier información que usted me entregue será utilizada de manera general resguardando su identidad en todo momento.

Con el objeto de conocer su experiencia, me gustaría concertar una entrevista con usted. La entrevista es una conversación basada en preguntas, en la cual usted es libre de contestar las preguntas que desee. La entrevista se extenderá por el lapso máximo de una hora y se realizará en un lugar que usted estime conveniente (un café, su casa, parque u otro). Si usted lo permite, la entrevista será grabada en casete. Me comprometo a conservar su identidad anónima, así como también a no reproducir la información que usted no quiera que sea presentada.

Le reitero, mi trabajo tiene el objetivo de desarrollar un análisis y conclusiones generales a partir de un conjunto de experiencias de Bolivianos que migraron a la Argentina. Los hallazgos de mis entrevistas no serán utilizados a nivel individual. Cualquier detalle que usted, u otras personas entrevistadas me provean, serán utilizados sólo por mi persona para promover un entendimiento del proceso migratorio y de retorno al país. En el estudio, si me refiero a algún caso en particular, será sólo para presentarlo como un ejemplo. Asimismo, usaré pseudónimos o sus iniciales, y nunca su nombre actual. Su identidad permanecerá anónima en todo momento, por lo que no se reproducirá ni en el informe final de mi investigación, ni en ningún otro documento público.

Si tiene dudas por favor contácteme al teléfono 429-7035.

Esperando contar con su participación, me despido atentamente,

Maria Eugenia Brockmann R.

Appendix 3: General information about Bolivian migrants

Name	Age	Sex	Civil status	Place of birth	Family, friends, compadres in Argentina	School (1–12 grade) / Degree	Language	Job prior to traveling to Argentina	Actual activity	Job(s) in Argentina	Work permit in Argentina	No. years migrating	Last return
Z	17	F	Single	Cochabamba	7 bros and sis.	8th	Spanish Quechua	No, school	House maid	House-maid Selling fruits, Vegetables "feriante"	No	3	November 2001
J	19	F	Single	Cochabamba	7 bros and sis.	9th	Spanish Quechua	No, school	House maid	House-maid Baby sitting sister's son "Feriante"	Yes, but it was a falsified one	3	November 2001
V	30	F	Married	Cochabamba	2 bros.	8th	Spanish Quechua	House-maid	Searching	Manufacturing clothes, small Bolivian micro-enterprise	Yes	10	May 2002
M	31	F	Married	Cochabamba	2 bros and 1 sis.	10th	Spanish Quechua	Green-house	Searching	Cleaning Care-taker of old women	Yes	6	June 2001
F	25	F	Single	Cochabamba	2 bros and sis.	7th	Spanish Quechua	Green-house	Searching	Grocery store (seller) Sewing shop (Bol. Owners)	Yes	5	January 2002
S	37	F	Divorced	Cochabamba	3 sisters, they're coming back Dec. 2002	School teacher	Spanish Quechua	Teacher	Teacher Market	House-maid in different places, Argentine bosses	No	3	December 2001
N	32	F	Single	Potosí, migrated to Cbba.	Sister, now she is in Spain	9th	Spanish Aymara Quechua	House-maid	House maid	House-maid	No	3	1998
MA	23	F	Single	Cochabamba	Aunt, since 1994	Computer Technician	Spanish	Student	Student	House-maid	No	2	November 1999
ME	40	F	Married	Cochabamba	Husband's brother	Nurse	Spanish Quechua	Nurse at State hospital	Nurse at State hospital	Head nurse at a Geriatric hospital	Yes	7	April 2002

Name	Age	Sex	Civil status	Place of birth	Family, friends, compadres in Argentina	School [illegible] grade / Degree	Language	Job prior traveling time	Actual activity	Job(s) in Argentina	Work permit in Argentina	Nº years migrating	Last return
JA	38	F	Single	Cochabamba	No	4th	Spanish Quechua	House-maid	Cleaning at a bank	House-maid	No	10	1990 aprox.
MO	20	F	Single	Cochabamba	Brother	7th	Spanish Quechua	No	Searching	Sewer at Bol. Shop	No	6	November 2001
A	44	F	Married	Cochabam ba	2 sist.one returning Dec.02	3rd	Spanish Quechua	School Janitor	Searching	House-maid Sewer Bol. Shop	No	10	March 2002
D	29	F	Married	La Paz	Cousin	Tourist guide	Spanish	Cleaning	Student	Taking care of old women	Yes	7	January 2002
AA	50	F	Single	Potosí, arrives to Cbba when 30	No	2nd	Spanish Quechua	Cleaning at houses and a hotel	Searching	House-maid Care-giver to old women	Yes	9	March 2002
W	21	M	Single	Cochabamba	4 sisters, 2 returning Dec. 02	12th	Spanish Quechua	Student	Helper at house	Cook helper	No	3	March 2002
T	45	M	Married	Oruro	Neighbors	10th	Spanish Quechua Aymara	Plays piano in band	Plays piano in band	Mason	No	3	June 2002
R	40	M	Married	Cochabamba	*Compadres*	Police-man	Spanish Quechua English	Police-officer	Searching	Mason	No	20	December 2001
D	35	M	Married	La Paz	In-laws		Spanish Quechua	Green-house	Carpenter	Mason Car factory	Yes	12	October 2000
PP	55	M	Married	Cochabamba	Daughters & sons		Spanish Quechua Aymara	Mason	Mason	Mason	No	23	1999
JC	44	M	Married	Cochabamba	*Compadres*	High-school teacher	Spanish Quechua Aymara	High-school teacher	High-school teacher	Mason	No	1	1992

Name	Age	Sex	Civil status	Place of birth	Family, friends, compadres in Argentina	School (1-12 grade) / Degree	Language	Job prior traveling	Actual activity	Job (s) in Argentina	Work permit in Argentina	N° years emigrating	Last return
C	30	M	Married	Cochabamba	In-laws	9th	Spanish Quechua	Mason	Searching	Mason	Yes	8	July 2002
A	32	M	Married	Potosi	Uncles	7th	Spanish Quechua	Taxi driver	Whatever available	Mason	Yes	9	September 1997
DA	29	M	Married	Potosi	Girlfriend	3rd	Spanish Quechua Aymara	Mason	Going to Spain	Mason	No	9	December 2001

Appendix 4
Newspaper articles: "returning" migrants

LA PRENSA

NEGOCIOS C

2.632 bolivianos con residencia argentina y 1.053 argentinos

En sólo cinco días llegaron a Bolivia 3.685 migrantes

El retorno de bolivianos residentes en Argentina aumentó considerablemente en los últimos días, a la par que se intensifica el contrabando en las zonas fronterizas con el vecino país. Según el informe de la Dirección de Migración, entre el 9 y 13 de enero ingresaron al país 2.632 bolivianos y 1.053 argentinos. Hasta antes de la crisis económica y social en Argentina, habitualmente se registraba el ingreso de 80 personas como promedio diario por Yacuiba, similar número por Villazón y 70 por Bermejo; ahora, en cambio, entran alrededor de 200 personas por día. Los empresarios están preocupados por el incremento del desempleo y el gobierno piensa ajustar el Plano.

PÁGINAS 4-5

El "corralito" impide el retorno de más bolivianos

AeroSur volará a Cuba a partir del 8 de febrero

La línea aérea AeroSur incursionará en los cielos de La Habana, Cuba, a partir del 8 de febrero, con un vuelo semanal.

Un pasaje de ida y vuelta hacia Cuba costará 370 dólares, será un vuelo directo entre La Paz, Santa Cruz y La Habana, informó Hércules de Sousa, gerente Comercial de AeroSur.

Los viajes hacia Cuba forman parte del proyecto de nuevos destinos que impulsa Aerosur.

Nuevos destinos

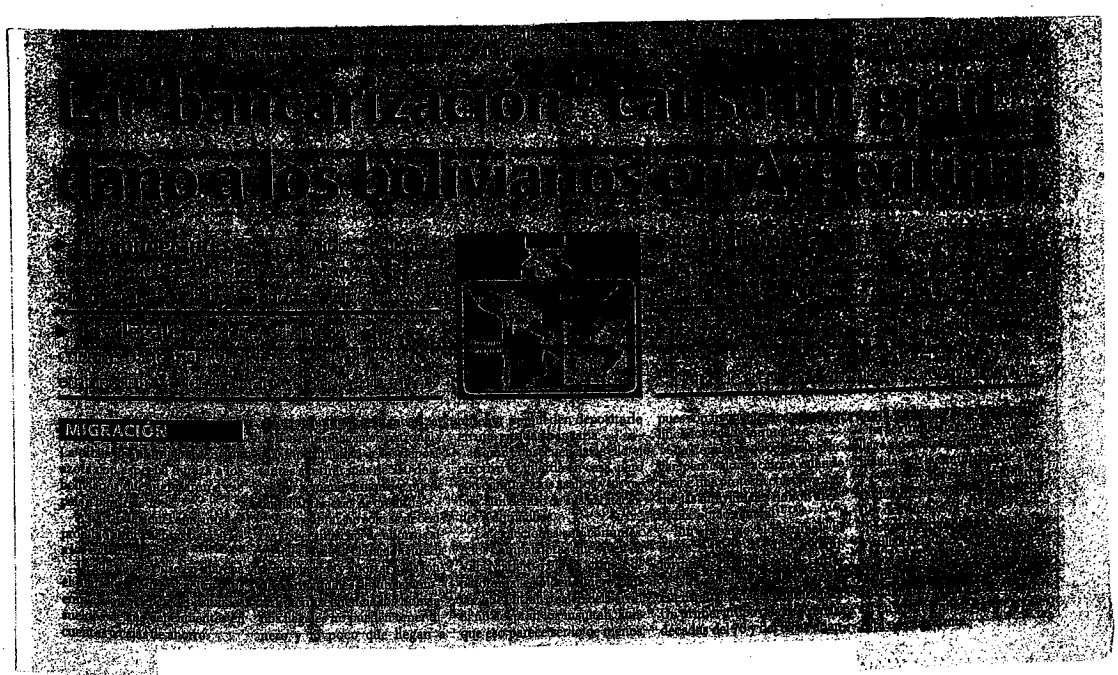
En diciembre arrancó con la ruta hacia Asunción, en febrero será Cuba y en breve volará hacia Argentina y Chile, aseguró De Sousa.

A la fecha, AeroSur ya opera con cuatro aeros, cuenta con un airbús y tres aviones 727-100 y 727-200.

Adicionalmente, la compañía promociona un paquete por 907 dólares en el que se incluye cinco días y cuatro noches en el hotel Bercoló (cinco estrellas) en La Habana, cubre también todos los costos de alimentación, además de city tours, visitas a la parte histórica de la ciudad, transferencias de llegada y salida, entre otros beneficios.

El paquete contempla también asistencia y chequeos médicos en caso de ser necesarios.

3,685 migrants arrive to Bolivia in only five days



MIGRACIÓN

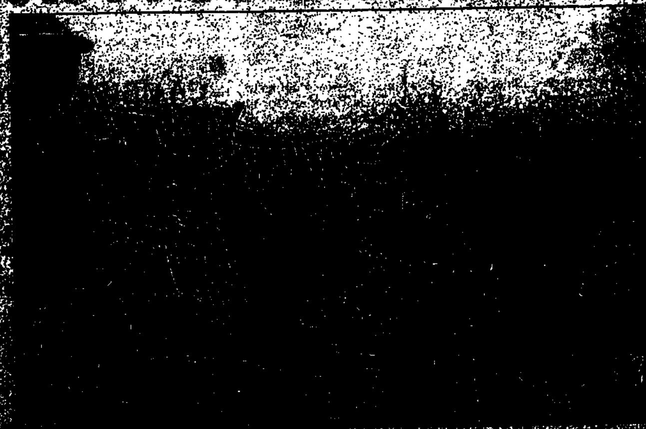
Bancarizacion hurts Bolivians in Argentina badly

The valley welcomes her migrant sons and daughters

Retorno: mucha gente de Cochabamba que migró hacia Argentina en busca de un futuro mejor comenzó a analizar la posibilidad de retornar [illegible] Una de las razones [illegible] país es [illegible] argentina para ir a Estados Unidos.

El valle ya recibe a sus hijos migrantes

[illegible]



[illegible] dida Isaura Encinas.

En las poblaciones de Tola, Carcaje y Cliza las personas prefieren no hablar del tema y evitan el contacto indicando que nadie llegó de Argentina.

[illegible]

The return [of migrants] raises issues of employment

Política

ESTADÍSTICA
Unos 20 mil bolivianos ya retornaron desde Argentina y no hay dónde ubicarlos.

El retorno desde Argentina plantea temas de empleo

El Gobierno comenzó, sin recursos, a elaborar un plan para absorber a esa población que además incluye menores con necesidad de estudiar.

LA FERIA URKUPIÑA • Este es uno de los mercados de la colectividad boliviana en Buenos Aires. La crisis redujo el volumen de los negocios y las posibilidades de trabajar son mínimas. 800 personas cruzan diariamente la frontera por Pocitos y Villazón.

REGRESO

El Estado boliviano no está en condiciones de atender los requerimientos de sus ciudadanos que retornan de Argentina.

Desde que pisaron suelo nacional, estas familias engrosaron automáticamente las filas de desocupados. No tienen una fuente de trabajo asegurada.

En busca de equilibrio, el Ejecutivo inició, sin contar con los recursos económicos, la elaboración de un proyecto para crear fuentes de trabajo destinadas exclusivamente a este sector.

Desde principios de mes, la Dirección Nacional de Migración registró el paso por Pocitos y Villazón de aproximadamente 20 mil ciudadanos bolivianos. Cada día vuelven al país, en promedio, unas 800 personas.

La crisis económica de la nación vecina ha golpeado de tal manera a la colectividad boliviana que se había asentado allá, que de pronto se encontró sin posibilidades de trabajar, por lo que muchos decidieron emprender el regreso al país.

El Ministerio de Trabajo inició la elaboración de un estudio para generar fuentes de trabajo destinadas a quienes vuelven a Bolivia por esta causa.

Esta tarea ya registra un avance del 15 al 20 por ciento.

Según el viceministro de Relaciones Laborales, Roberto Pancorbo, estas personas deben ser empleadas por microempresas en condiciones favorables porque, por su experiencia, se trata de mano de obra calificada.

"Haremos todo el esfuerzo para conseguir el financiamiento y dar apoyo a estos ciudadanos".

La preocupación por estos compatriotas alcanzó a los niveles más altos del Ejecutivo. El ministro de Información, Mauro Bertero, aseguró que atender a este conjunto es un "nuevo desafío" para el Gobierno.

Según el portavoz gubernamental, este reto será encarado en la medida de las "posibilidades y limitaciones" del país.

El plan de empleo iniciado en noviembre del año pasado avanza lentamente. A la fecha sólo se crearon 10 mil fuentes de trabajo temporal, de un total de 73.050 que comprende el proyecto hasta junio de este año.

El Gobierno cuenta con un financiamiento del Banco Mundial de 100 millones de dólares para llevar adelante este plan destinado a apoyar a los desocupados que radican en el país.

Pero el Plan Nacional de Empleo de Emergencia no toma en cuenta a los bolivianos que retornan de Argentina o de otros países vecinos.

Según los datos del Instituto Nacional de Estadística tomados en 1992, la tasa de desempleo abierto en Bolivia es del 10 por ciento de una población económicamente activa conformada por dos millones de personas.

El Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Laboral y Agrario dio cuenta de que la economía boliviana requirió crear el año pasado 95 mil nuevos empleos para absorber a la población incorporada al mercado de trabajo.

¿CUÁNTOS DESOCUPADOS HAY EN BOLIVIA?

Estadística • Según el Instituto Nacional de Estadística, que considera los resultados del Censo de Población y Vivienda de 1992 como parámetro, la tasa de desempleo es del 10 por ciento de un total de población económicamente activa de dos millones de personas. El subempleo llega al 40 por ciento.

Un dato conservador • Los datos del Ministerio de Trabajo dan cuenta de que la tasa de desempleo es del 6,8 por ciento.

Nueva información • La Central Obrera Boliviana no comparte los datos anteriores. Para la principal organización matriz de los trabajadores, la tasa de desempleo supera el 20 por ciento. Los resultados del Censo del 2001 deben proporcionar una cifra actualizada sobre el número de desocupados.

EDUCACIÓN

El Parlamento se preocupa por los niños

Los migrantes que retornan de Argentina tropezarán con otro problema en el país: la carencia de plazas en escuelas y colegios fiscales para sus hijos.

La presidenta de la Comisión de Política Social de la Cámara de Diputados, Elisa Zúñiga, pidió al Ministerio de Educación que instruya a las direcciones departamentales un trato preferencial en las unidades educativas.

"Una de las preocupaciones de nuestros connacionales es que sus hijos no van a encontrar plazas en los colegios. Ni siquiera quienes vivimos acá las encontramos y tenemos que dormir en las calles para lograrlas. Tenemos que generar conciencia en estos colegios, de manera que abran sus puertas en forma prioritaria a estos niños y adolescentes".

Otra aflicción, además de asegurar las fuentes de trabajo para los padres de familia, es la situación legal de los bolivianos que contrajeron matrimonio con ciudadanos argentinos.

Para el efecto, esta comisión congresal pidió a la Dirección Nacional de Migración facilitar los trámites de residencia.

El director de tal dependencia, Oscar Jordán, se habría comprometido a acortar los trámites burocráticos que se realizan en situaciones de esta naturaleza.

Para atender a quienes volvieron al país, la Comisión de Política Social de la Cámara Baja propuso minutas de comunicación dirigidas al Poder Ejecutivo.

Esta instancia parlamentaria comenzó a preocuparse al conocer, sobre todo a través de la prensa, el fenómeno migratorio.

Se estima que la colectividad boliviana está conformada por alrededor de dos millones de personas, aunque no existe datos exactos al respecto. Se sabe que la mayoría está conformada por residentes ilegales.

"CORRALITO" | Muchos se niegan a salir del país sin sus ahorros

Bolivianos no pueden retornar

SANTA CRUZ | EL DEBER.- La crisis en Argentina está ahuyentando a muchos bolivianos, pero aunque unos pueden regresar al país en busca de mejores perspectivas laborales, otros por más que quieran no pueden hacerlo porque tienen sus ahorros atrapados por el "corralito" bancario que restringe el retiro de los depósitos en el sistema financiero argentino.

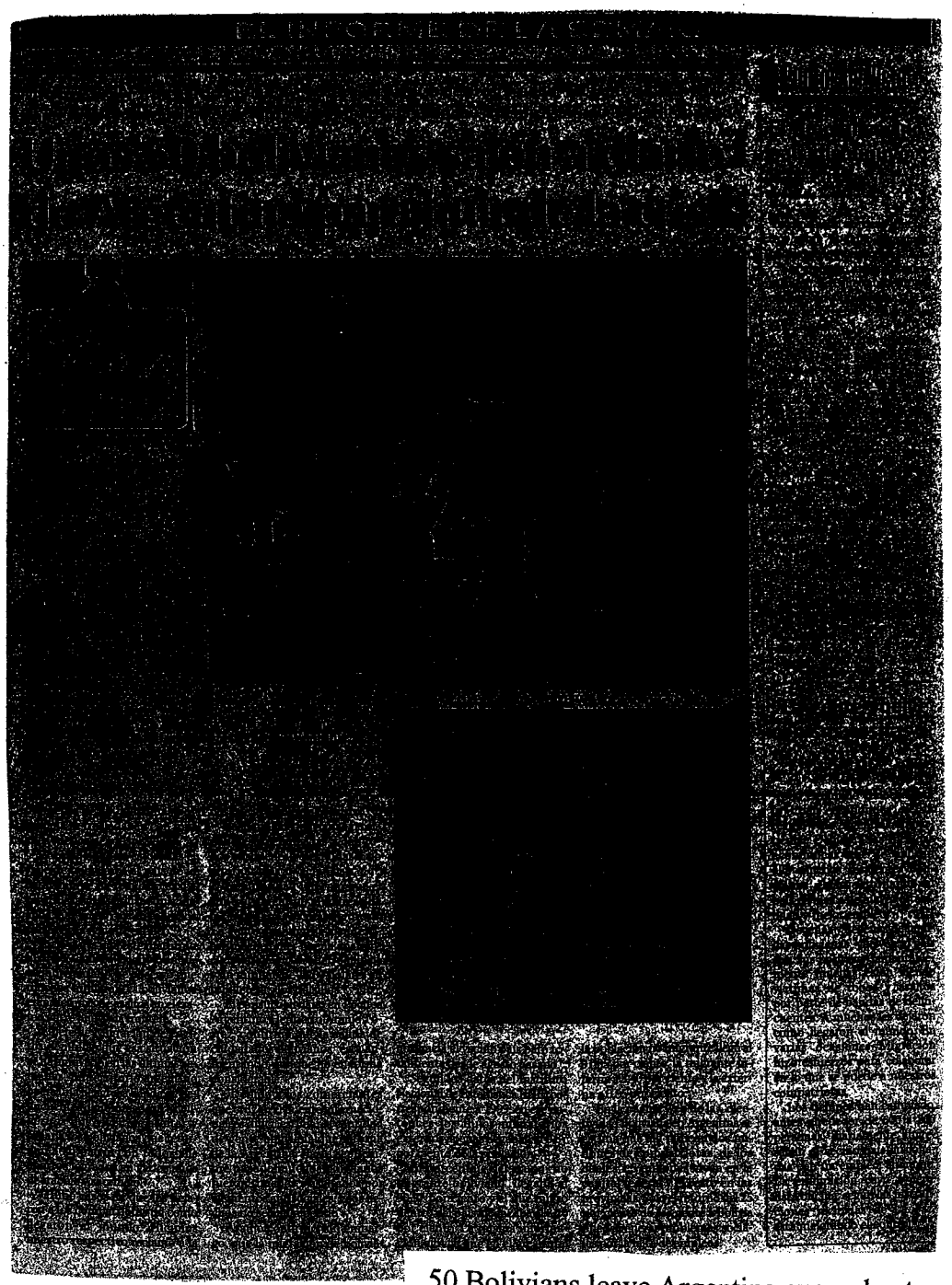
Francisco Terceros, ministro consejero de la Embajada de Bolivia en Argentina, indicó que diariamente reciben la visita de cientos de compatriotas que solicitan la intervención de la legación diplomática ante las entidades financieras para que se les permita retirar sus ahorros de los bancos.

Sin embargo, al tratarse de disposiciones gubernamentales, es muy poco lo que la Embajada puede hacer para modificar las políticas definidas en el vecino país, dice.

El consulado de Bolivia en Buenos Aires también atiende las consultas de varios connacionales que preguntan cuándo se suspenderá el "corralito" que restringe los recursos. Ambas entidades acopian toda la información necesaria para ver la forma de ayudar a quien lo necesite.

Terceros manifestó que la mayoría de las personas que solicitan información son profesionales. Además, dijo que se presta colaboración a las personas pobres para que lleguen gratis hasta la frontera. Mientras, en Santa Cruz el flujo de pasajeros que vienen de Argentina por vía terrestre y aérea se normalizó.

Bolivians cannot return



50 Bolivians leave Argentina every day to avoid the crisis

Appendix 5

Newspaper articles: xenophobia, discrimination

LA VIOLENCIA CONTRA BOLIVIANOS EN ARGENTINA CONVENCIERON A LAS AUTORIDADES NACIONALES

Gobierno despierta y reconoce la xenofobia

Una portada de Los Tiempos que denunciaba xenofobia y pasividad del gobierno.

Satisfacción del Inadi

The government reveals and acknowledges xenophobia

Discrimination against Bolivians in Argentina

Discriminan a bolivianos en Argentina

Salta-Argentina, por Guido Romay, Enviado Especial de PRESENCIA.- En una reciente visita periodística al norte argentino, se pudo comprobar que muchos bolivianos que se vieron en la necesidad de migrar hacia el extranjero, viven un verdadero drama y se ven ante un permanente acoso y discriminación.

Con el título de "Xenófobos atacan a los bolivianos", un periódico local señala que "más que brotes de xenofobia parecen existir sistemas articulados para discriminar, subestimar y descalificar a inmigrantes bolivianos que el Estado argentino admite. Las manifestaciones fueron varias y todas apuntan a un supuesto enemigo, que en este caso es a un intruso boliviano que no agrada...".

Las versiones periodísticas dan cuenta, además, que "algunos grupos de argentinos se ensañan con los residentes bolivianos, sin que de estos extranjeros hayan emanado agresiones, salvo -y si como tales se las puede considerar- su aspecto, estatura, color, indigenidad que, según Juan Pedro Manghera, molestan, porque son intrusos que desagradan e irrumpen en la casa grande urbana y se adueñan violentamente de los lugares familiares".

Un artículo bajo el titular de "La bolivianización de Salta", afirma: "Lo que molesta propiamente no es que vengan, sino molestan por lo que son, por su aspecto, por su indigenidad y todo el contenido peyorativo de ser indio...".

Ante ese gravísimo problema social, las autoridades bolivianas en Salta se han mostrado incapacitadas de encontrar una solución que, por un lado frene la creciente migración y por otro que los inmigrantes bolivianos se "acomoden" sin problemas en una sociedad que se ve inundada por "extraños.

AUTORIDADES LIMITADAS

El consulado boliviano en Salta, prácticamente desde su creación tiene una serie de limitaciones, al extremo que en la anterior gestión esa representación diplomática en el norte argentino instaló un "kiosko" de venta de refrescos, dulces y otros productos, para obtener recursos.

Actualmente, está encargado del consulado boliviano en Salta el coronel (r) Germán Lema Araos, ex-comandante de la Policía Boliviana y ex-prefecto de Cochabamba.

Tras ratificar limitaciones de esa oficina diplomática, afirmó que "no obstante esa situación, vamos a extremar esfuerzos para no solamente mejorar nuestras condiciones de trabajo, sino también para procurar una labor efectiva en favor de nuestros compatriotas, que radican en gran número en esta provincia importante de la República Argentina".

Eduardo Arancibia, presidente del Centro de Residentes Bolivianos en Salta, hizo conocer que recientemente esa asociación envió sugerencias a las autoridades bolivianas para que, a través de la empresa privada, se puedan generar proyectos productivos que permitan poner fin a la humillante situación de los migrantes bolivianos en esa parte de la Argentina.

EL DEBER ▶ NACIONAL A19

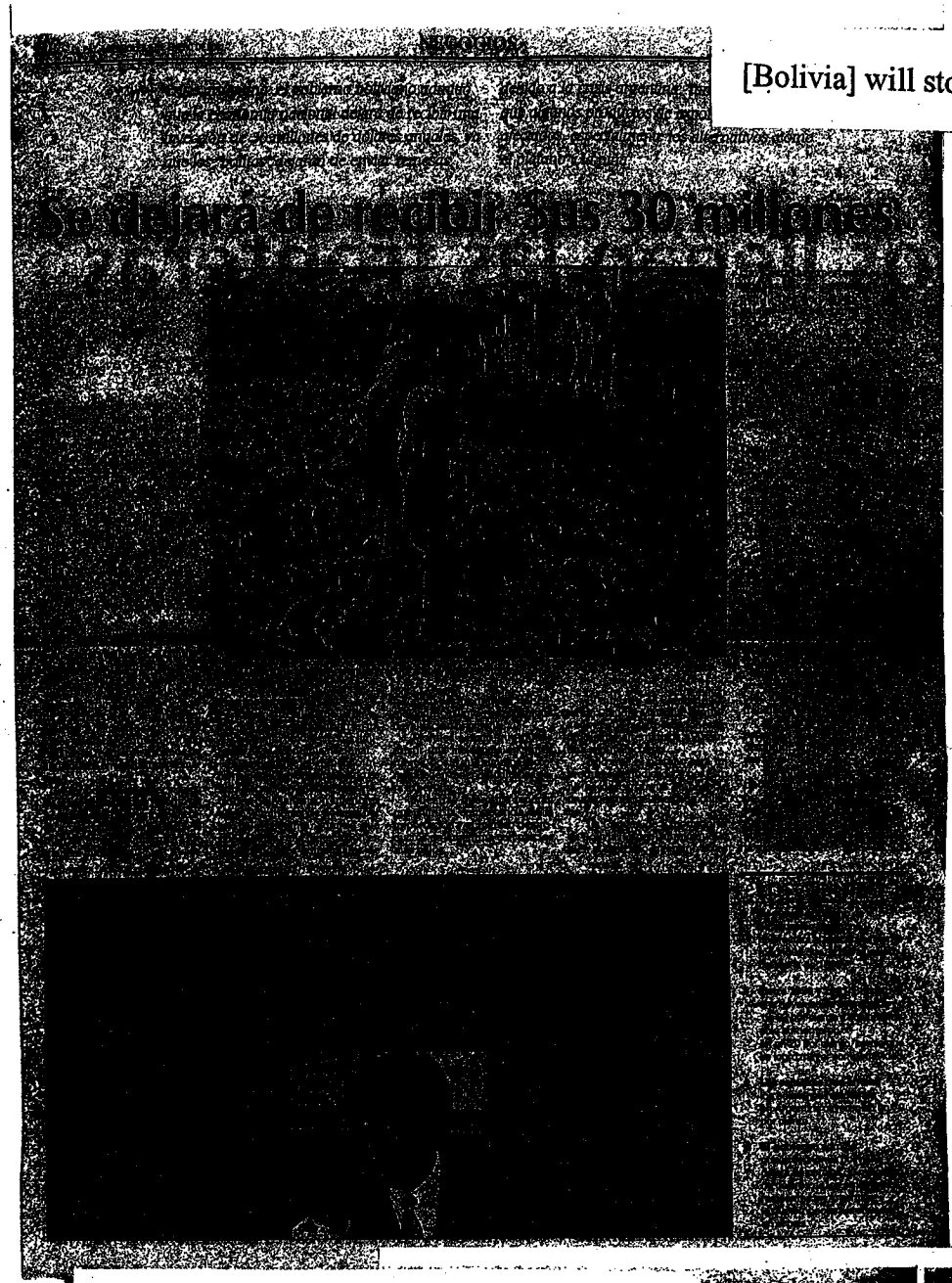
COMPROMISO. *La Federación de Organizaciones Civiles de Bolivia en Buenos Aires comprometió al Estado argentino en violaciones de Derechos Humanos, abusos, ultraje y robos a mano armada*

Policía Federal promueve la xenofobia hacia los "bolitas"

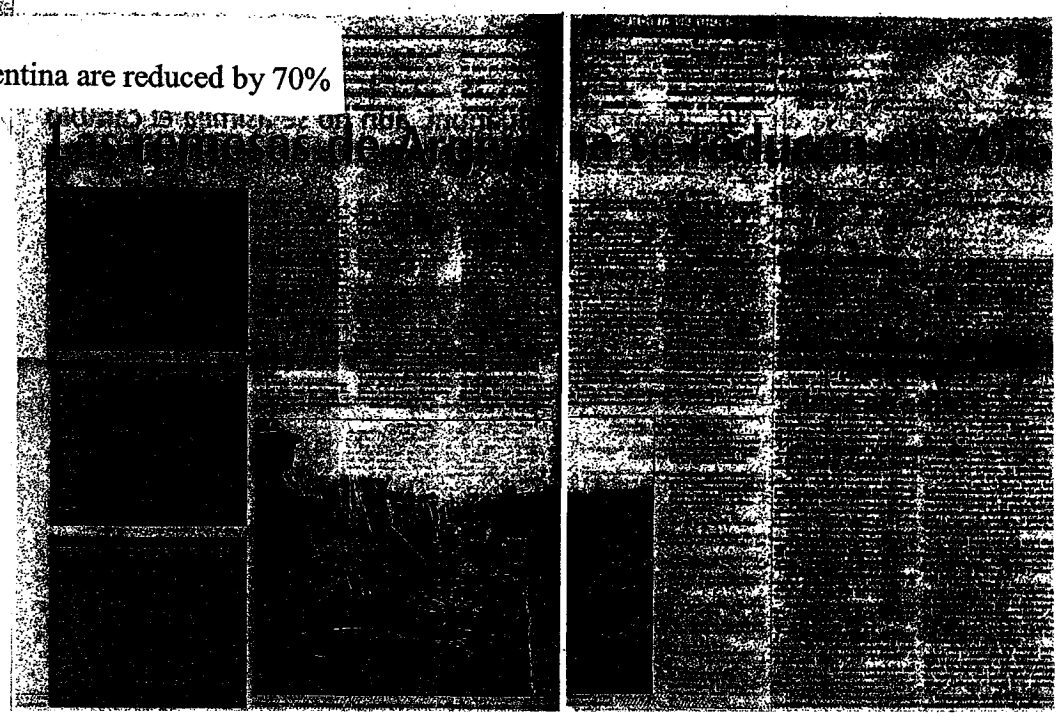
Escobar es la región del olvido y donde la ley no existe para los compatriotas

Federal Police promotes xenophobia towards Bolivians

[Bolivia] will stop receiving US$ 30 million



Remitances from Argentina are reduced by 70%



Appendix 6
Newspaper articles: Bolivians exploiting Bolivians

LA HISTORIA DE UN BOLIVIANO | El contacto para viajar fue mediante un aviso radial. Carlos llevó a Wilfredo hasta Argentina. Trabajó en ocho talleres de compatriotas y nunca le pagaron. Ahora es explotado por coreanos

Los bolivianos son verdugos de sus propios compatriotas

Muchos casos de explotación

Bolivians are tyrants to their own countrymen

Santa Cruz de la Sierra
Domingo 25 de junio de 2000
EL DEBER ▶ NACIONAL
A 21

Niños repatriados denuncian a su familia

PSICOSIS. *En Argentina miles de compatriotas sufren de asaltos, torturas y persecuciones raciales*

CARLA PAZ VARGAS

RESCATE. *René Gallardo, director del Régimen Consular dirige a la comitiva de niños cuando llegaron a Viru Viru*

Los 15 niños bolivianos que trabajaban hasta 19 horas en máquinas de coser y en condiciones infrahumanas llegaron de Buenos Aires, haciendo escala en Santa Cruz para continuar su viaje hasta Cochabamba. Denunciaron a sus familiares de autorizar que salgan fuera del país.

Las 13 niñas y los dos varones llegaron acompañados de la presidenta de la Comisión de Política Social, Elisa Zúñiga y René Gallardo, director regional del Régimen Consular. Los niños identificaron a las hermanas Amapola y Luisa Tribeño (que viven en Cochabamba), además de una hermana más (se desconoce el nombre) que vive en Buenos Aires, como las encargadas de llevarlos y esclavizarlos.

Los primeros tres meses trabajaban sin sueldo para pagar el costo de los pasajes. Todos los menores tienen familiares en Cochabamba, según explicaron el director general de Régimen Consular de Bolivia, René Gallardo y la presidenta de la Comisión de Política Social de Diputados, Elisa Zúñiga de Siles, que acompañaron a los niños hasta el valle para que retornen a sus hogares.

Las autoridades de la Cancillería boliviana agradecieron al Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano por haber donado el costo de los pasajes que permitió el traslado de los menores de edad, aunque las Fuerzas Aéreas de Bolivia también ofrecieron un avión del TAM para el traslado.

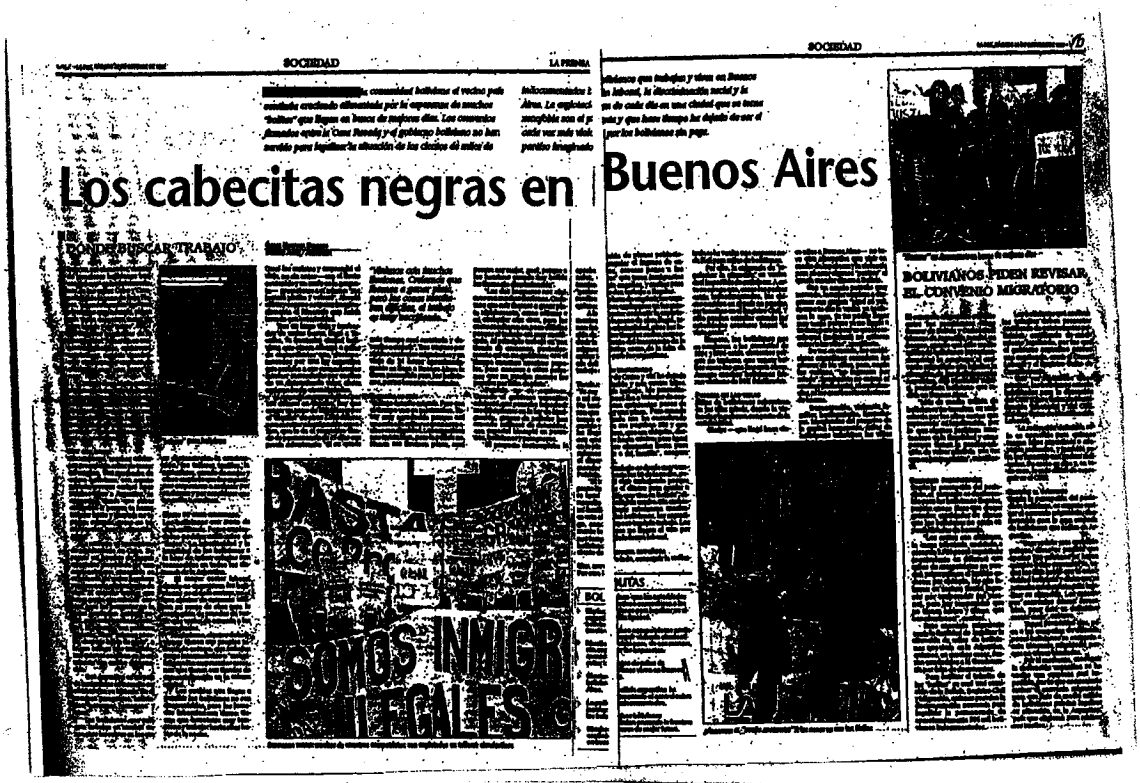
Zúñiga informó que [illegible] contacto con el primer [illegible] vicepresidente de la Cámara de Diputados de Argentina, Pablo Cafeiro para pedirle que se clausure la fábrica de ropa donde trabajaban los menores y que se analice la posibilidad de repatriar a los autores del [illegible] que son bolivianos.

Los bolivianos son torturados

"Me colgaron de los testículos, me quemaron el pecho con una plancha para que les entregara la plata, me golpearon hasta cansarse", relata Fidencio Choque (50), un boliviano residente en la Argentina, sobre el asalto a mano armada del cual fue objeto en las últimas horas en la conflictiva zona de Escobar, aproximadamente dos horas de distancia de la capital federal de Buenos Aires.

El testimonio reproducido por el periódico Página 12 de la Argentina, manifiesta además: "no creo en la coincidencia, pero cuando me di cuenta de la fecha se me puso la piel de gallina", hace un mes una patota de encapuchados torturó y robó a tres familias de quinteros bolivianos en la zona de Escobar. En el aniversario de aquel hecho, una banda de entre ocho y diez hombres entró al grito de "¡policía!" a otra casa boliviana con el objetivo de robar, recordó.

Returned children denounce their own family



SOCIEDAD

LA PRENSA

Los cabecitas negras en Buenos Aires

DÓNDE BUSCAR TRABAJO

BOLIVIANOS PIDEN REVISAR EL CONVENIO MIGRATORIO

SOMOS INMIGRANTES ILEGALES

"Little black heads" in Buenos Aires

SIGUE EL DRAMA EN ARGENTINA | Un operativo de allanamiento permitió descubrir otra fábrica de textiles que trabajaba con emigrantes ilegales

La Policía libera a otros 23 esclavos bolivianos

BUENOS AIRES | VOCERO BOLIVIANO Y DIARIO POPULAR, ESPECIAL PARA LOS TIEMPOS.- "No señor, todos trabajan 'en negro' (ilegalmente), ninguno tiene seguro médico, tampoco están legalmente en el país", fueron las palabras de Oscar Calisaya, un boliviano que se dedicaba a explotar a sus compatriotas en una fabrica textil donde trabajaban 23 bolivianos en condiciones inhumanas desde hace varios meses.

El operativo de allanamiento efectuado por la Policía Federal, el departamentó de impuestos Ances y la Superintendencia de Trabajo en el taller de Oscar Calisaya descubrió que había 23 personas trabajando durante 16 horas diarias en condiciones inadecuadas.

El hecho

Al promediar las 8:00, miembros de estas tres entidades, junto a periodistas, se presentaron en el domicilio de Calisaya y fueron recibidos por su esposa, que se negó a abrir la puerta. Luego de 10 minutos volvió a la puerta preguntando el motivo de la presencia de los efectivos. Ante la respuesta de que sería una simple rutina, decidió abrir no sin antes esconder a los trabajadores del taller.

Cuando la policía ingresó en la vivienda de tres pisos no pudo acceder al segundo y sólo logró subir al tercero, donde se hallaban las máquinas de costura, con todo el material a medio trabajo y sin operarios. Una maniobra rápida de los miembros policiales hizo que se descubra a cuatro trabajadores ocultos en una puerta asegurada y a tres operarios en un segundo patio al que saltaron para evitar ser vistos por los efectivos.

Frente a las evidencias, la Policía ordenó el fratrillaje a las habitaciones del segundo piso, donde encontró un cuarto de cuatro por dos, en el que había cinco camas marineras, cuatro de dos pisos y una de tres. Allí, un trabajador estaba oculto envuelto en una frazada, y otros tres en un ropero. También se descubrieron camas en la cocina y cerca de los baños donde dormían las mujeres.

Ante estos descubrimientos, Oscar Calisaya, propietario del taller, admitió que eran trabajadores indocumentados y sin ninguna garantía en el trabajo.

"Alquilamos el local hace seis meses y recién hacé tres que estamos trabajando, pero siempre tratamos bien a los trabajadores y sólo cumplen su trabajo desde las ocho hasta las 21 horas", dijo Calisaya.

La respuesta de Calisaya a la Policía fué desmentida por uno de los trabajadores, quien manifestó que trabajaba en el taller por cinco meses y su labor comenzaba a las ocho y concluía a las 23:30.

Todos los trabajadores del taller explicaron que su llegada a Argentina fue por la población fronteriza de Pocitos, donde no existe ningún control para el paso de Bolivia a Argentina o viceversa.

Police set free another 23 Bolivian slaves

Bibliography

Abu-Lughod, Lila (1991) Writing against Culture. ***In*** *Recapturing Anthropology.* R.G. Fox (ed.) Santa Fe: School of American Research Press. pp. 137-163.

Albó, Xavier [1999] (2002) *Iguales aunque diferentes.* La Paz, Bolivia: Ministerio de Educación, UNICEF, CIPCA. Cuadernos de Investigación N.52.

_____(1994) Ethnic Violence: the case of Bolivia. ***In*** *The Culture of Violence.* Rupensinghe, Kumar and Marcial Rubio (eds). Tokyo, New York: United Nations University Press.

Appadurai, Arjun (1996) *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

_____(1991) Global Ethnoscapes. Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology. ***In*** *Recapturing Anthropology: working in the present.* R.G. Fox (ed.) pp. 191-210

Ardaya, Gloria (1978) *Las Migraciones bolivianas hacia la ciudad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.* Master's Thesis, Buenos Aires: FLACSO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales).

Balán, Jorge (1990) La economía doméstica y las diferencias entre los sexos en las migraciones internacionales: un estudio de caso de los bolivianos en la Argentina. ***In*** *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos,* Año 5, N° 15-16, pp. 269-294.

_____(1995) Household economy and gender in internacional migration: the case of Bolivians in Argentina. ***In*** *International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants.* New York: United Nations.

Baldivia, José (2002) Migración y Desarrollo en Bolivia. ***In*** *Población, Migración y Desarrollo en Bolivia.* Instituto PRISMA (eds.) La Paz: BID (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo), EPB (Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia), PNUD (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo), OIM (Organización Internacional para las Migraciones).

Benencia, Roberto (1998-1999) El fenómeno de la Migración Limítrofe en la Argentina: interrogantes y propuestas para seguir avanzando. ***In*** *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos,* Buenos Aires: 13/14, N°40-41, pp. 419-447.

Benencia, Roberto and Karasik, Gabriela (1994) Bolivianos en Buenos Aires: aspectos de su integración laboral y cultural. ***In*** *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos,* 9, N°27, pp. 261-299.

_____(1995) *Inmigración limítrofe: los bolivianos en Buenos Aires.* Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina.

Brettell, Carolina (2000) Theorizing Migration in Anthropology. The Social Construction of Networks, Identities, Communities, and Globalscapes. ***In*** *Migration Theory. Talking across Disciplines.* Brettell, Caroline and James Hollifield (eds.). New York and London: Routledge.

Briones, Claudia, Ricardo Fava and Ana Rosan (2002) *Ni todos, ni alguien, ni uno. La politización de los indefinidos como clave para pensar la crisis argentina. Preliminary Version.* Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Grupo de Trabajo Cultura y Poder.

Brotherton, Sean (1998) *Contagious Bodies:" (Re)Defining "Risk", Stigma and the Moral Order in HIV/AIDS Education and Prevention Programs in Jamaica,* Ottawa: Canadian Bureau for International Education.

Buckser, Andrew (1999) Keeping Kosher: Eating and Social Identity among the Jews of Denmark, ***In*** *Ethnology,* N° 38 (3), pp:191-209.

Caplan, Pat (1997) ed. *Food, Health, and Identity.* London and New York: Routledge.

Carter, William (1971) *Bolivia.* New York: Praeger Publisher.

Chambers, Iain (1994) *Migrancy, Culture, Identity.* New York: Routledge.

Cortes, Genvieve (2002) Hacia una Neo-territorialidad andina? Sistemas de Movilidad y Circulación migratoria de campesinos bolivianos. ***In*** *The Andean Exodus. Transnational migration from Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.* Salman, Ton and Annelies Zoomers (eds.). Amsterdam: Cuadernos del CEDLA (Cenre for Latin American Research and Documentation), pp. 53-76.

_____(1998) A la Argentina, a EE.UU., a Israel...La emigración, estrategia vital del campesinado. ***In*** *Tinkazos,* La Paz: N° 1: 27-41.

Courtis, Corina (2000) *Construcciones de Alteridad. Discursos cotidianos sobre la inmigración coreana en Buenos Aires.* Buenos Aires: EUDEBA (Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires)

Crandon-Malamud, Libbet (1991) *From the Fat of Our Souls. Social change, political process, and medical pluralism in Bolivia.* Berkeley: University of California Press, Berkeley.

Dandler, Jorge and Medeiros, Carmen (1988) Temporary Migration from Cochabamba, Bolivia to Argentina: Patterns and Impact in Sending Areas. ***In*** *When Borders don't Divide. Labour Migration and Refugee Movements in the Americas,* Pessar, Patricia (ed.) New York: Center for Migration Studies of New York.

_____(1985) *La migración temporal de Cochabamba (Bolivia) a la Argentina: trayectorias e impacto en el lugar de origen.* Cochabamba: CERES (Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social).

Devoto, Fernando (2003) *Historia de la inmigración en la Argentina.* Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana.

FIE (Fondo de Inversion Social) (2002) *Informe sobre la situación sociodemográfica de la población migrante boliviana en la Argentina.* La Paz: FIE (Unpublished paper)

Foxen, Patricia (2001) *K'iche' Maya in a Re-Imagined World: Transnational Perspectives on Identity.* Montreal: Ph.D. Anthropology Thesis. McGill University.

_____(1996) *Transnational Migration: the making of identities through space and time.* Unpublished paper.

García Canclini, Nestor (1999) *Globalización Imaginada.* Buenos Aires: Paidos SAICF.

Giorgis, Martha (1999) *Y hasta los Santos se trajeron. La fiesta de la Virgen de Urkupiña en el boliviano gran Cordoba.* Master's thesis in Social Anthropology, Posadas, UNAM.

Grimson, Alejandro (2000) La migración boliviana en la Argentina. ***In*** *Migrantes bolivianos en la Argentina y los Estados Unidos.* Grimson, Alejandro and Paz Soldán, Edmundo. La Paz: PNUD (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo), Cuadernos de Futuro N°7, pp.7-50.

_____(1999) *Relatos de la Diferencia y la Igualdad. Los bolivianos en Buenos Aires.* Buenos Aires, Ed. Eudeba y FELACS (Federación Latinoamericana de Facultades de Comunicación Social).

_____(1997) Relatos de la Diferencia y la Igualdad. Los bolivianos en Buenos Aires. ***In*** *Nueva Sociedad,* N° 147, Caracas, pp. 97-107.

Guano, Emanuela (2003) A color for the Modern Nation: the discourse on Class, Race, and Education in the *Porteno* Middle Class. ***In*** *The Journal of Latin American Anthropology,* volume 8, N° 1, pp:148-171.

Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson (1997a) Culture, Power, Place: Ethnography at the End of an Era. ***In*** *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology.* Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson (eds.). Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 1-29.

_____(1997b) Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference. ***In*** *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology.* Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson (eds.). Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 33-51.

Hahn, Dwight (1991) *The Divided World of the Bolivian Andes. A Structural View of Domination and Resistance.* New York: Talyor and Francis.

Harris, Olivia (1995) Ethnic Identity and Market Relations: Indians and Mestizos in the Andes. ***In*** *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes. At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology.* Larson, Brooke and Olivia Harris with Enrique Tendeter (eds.). Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Hinojosa, Alfonso (2002) Cohabitando fronteras culturales de la modernidad. El caso de los campesinos tarijenos en el norte argentino. ***In*** *The Andean Exodus. Transnational migration from Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.* Salman, Ton and Annelies Zoomers (eds.). Amsterdam: Cuadernos del CEDLA (Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation), pp. 77-89.

Hinojosa, Alfonso; Pérez, Liz and Guido Cortez (2000) *Idas y Venidas. Campesinos tarijenos en el norte argentino.* La Paz: PIEB (Programa de Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia)

Hirsch, Silvia (2000) Misión, Región y Nación entre los guaraníes de Argentina. Procesos de integración y de re-etnización en zonas de frontera. ***In*** *Fronteras, naciones e identidades. La periferia como centro.* Grimson, Alejandro (ed.) Buenos Aires: CICUS and La Crujía.

INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos) (1996) *La población no nativa de la Argentina, 1869-1991,* Buenos Aires: INDEC.

Karasik, Gabriela (2000) Tras la genealogía del diablo. Discusiones sobre la nación y el Estado en la frontera argentino-boliviana. ***In*** *Fronteras, naciones e identidades. La periferia como centro.* Grimson, Alejandro (ed.) Buenos Aires: CICUS and La Crujía.

Kearney, Michael (1996) *Reconceptualizing the Peasantry. Anthropology in Global Perspective.* Colorado: Westview Press.

_____(1995) The Local and the Global: the Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism. ***In*** *Annual Review of Anthropology,* volume 24, pp:547-565.

_____(1986) From the Invisible Hand to Visible Feet: Anthropological Studies of Migration and Development. ***In*** *Annual Review of Anthropology,* volume 15, pp:331-361.

Kershen, Anne (ed.) *Food in the Migrant Experience.* England: Centre for the Study of Migration, Ashgate.

King, Russel (1986) Return Migration and Regional Economic Development: an Overview. ***In*** *Return Migration and Regional Economic Problems.* Russel, King (ed.) New Hampshire: Croom Helm.

Klein, Herbert (1993) *Haciendas y Ayllus. Rural Society in the Bolivian Andes in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centurias.* Standford, California: Standford University Press.

_____(1982) *Bolivia: the evolution of a multiethnic society.* New York: Oxford. University Press.

Larson, Brooke (1995) Communities, Cultures, and Markets. ***In*** *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes. At the Crossroads of History and Anthropology.* Larson, Brooke and Olivia Harris with Enrique Tendeter (eds.). Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Massey, Douglas (1999) Why Does Immigration Occur? A theoretical synthesis. ***In*** *The Handbook of International Migration: the American experience.* Hirschman, Charles, Philip Kasinitz and Josh DeWind (eds.). New York: Routledge Sage Foundation.

Massey, Douglas, Joaquin Arango, Hugo Graeme, Ali Kouacouci, Adela Pellegrino, J.Eduard Taylor (1998) *Worlds in Motion. Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press.

McAll, Christopher (1992) In Search of Identity: Ethnicity and the "Boundaries" of Social Anthropology. ***In***, *Class, Ethnicity, and Social Inequality.* C.McAll, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, pp:98-110.

Melamed, Diego (2002) *Irse. Cómo y por qué los argentinos se están yendo del país.* Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana.

Narayan, Kirik (1993) How Native is a "Native" Anthropologist? ***In*** *American Anthropologist,* N° 95. pp.19-34

Novick, Susana (1992) *Política y Población. Argentina 1870-1989.* Vol. 1 and 2. Buenos Aires, CEAL

Oteiza, Enrique; Novick Susana; Roberto Aruj (1997) *Inmigración y Discriminación. Políticas y Discursos,* Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Universitario, Biblioteca de Temas Argentinos.

Olwig, Karen Fog (1997) Cultural Sites: Sustaining a home in a deterritorialized world. ***In*** *Siting Culture: the Shifting Anthropological Subject.* Karen Fog Owig and Kirsten Hastrup (eds.) London and New York: Routledge.

Olwig, Karen Fog, and Kirsten Hastrup (eds.) (1997) *Siting Culture: the Shifting Anthropological Subject.* London and New York: Routledge.

Oxhorn, Philip (2002) History Catching Up With the Present?: State-Society Relations and the Argentine Crisis. ***In*** *Cambridge Review of International Affairs,* N° 15:3. pp:499-515.

Pastor, Manuel and Carol Wise (2001) From Poster Child to Basket Case. ***In*** *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 8, N°6. pp: 61-72. (November/December)

Poerregaard, Karsten (1997) Imagining a place in the Andes: In the borderland of lived, invented, and analyzed culture. ***In*** *Siting Culture: the shifting anthropological object.* Karen Fog Olwig and Kirsten Hastrup (eds.) New York, London: Routledge.

Rivera Cucicanqui., Silvia (1987) *Oppressed but not Defeated. Peasant struggles among the Aymara and Quechua in Bolivia, 1900-1980.* New York: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Participation Programme.

Rousse, Roger (1992) Making sense of settlement: class transformation, cultural struggle, and transnationalism among Mexican migrants in the United States. ***In*** *Towards a transnational perspective on migration: race, class, ethnicity and nationalism reconsidered.* Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc (eds.) Annals of the New York Academy of Science, v. 645. New York: New York Academy of Sciences.

Salih, Ruba (2003) *Gender in Transnationalism. Home, longing and belonging among Maroccan migrant women.* London and New York: Routledge Research in Transnationalism.

Sassone, Susana (2002) Espacios de Vida y Espacios Vividos. El caso de los inmigrantes bolivianos en el Area Metropolitana de Buenos Aires. ***In*** *The Andean Exodus. Transnational migration from Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.* Salman, Ton and Annelies Zoomers (eds.). Amsterdam: Cuadernos del CEDLA (Cenre for Latin American Research and Documentation), pp. 85-121.

Sharples, Rosemarie (2003) *Negotiating "Normal": Space, Illness, and Identity in an Alternative Mental Health Resource in Montreal.* Montreal: Anthropology Masters Thesis, McGill University.

Stephenson, Marcia (1999) *Gender and Modernity in Andean Bolivia.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Veltmeyer, Henry and Tellez, Juan (2001) The State and Participatory Development in Bolivia. ***In*** *Transcending Neoliberalism. Community-Based Development in Latin America.* Veltmeyer, Henry and O'Malley, Anthony (eds.). United States: Kumarian Press, pp.67-95.

Whiteford, Scott (1981) *Workers from the North. Plantations, Bolivian Labour, and the City in Northwest Argentina.* Austin. University of Texas Press.

Zalles, Alberto (2002) El enjambramiento cultural de los bolivianos en la Argentina. ***In*** *Transnacionalismo. Migración e Identidades,* ***In*** *Nueva Sociedad,* N° 178, Caracas, pp. 89-103.

Documents Downloaded from the Internet

Bolivia, Constitución Política del Estado, Electronic document
http://www.presidencia.gov.bo

INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos) *Censo 2001. Revista Aquí se Cuenta.*
Nº 6, August of 2003.
http://www.indec.mecon.gov.ar

INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadística de Bolivia). *Censo 2002. Datos preliminares.*
Electronic data
http://www.ine.gov.bo

Martínez-Echazabal, Lourdes (1998) Mestizaje and the Discourse of National/Cultural Identity in Latin America, 1845-1959. ***In*** *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Race and National Identity in the Americas. (May, 1998), pp. 21-42.
Electronic document
http://www.jstor.org

Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT). *Datos de America Latina. Estadísticas 1990-2000.*
Electronic data
http://www.oit.org.pe

Schuler, Kurt (2002) Fixing Argentina. ***In*** *Policy Analysis.* Nº 445, July 16, 2002.
Electronic document
http://www.foreignaffairs.org

Newspaper Articles

From Argentina:

La Nación

1999 *Menem: los ilegales tendrán que irse,* La Nación, January 21.

From Bolivia:

1995 *Discriminan a bolivianos en Argentina.* Presencia, August 28.

1999 *Los Cabecitas Negras en Buenos Aires,* Los Tiempos, October 30.

2000 *Policia Federal promueve la Xenofobia hacia los "bolitas"* . El Deber, June 5.

Paz Vargas, Carla

2000 *Ninos repatriados denuncian a su familia.* El Deber, June 25

2000 *Los bolivianos son verdugos de sus propios compatriotas.* Los Tiempos, July 11.

2000 *La Policia libera a otros 23 esclavos bolivianos.* Los Tiempos, October 4.

2002 *Se dejará de recibir $us 30 millones.* La Prensa, January 6, Negocios: 6C

2002 *Las remesas de Argentina se reducen en 70%.* La Prensa, January 6, Negocios:4C

2002 *La "bancarización" causa un gran dano a los bolivianos en Argentina.* La Razón, January 6, Especial A9

2002 *Unos 50 bolivianos salen a diario de Argentina para huir de la crisis.* La Razón, January 8, Especial A11.

2002 *El valle ya recibe a sus hijos migrantes.* La Prensa, January 10:6C

2002 *Bolivianos no pueden retornar.* Los Tiempos, January 18.

2002 *En sólo cinco días llegaron a Bolivia 3,685 migrantes.* La Prensa, Negocios:1C.

2002 El retorno desde Argentina plantea temas de empleo. La Razón, January 28, Política: A11.