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GENDER, CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT IN BOLIVIAN ANDES

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INTRODUCTION

The Bolivian Andean region has been being the scene, during the last decades, of diverse development actions. There are projects and programs carried out by governmental and no governmental organizations which seek to improve life conditions of people from *Aymara* and *Quechua* ethnies, according to different political point of views. Nevertheless, all of them inevitably confront many problems when dealing with both cultural peculiarities and socially constructed differences between men and women.

In last years systematic efforts have been made to carry out development policies considering women since a gender perspective. Most projects and programs that use this approach are based on the premise of subordination of women, and seek gender equality through activities addressed to 'empower' women.

However, there are not too many studies on the relationship between development and Andean culture and, even less, which treat gender issues in this political and cultural context. Furthermore, there are no works trying to systematize the Andean concept of gender however, we can find some isolated anthropological researches as well as historical studies.

Thus, I am concerned, on the one hand, to understand gender concept built by Andean populations and to analyze how this cultural construction is present now in rural communities. On the other hand, I am interested in understanding how Andean culture with such gender concept has influenced the incorporation of development actions based on the idea of empowerment of women. The challenge proposed is to see to what extend the anthropological knowledge on gender and Andean world can contribute to understand and, on certain way, to rethink development actions addressed to empower women.

The intriguing question that led me to do the present research was what happened in Milk Producers Associations of the region

of Tiwanaku (Department of La Paz, Bolivia). Such associations were created as a consequence of the implementation of a development project - the "Project of Milk Production with Peasant Women" - and were addressed to build a feminine space and to reach a social recognition of the economic role of Aymara women. However, we could observe that gradually men were replacing women in the management board and in meetings' attendance. In spite of that, women remained working in the production and maintaining the economic control of the income from milk. What is the real meaning of this in terms of the empowerment of women?

Thus, the first part of this research try to clarify how I understand some basic concepts which compose the analytic framework: Andean World, Gender and Empowerment. The second one analyzes the concept of gender historically built by Andean populations and how it is currently found in Bolivian rural communities. For that, it has been investigated how the dualism, understood as a cosmovision longstanding in this cultural universe, gains special meaning in the system of gender. In the third part there is a description of Milk Project and the environment it was developed and an analysis on how it contributed to empower women. From the standpoint showed in the second part, on the fourth one an attempt has been made to understand the meaning of the way men and women participated in the Project of Milk Production. This showed that the dual logic, which imparts meaning to the Andean world, is recreated and experienced continuously within gender relations. This has in turn led to a reinterpretation of actions of development. In the conclusions, it is rethought the concept of empowerment used in gender and development approach, according to cultural variables.

The information used in this research is from my own field experience. During three years (1990-1993) I worked in Bolivia with Aymara peasant women. First, as a consultant of the "Milk Production Project", when I evaluated its social impact in the population, and when I participated in capacitation activities.

Further, I worked as a researcher in SETAM (Servicios Técnicos para la Mujer) the NGO that was in charge of this project and also works with similar programs in rural development addressed to women. In the present paper I use interviews I have done with women and men who participated actively of the Milk Project, most of them carried out in Aymara language. Indeed, all my daily experience working with SETAM's team and with Aymara people is, in different ways, present here. Most information and ideas came from informal conversations, direct observations I could do during many travels when I spend many days (each) in the communities, living in the peasants' houses.

There is a great deal of interest in the study of the history of the United States, and it is not surprising that many of the most important events in our history have been the subject of much discussion and debate. The study of history is not only a means of understanding the past, but also a means of understanding the present and the future. It is through the study of history that we can learn from the mistakes of the past and avoid them in the future.

The study of history is also a means of understanding the human condition. It is through the study of history that we can learn about the lives of the people who lived in the past, and we can learn about the challenges they faced and the solutions they found. It is through the study of history that we can learn about the human mind and the human spirit.

History is a subject that is both fascinating and challenging. It is a subject that requires a great deal of research and a great deal of thought. It is a subject that is both a science and an art. It is a subject that is both a means of understanding the past and a means of understanding the present and the future.

I. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Andean World

A category that will be very useful for this analysis is "Andean world" which delineates the geographical and historical amplitude characteristic of the sociocultural universe I want to comprise. 'The Andean' is defined as a distinctive cosmovision structured by some elements with a long historical stay; these elements are characteristic of populations that existed and still exist in the geographic area around the central part of the Andean Mountains. Those elements persist as indicators of the cultural identity, despite the intricate web of struggles, dominations and overlapping of different peoples that characterize the history of the region.

This extensive and high area, with the Titicaca Lake as its "epicenter", has been occupied by various ethnic groups. They have bred cattle and have produced a very sophisticated agriculture system, since some centuries before our era. In spite of great social diversity found among the indigenous peoples in the Andes, the constant interchange and trade among them allowed the development of a common cultural background. Between the VIII and XV centuries, regional domains emerged forging vast political units and developing a certain homogeneity in terms of language, culture and, especially, religion. Some of them were the *Tiwanaku* civilization, the *Aymara* realms and the *Wari*. In 1450 the *Inca* empire – created from the nobility of the *Quechua* ethnic group – started its expansion, managing a big extension of land. *Inca* controlled diverse ethnic groups and imposed its language, religion, political system, embracing all the communities in the same economic structure. They rearranged the common cultural background according to their political interests.

The *Inca* dominion remained until 1532, when Spanish arrived to this part of South America, installing the most destructive colonization. Alike it happened in the rest of the continent, the

European diseases annihilated a big part of the population. With the people who remained, Spanish dictated a completely new order and logic that did not recognize their traditions and values, forcing them to work in mines and in handcraft work.

Some centuries later, when the national states emerged (Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Ecuador and Colombia), they promoted the establishment of big farms which embraced a bigger segment of the population submitting them again to forced work. Besides, this arrangement destroyed many indigenous communities damaging the traditional ways of organization both, in terms of the communal structure and the authority systems as well.

In spite of these deep changes experienced by the traditional Andean population, it remains a strong ethnic identity that marks the difference between them and the other segments of the national societies. The *Aymaras* and *Quechuas* of today impress us due to their capacity of resistance; not only several political struggles have been taking place up to now but, also an ethnic movement for their rights of difference has been very strong during the last decades.

In general terms, all the rural societies in the Andean region, both Aymara and Quechua speaking, share a similar cultural background; Andeanist scholars agree that most of the traditional symbolic and social structures remain, with different intensity, in the contemporary societies (Albó, 1984; Bouysse-Cassagne et alli, 1987; Murra, 1975). Cultural differences are, basically, consequences of the variety of relationships people maintain with the non-Andean world. Thus, there are places like *La Paz*, capital of Bolivia, where most of the inhabitants belong to the Aymara ethnic and their language and culture are printed in the structure of the city. While also, we can find indigenous communities that maintain only weak ties with the national societies, isolated in the highlands and having a very strict subsistence economy.

Nowadays, in Bolivia, the *Quechua* population (37% of the inhabitants of the country) occupies specially the valley regions that surround the highlands. Besides, *Aymara*, who counts for 24% of the Bolivian population, are the principal inhabitants of the highlands.

It is in this scene that I consider the gender concept of the Andean world, as a system based on a cosmovision where the thinking logic operates with historical continuity. Although many changes have occurred, structuring elements are deeply rooted up to now. This universe has a kind of "cultural matrix" based on a particular sort of dualism that defines the peculiarity of Andean and its gender concept that always influence and reinterpret any intervention although in different levels.

Gender

The Feminist Movement, that arose in the 1960's in the middle classes of the urban populations from the Western countries, had not only provoked a political impact, but also influenced the development of the social sciences. Many critics emerged at the beginning of the 1970's related to the masculine bias in social sciences, particularly concerned to the participation of women in societies and cultures studied. This approach generated investigations in search of the comprehension of the considered universal subordination of the woman trying to identify the basis of the constant asymmetry in the relationship between men and women.

Nevertheless, the great scope of this new research field was to find that we cannot consider 'woman' as a universal category. Rather, it is the clear distinction established between masculine and feminine that is a common component of all cultures. It was based on this starting point that the term **gender** was conceived. In order to distinguish it from 'sex', what is limited to the biological characteristic of women and men, 'gender' emphasizes

the socio-cultural classification to define feminine and masculine.

Moreover, it is important to see that the concept of gender is constructed through all social spheres, as Scott (1988) highlights:

"Gender is constructed through kinship, but not exclusively; it is constructed as well in the economy and the polity, which, in our society at least, now operate largely independently of kinship". (Scott, 1988:44)

Indeed, the concept of gender has a double movement in social life. On the one hand, it is a cultural construction about feminine and masculine, which is structured since a specific cosmovision. That means that gender is inserted in a group of ideas which form the basic order of the world within certain cultural universe and, as that, can change along history. On the other hand, the social construction based on sexual differences works as a kind of elementary classification that also helps to order the universe and to regulate human relations. I agree with Scott when she argues that:

"(...) conceptual languages employ differentiation to establish meaning and that sexual difference is a primary way of signifying differentiation. Gender, then, provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interaction. When historians look for the ways in which the concept of gender legitimizes and constructs social relationships, they develop insight into the reciprocal nature of gender and society and into the particular and contextually specific ways in which politics construct gender and gender constructs politics." (Scott, 1988:45-46)

Thus, for the purpose of this paper, I want to understand how the gender concept from Andean world has been structured along history according to both its traditional cosmovision and the western influences. Also, I will study how "gender language" has been used to ordain the universe and social relations. Based on that I will analyze, in a specific situation, how this concept interacts with recent development actions that seek after empowerment of women. In certain sense, I want to recover the anthropological character of gender, insofar as what I try is to do a kind of "Andean ethnology of gender".

Empowerment

The concept of **empowerment** has been taking an important place in development discourse lately. It has being used mostly in NGOs spheres, as a new approach to deal with poor people in 'Third World', which seek to strengthen grassroots organizations and personal capabilities to overcome poverty. As synthesizes Johnson in a study on women's empowerment in Latin America:

"Empowerment means attempts by the poor and powerless – or those whose interests are not represented in the state of whose demands are not met by state policies – to meet their needs, either through their own organizations or through pressure on the state to make it act in their interests (...). 'Empowerment' is part of the discourse of those non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which have an ideology of 'siding with the poor' (...). Such NGOs try to use their relatively superior resources and position to support process of empowerment" (Johnson, 1992:148).

As the author asserts, empowerment is closely related to power and then, it has to be clear what sort of power we are talking about, for whom and to what end. It is important take note that empowerment does not have the same meaning for everybody;

differences of class, ethnic and gender, among others, are basic conditions which define the sort of power that has to be developed.

In this sense, empowerment necessarily implies an understanding of the difference, and I think that it means a certain fragility due to the way it is employed. The danger of falling in a kind of ethnocentrism is always eminent in development actions. Particularly, it is more dangerous when the concept that want to be employed is defined from a western viewpoint and, then, with a meaning quite delimited, as it happens with 'power'. Such concept is identified in the western world almost exclusively with politics and public spheres. To conceive power in different contexts, that is, in a more large meaning, may be quite difficult to people used to deal with models and goals well defined as is usual in development spheres.

Despite that, empowerment has been largely used in gender issues. Empower women has been the principal goal of projects and programs of development with a feminist perspective. According to Johnson, quoting both Vargas and Sen & Grown, women's empowerment involves: gaining a voice, having mobility, establishing a public presence, obtaining control over different aspects of their daily lives, gaining control over power structures (or changing them), strengthen organizational capacities, and crystallizing visions and perspectives that will move them beyond their present situation (Johnson, 1992:148).

It is evident throughout the essay that, to empower women in Latin America, the principal means has been to push them to public spheres and to strengthen organizations where women's participation is important. Indeed, they look for more participation of women in traditional masculine spheres. Although I think that such ways are important and have been very effective in many situations, we have to be aware that they are not the only ones and the same to every social and cultural circumstance.

One important point that has not been even mentioned either by Johnson or by Sen and Grown (1988), is the one concerned to knowledge. As Foucault has asserted uncountable times, knowledge is closely related to power. The fact of having access to certain information and experiences gives to the person or to the community the possibility of controlling certain spheres of private and social life. Power, and thus, empowerment, does not reduce to the political and public arena; it is spread in all social relations and probably it is in the 'capillary' level that it is more strong. According to Foucault (1981), power is diffused through society rather than located in the state, and thus has to be understood in this much broader context.

In this sense, I consider that an interesting analytical instrument to understand empowerment in gender perspective is offered by the marriage done between feminist and post-modernist analysis. Parpart, one of the scholars who dived in this field, asserts:

"Power is not exercised solely at the level of the state, and it urges a closer, more localized and specific examination of Third World women's strategies for survival. The recognition of Third World women as persons with their own history, practice and achievements would alter and improve development theory and practice (...).

An approach to development that recognizes the connection between knowledge and power, and seeks to understand local knowledge both as sites of resistance and power, would provide a more subtle understanding of Third World women's lives. (...) Attention to difference and to multiple power/knowledge systems can encourage self-reliance and a belief in one's capacity to act." (Parpart, 1993:456)

Thus, I think that there are two ways of considering women's

empowerment. The first, more largely used by feminists, is the one that leads women to participate in the masculine world, particularly in public spheres. This one, from my point of view, is very influenced by western vision of power, and may lead to development actions that not necessary correspond to women's need and interests. The second way is through strengthening the value socially given to women's world, where the improvement of traditional feminine knowledge has an important role to play. In this sense, the possibility of different ways of considering power is taken into account. However, it does not mean that both ways are excluding, rather it is probably the combination of them that will lead to overcome gender inequalities.

II. DUALISM: THE ANDEAN STYLE OF ORGANIZING THE WORLD

The Universe is divided in pairs

Aymara proverb

The Genesis of dualism

According to Aymara mythology, the world passed by three different ages: the age of *Taypi*, the age of *Puruma* and the age of *Awqa-Pacha Kuti*; each related to a specific sphere or space.

The first age that of *Taypi* occurred in the 'Isla del Sol' (Sun Island) in the middle of Titicaca Lake (in Aymara: *Taypi Qala* – central stone). This lake is considered by many different myths, as the location where the genesis of the world took place.

Legend tells how, in that time, many different ethnics and cultures lived together in the same space (Sun Island). This came about also when all different gods were related to this main center. The principal god was *Tunupa* who, in spite of its relationship with fire and volcanoes – masculine elements – is also related with the aquatic surroundings of *Titicaca* – feminine space – containing therefore, a kind of 'androgyny'. As Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris (1987:20-21) pointed out, *Taypi* is a kind of potential micro-cosmos from which diversity emerges.

Next age was *Puruma*, the age of the diffuse light, that of sunset (or sunrise). It is connected with beings from the jungle and wilder lands without agriculture. There is an 'edge' situation: forces working from the borders and trying to divide what originally was an only entity. Thus, lips split, twins are born, corncobs are duplicated, and so on, forming pairs, generally symmetrical (Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris, 1987:27). This, for me, characterizes the rise of dualism, though embryonic.

Age of *Awqa* or *Pacha Kuti* means confrontation. It refers to the time when wars among Aymaras led to the formation of two groups,

the halves *Urko* and *Uma*, which began to form the Andean geography. Nevertheless, *Awqa* also refers to elements divided into opposite pairs that cannot be together. In other words, they oppose to each other as black and white, water and fire, night and day or enemy groups. The authors previously mentioned discriminate between two feasible interpretations of this concept. The first one refers to the idea of 'encounter' expressed by *Tinku*. The other one alludes to 'alternation' and is summarized by *Kuti*.

Kuti means 'turn round', change, turn, alternation. Solstice, for example, is called *Wilkakuti*, meaning 'sun returns', is when the solar cycle is reverted. *Pacha Kuti* is then, the age when the world can be turn round. It is the beginning of a new life's cycle, as it happens in war times. The same term is used to name the time when an *Inca* died and it was also used to call the arrival of Spaniards to the Andean region. Therefore, *Awqa* age is when dualism is settled down, put order in the world and, simultaneously, contained the embryo of a new cycle through *Pacha Kuti*.

Summarily, the three *Pachas* point out three distinct forms of thinking the relationship between two elements:

- * *Taypi* is encounter, conjunction and cohabitation of opposites in similar conditions; it is when humankind is created.
- * *Puruma* is the border dividing the one into opposite pairs.
- * *Awqa* is the contrast between opposite pairs. They can show themselves through *Tinku*, trying to equilibrate opposite forces pointing out differences or, through *Kuti*, alternating contraries.

Organization of the Andean time is, in fact, a real myth of origin. In it, the sign of the change to actual time is division into two, in other words: dualism. Dualism represents the culture itself as a specificity of the Andean world it is part of its own identity. However, we should remember that time is cyclical so, the process of the three ages can be regenerated in different

moments. It is also possible that the way in which new elements are assimilated by the culture is through the 'civilizing cycle' of the myth. Through this cycle, elements are transformed and incorporated following the logic of the culture. This can be a feasible interpretation of what had happened with the development project we will analyze.

Dualism and gender concept

Many authors who work on the Andean culture remark the strong presence of a dualistic structure in the Andean social organization and in its symbolic system (Duviols, 1973 and 1976; Rivière, 1984; Platt, 1976; Poole & Zuidema, 1988; Wachtel, 1974; Arnold, 1992; Berg, 1992). Nevertheless, dualism is not an exclusive characteristic of these peoples; the concept was intensively worked in Anthropology (as Lévi-Strauss, 1976), based on researches from diverse societies and cultures.

Dualism concerns to the tendency of many symbolic systems of splitting the category of persons, natural elements, social organization, mythological and living beings, etc., into two classes. The logical relation between them is, in general, of contradiction and complementary opposition, although each culture makes and uses this kind of classification in a particular way.

The specific ways of Andean dualism and, particularly, the one related to gender concept are present in the physical, social and supernatural universe which is organized in pairs. It means that we can find them in opposition like high and low, right and left, hard and soft, external and internal, among others.

According to this conceptualization of the Andean dualistic logic, the pair man-woman occupies a prominent position: it is the model, the pair of reference used to talk on the other pairs. It works as a matrix which associates and synthesizes all the other polarities. Thus, high, hard, right and external are

considered masculine characteristics, while their opposition, low, soft, left and internal, are feminine. The gender language reorders and classifies the universe, synthesizing it into two large categories.

From the particular way in which 'dualistic' logic appears in Andean cultures, we can deduce that their gender concept is more than a regulatory instrument for the relationships between men and women. As it was discussed before, gender has two different aspects that can be distinguished. First, gender language applies to the natural world and also to the social one; the Universe is classified according to a dual order where the female-male pair is the reference matrix for the logic of thinking. Second, gender concept summarizes basic principles that define the Andean world in which cosmovision is structured as microsystems of the universe's values. It means that all the culture can be known and recognized from the way in which the relationship between men and women works.

Therefore, there is a wide and evident association of all elements of the Andean universe with femininity and masculinity. These categories act as opposite poles of reference of the symbolic universe, as it can be seen next:

MASCULINE

FEMININE

. Man

. Woman

. High: highland
mountains
sky (*Illapa* god)
ayllu's partiality:
aransaya/alasaya

. Low: valley
'pampa'
land (*Pachamama* goddess)
ayllu's partiality:
urinsaya/mäsaya

. Exterior: public
stranger
'mestizo'
Sun (light)

. Interior: domestic
native
Indian
Moon (obscurity)

. Right

. Left

. Rigid/dried: land

. Soft/humid water

The relationship between these opposite pairs is characterized by complementary, hierarchy, autonomy and relation: that is the Andean particular way of living the dualism.

The relationship maintained between the halves in the Andean dualist system is a **complementarity** one, since each half has meaning only if its opposite pair exists and, together, they form a unity. Nevertheless, the relationship between the halves of the dualistic pairs is not symmetric, it is differentiated and **hierarchic**. One part has a higher social value than the other and power relations between them can be generated.

Moreover, the Andean dualism has a relational character. The fact of a being or a thing belonging to the category A or B does not mean that this characteristic is part of the essence of beings or things. The same item or person can be classified as high or low, left or right, etc., in different circumstances, according to the place it occupies in a such relation. It means that elements of the Andean universe have not fixed classification; they have the capacity of moving in the dualistic order. Evidently, there is a tendency to classify the element in one or in the other polarity; however, what I want to emphasize is that the classification is not absolute and the possibilities of moving are effective in many circumstances.

Natural environments are a good example of the relational character of dualism. In spite of existing the generic opposition between mountain and valley in the Andes, a certain place can be identified with either category depending on its relation with the other when it is being classified. Thus, a peasant from the valley denominates the medium part of the mountain - *taypirana* - as highlands, while another from highlands would call the same area as valley. Moreover, in highlands although generally mountains are considered masculine while "pampas" are feminine, the same mountain can be male or female depending on its relative altitude when comparing it with another one.

Furthermore, the dualism has a particular characteristic: the halves not only maintain a complementary and hierarchical relationship, but constitute different worlds as well. Women and men, for example, have also distinctive cultures and, in certain extend, they are divided into compartments, it means that their universes do not mix in diverse aspects. Thus, there are spaces which are exclusively feminine, while other spheres are masculine. Therefore, when we use the gender metaphor to talk of other classifications, this peculiarity, the autonomy of spheres, is present.

Nonetheless, complementarity and autonomy seem to be opposite properties and mutually excluding according to the dualistic logic. However, we can consider and think on a pair of elements which are independent between them and, simultaneously, each of them is part of a whole. I assert that this is one of the peculiarities of the Andean culture, that is, it is part of its own dynamic: the permanent conflict between "to be together" and "to be separated", what Albó called "the Aymara paradox" (Albó, 1985:7).

The Andean dualism also contemplates the existence of a third dimension, both temporal and spatial: the *Taypi* (Bouysse-Cassagne & Harris, 1987; Platt, 1976; Harris, 1978). Nevertheless, I do not consider that it means that the Andean thinking is triadic and not dualistic. Indeed, this third sphere constitutes a logical strategy that allows to relativize the polarities, operating as a negotiating space of the extremes. It is a transitory place and a beginning time that allow the cohabitation of antagonistic powers to suit into the new order of the opponents and, then, maintaining the dualistic ideal. This is dualism under its complementarity and relational aspects.

Another concept, *Awqa*, means splitting into two; there is where difference is established, autonomy between halves is emphasized and hierarchy is stressed in Andean dualism. The Andean historical cycle is then the cycle of dualism, where a constant

game is set up among the different possibilities of thinking or living 'the two'. An intermediate time is also included - *Puruma* - where transition takes place according to Aymara mythology.

Andean concept of gender through history

Considering all this cosmovision, I would like to examine how the gender-dualism has been constructed and lived by Andean population, comparing the last phases of the regional history: pre-Inca societies, *Inca* empire and Hispanic colonization. I try to analyze the changes through three different spheres of the social life: socio-politic, economic and religious.

Socio-politic

In pre-Inca societies, the *ayllu* synthesized the traditional way of the complex social, political, economic and territorial organization of the Andes, and it is a classic example of complementarity. It was based on kinship relations and its members shared the same ethnic identity. The *ayllu* was constituted by two "partialities" or "halves" which, dislike many dualistic societies, were endogamic and the residential rule was the patrilocality.

The *Ayllu's* territory was discontinuous, dispersed over different ecological zones, according to the altitude, whereas both halves were represented in each zone. Although the high and the low partialities occupy specific spaces, performing distinct economic and political functions, the *ayllu* itself was understood as constituted by both halves; indeed, they were necessarily complementary.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the hierarchy was also present, to the extent that the high partiality was considered more important, particularly because there was the political head office of all community. Also it was common that

the local authority dominated all the *ayllu*.

Authority's functions of the traditional *ayllu*, is assumed by couples. This system is closely related to the Andean concept of person; *jaq'i*, that means 'person' in Aymara, refers only to married people. A single is not considered a completely social being and, as such, cannot assume any important social functions. The higher authorities were the *Mallku* (man) and the *Mama T'alla* (woman), followed by other couples of authority in each instance. Both masculine and feminine authorities had specific roles and domains into the communities (Zuidema, 1980:74). The hierarchy of groups and authorities did not mean either a class division or an economic differentiation. The formation of groups constituted just a social frame. The power of authorities was based on prestige. Class division did not exist; it was introduced by *Incas*.

The *Inca* state was a very hierarchical structure, where political power was closed sustained by the religious ideology. There was, in one side, the *Inca* nobility with its own hierarchy, such as special groups of women – the "sun's virgins". In the other side were the "common people", that is, peasants. The communal couple of authorities continued existing, but a new one was introduced as intermediary between the *ayllus* and the *Inca* state: the *Curaca*, which was always a man and had recompenses for his work through land, products and women (Rasnake, 1989).

Nevertheless, the Hispanic dominion did not respect any authority. They destroyed completely the *Inca* state and they tried to annihilate the *ayllu*'s political structure. In spite of the strong Andean resistance, which allowed the maintenance of some features of the *ayllu* organization until now, the Spanish imposed a new order: the colonial government. In such system, men were privileged as the political agent: the governmental authorities were men and, in the few spaces of dialogue between the communities and the colonialists, only the masculine leaders were recognized as representative of their people.

Thus, we can perceive an increase loss of space in the political sphere by women. First, they had an equilibrated position related to men in pre-Inca societies. However, *Incas* caused two big ruptures: the introduction of class division that meant that women had a religious specific value and, then, they could be managed as object of prestige by men (for example, as present to the *Curaca* or as offering to the God Sun); and the establishment of the *Curaca's* institution, an authority in an important intermediate position occupied only by men. In spite of that, women maintained their politic actuation in the communal domain. Nevertheless, the great breakdown was produced by the Hispanic colonization that simply ignored women as political agent.

Economy

The classical sexual division of work characterized the pre-Inca societies: women took care of children and household tasks, while men were responsible for agriculture and defense activities. However, women also charged some roles in agriculture and took care of the cattle. Moreover, they had a special job in their culture: weave, which was considered a very important task, as much as agriculture. It was through the sophisticate drawings and colors engraved in the diverse kind of textiles that the ethnic identity, the basic principles of their culture and their history were printed and showed¹.

The inheritance system in these societies was parallel, that is, women had access to the land and cattle through the mother, and men through the father. Thus, both had the same rights to inherit the material benefits (Lambert, 1980).

During the *Inca* domain, women continued to have autonomous access

¹ Verónica Cereceda (1978 and 1987) has been studying the meaning of the weaving in the Andean cultures, and she emphasizes the important role of the women in the preservation of the Andean world-view during the history through this activity.

to resources, but the state had the power to commission the single to serve the nobility or to occupy special religious positions in *Cusco*, the capital of the empire. Thus, these women lost their rights to the land and broke the relationship with their relatives and original group.

In the communities, the former sexual division of work remained. Besides, the weaving, the principal feminine activity, was considered one of the most important riches of the *Inca* state. The elaborated clothes operated as distinctive class, and the nobility had a special group of women to weave for them.

The Hispanic colonization introduced new values. Activities related to the market were regarded as the most important, such as agriculture and mining, both carried on by men. Consequently, women's reproductive role was not recognized as work and then, they were not regarded as economic agents.

The new system of inheritance imposed was patrilineal and women did not have access to land anymore, at least legally. In spite of that, in some *ayllus* which preserved features of the traditional structure the old law has continued to be obeyed until now, and women acceded both to land and to cattle through the matrilinear inheritance.

It is important to take note of that the colonial state also instituted new dress patterns, devaluating the characteristic Andean weaving. Despite traditional textiles have continued to be produced up to now, their social meaning and value changed. On the one hand, the significant position occupied by women gotten through their principal activity was fallen. On the other hand, devaluation of weaving help to loose the ethnic identity in most communities, since drawing and weaving patterns printed, among many things, the differences between the groups.

Religiosity

In pre-Inca societies, the entity creator of the universe was an androgynous being: *Wiracocha*, who was male and female at the same time. All other sacred beings, hierarchically subordinated, were arranged into sexually distinct realms. The idea of complementary was present in the Andean pantheon, where divinities were composed by pairs. In the division of domains, gods took care of forces from heaven and goddess of those from land. The deities of the sky and mountains were led by *Illapa*, responsible for the thunder, lightning and rains, who was also regarded as the god of the conquest; he had a male appearance and principally men worshipped him. On the other side, land fertility, agriculture products, metals and clays were in charge of diverse female entities; all of them were guided by *Pachamama* who detained the reproductive power. Women maintained especial worships to *Pachamama*.

Nevertheless, pre-Inca religious organizations embraced the dualism characteristic of autonomy as well, since groups of divinities were not only defined by their sex, but also had different gods/goddesses and ceremonial, as Irene Silverblatt remarks:

"Many (although not all) of the religious worships organized to honor the Andean divinities were divided according to the gender lines: women and men propitiated their own religious organizations, dedicated to the divine beings from the cosmos of the appropriated sex".
(Silverblatt, 1990:17)

Entities in the pre-Inca culture were not divided into the good one and the bad one. Both female and male divinities just had power – more or less, according to their hierarchical position – which could be addressed to work in favor of human interests or not, depending on the behaving of people and the worship they offered.

Following the religious tradition in the Andes, *Incas* also arranged their cosmos through gender dualism, and most of their divinities were the same of conquered peoples. *Wiracocha* remained as the creator entity, but the male and female realms become to be reigned by the God Sun and the Goddess Moon, respectively. Despite the creator of the universe was an androgynous being, and even despite the absolute gender parallelism in deities' hierarchy, the Sun – a male divinity – was the one that had dominance over the empire; he was regarded as the supreme god of *Incas*. Thus, such new arrangement showed a deep rupture in gender concept: the male side began to achieve more value and power.

However, it is interesting how the relational character of Andean dualism is present also in religious spheres. As it was seen before, to belong to a half is not determined, but depends on other element to which it is currently related. Objects, beings and surroundings are organized in pairs that do not include a stable principle that classified them as masculine or feminine. What defines the half to which it belongs, is the relation of opposition with the other element that is forming the pair. The previous classification shows how a being or entity can be taken as masculine or feminine. Depending on the element to which it is being confronted, it will take one of the two aspects or halves. It is in this way that some mutations or movements have taken place. That was what occurred with *Pachamama*, the land's goddess. She has changed from being feminine in pre-Inca times to masculine during *Inca* times. This was because she was first opposite to *Illapa*, god of the skies; the opposition was between land-low and sky-high. However, later *Pachamama* opposed to *Mama Cocha*, goddess of water; in this moment the characteristic of land that opposed was that it is rigid and the water is soft.

However, the Hispanic colonization brought an absolute different cosmovision: the Christianity. According to such religion, the universe is organized and controlled by Trinity – the union of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – that denoted a strong male dominance. The Holy Spirit simply does not have a sex, what

is quite different of the androgynous *Wiracocha* who had both sexes. The conception of femininity is synthesized in the figure of the Virgin Mary, whose characteristics are: motherhood, resignation, suffering, subordination to men, virginity, pureness, etc.

Christianity also introduced the idea of the good and the evil as antithetical and absolutely distinct powers. The Devil is the entity opposite to God, Trinity and saints, and it is very powerful. It is quite interesting to take note of the close relationship between the devil and women, particularly manifested through the institution of the witchcraft. The female ideal is the peaceful and harmless Virgin Mary; however, if women break such ideal, they become extremely dangerous because they have the power of the evil. Nevertheless, women are always sacred: perfectly pure so, very near to the heaven, or completely perilous belonging to the devil realm: the hell. In fact, women now do not have the same cosmological status than men.

III. THE PROJECT OF MILK PRODUCTION

Tiwanaku: past and present

The Milk Production Project worked with seven communities in *Tiwanaku*, which lies in the countryside of the Department of La Paz, near the Titicaca Lake. The population belongs to the *Aymara* ethnic group and, in 1990, there were 5.594 inhabitants distributed in 965 families. Located at 3,800 meters above the sea level, the 'Altiplano', as is called this region, is characterized by severe ecological limitations. The weather is cold and dry, with frosts that frequently destroy crops and pastures.

Historically, this region was the cradle of *Tiwanaku* civilization, where it was located its principal ceremonial center. After the Spanish colonization, this area was occupied by a huge "hacienda" (estate), which was divided when the Agrarian Reform in 1953. Thus, land was parceled out and some communities were born.

People are *Aymaras* but, they do not have a specific group identity manifested by a different social name, clothes or special dialects, as it happens with other Andean groups both *Aymaras* and *Quechuas*, like *Laymi*, *Macha*, *Tarabuco* and *Jalq'a*. Such groups have been living in their ancestral lands, which were not affected by the "hacienda" regime. *Tiwanaku* people, however, consider themselves and are seen by the population around just as *Aymara* peasants.

Communal identity nevertheless, acts as generator of solidarity and, it is manifested through kinship relationships, celebrations, competitions and social organizations. Moreover, in certain way local populations has the *Aymara's* identity reinforced by the presence in this region of the most important archaeological ruins in the country. In recent years, in solstice and equinox, *Tiwanaku* has been converted in a national center of

celebrations, both political and religious, where Aymara's ethnic rights are demanded and historical identity is ransomed.

Most people, specially men, have a migrating experience due to the proximity of the city of La Paz (70 km), the decreasing availability of land, and the insecurity of the agriculture work which is at mercy of climatological vicissitudes. In terms of education, there is a clear distinction according to sex and age; men, traditionally, have more access to school than women and have a better 'management' of the outside world. Most of them master both Aymara and Spanish languages, know how to deal with money and have an easy transit in the urban areas. Furthermore, in the rural unions, which work like a communal government, the familiar representation is in charge of the man; the woman can participate only when her husband is absent, following the gender-political order imposed by the colonization.

The agrarian structure is based on family land holdings and communal lands, having an average of eight hectares per domestic unit. The economy is based on the subsistence agriculture and in livestock production – cattle and sheep. There are not a great variety of crops and, in general, production is low, being mainly for self-consumption or exchange in local markets. It is very common, the migration to La Paz, specially of men, during the periods where agriculture work is not so hard.

Agriculture is complemented by cattle breeding activities. Animals are used principally as labor power to plough the land, and as producers of fuel since manure is the principal source of energy used in the kitchen. Besides, livestock are regarded as a financial reserve to which peasants may resort whenever they need surplus money. Cattle are seen as food providers, particularly due the milk (people almost do not consume bovine meat), with which they are used to prepare home-made cheese for household consume and to be sold in the local markets. Just in the last decades the sale of liquid milk started, through the introduction of the milk industry in Bolivia.

Contemporary studies on peasant households in the Andes found out that there is no agriculture task gender exclusive; both women and men share the work. However, we can also find the common trend of peasant societies that men tend to carry out the hardest tasks. Also, there are some activities, like plough for example, that are exclusively masculine because of their strong symbolical meaning in Andean culture (land is female and only men can "fertilize" it). In spite of that, men are the only ones who are socially recognized as "the producer" and are seen as responsible for agricultural work, even when, because of men's migration, women carry out all the work. The agriculture labor is seasonal; throughout the year there are periods of more intense work, like during the harvest and sowing when it is necessary to spend about eight hours along around 60 days. In other periods it is needed just some hours for agricultural tasks.

Concerning to cattle breeding activities, in general the responsibility is in hands of women, although men and children also participate in some tasks. Due to their daily contact with animals, women have wide knowledge about their characteristics, needs, development cycle and the environment where they live. Unlike agriculture, cattle breeding is an activity that requires the same effort during all the year, as well as domestic work.

Domestic tasks and children's care are almost exclusively women's responsibility. Often they spend from six to eight hours per day in activities such as: food preparation, water and fuel collection, clothes washing, house cleaning, baby sitting, weaving, etc. Lack of basic services in communities such as, drinking water, roads, medical care, etc., worsens the condition of domestic work for women.

Market activities are shared by the couple. Generally, women sell the cheapest products in local markets, like cheeses, eggs, chickens and some agriculture products; men are in charge of the biggest sales, like cattle and agriculture products that require transportation to La Paz and other regional markets. Without any

doubt, distribution of roles in the commercialization is due to external demands to communities: the domain of Spanish, management of prices, etc. Moreover, it follows the traditional gender concept, where men are identified with the external world and women with the internal one.

In Andean communities nowadays the most spread organization is the Agrarian Union, where the family is represented by the man. In most cases, the woman does not participate; sometimes she can attend meetings as listeners or in behalf of the husband, but in any case she has the right to vote. Only if the woman is a widow she can assume the family representation, but until the oldest son comes of age. This system breaks the traditional structure of the Andean authorities, in which functions were assumed by the couple and each one had specific tasks. Besides, it is important to highlight that men's participation in unions is because the family plot is usually under his name. After the Spanish regime, land began to be inherit by men; usually, when women get married they have to move to his husband's land.

In spite of that, nowadays many unions have their "Cartera de Vinculacin Femenina" (women's secretariat) that gives women their own space but, differing in the way they function. Sometimes, they just organize women around their traditional activities, as cooking when community activities take place. However, it can be found unions where certain "carteras", like finances or cattle related, are headed by women.

In the 1980s the "Federacin de Mujeres Campesinas de Bolivia 'Bartolina Sisa'" (Peasant Women Federation of Bolivia) was created, parallel to the traditional masculine union system, and also linked to the 'Central Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia' (Peasant Federation). Many of their demands coincide with the ones of the latter, but they also highlight the need of recognizing the women's participation in the process of fighting for the peasants' rights. Thus, they seek structural changes related to the women's status in the society.

Nevertheless, its presence in Tiwanaku is almost null.

In recent decades, many Mothers' Clubs or Centers have been created in many communities. Married women participate to undertake activities related to the familiar sphere (children care, weaving, kitchen gardens) and to get food aid. Until the insertion of the Milk Project these instances were the only one which offered women the opportunity for exchanging opinions, participatory practices and leadership development.

The Milk Project

It was within this context that the "Project of Milk Production with Peasant Women" was set up, during the years 1985 and 1991, based on the demands from peasant communities of the region. It was carried out by the NGO 'Servicios Técnicos para la Mujer' and had the financial support of UNIFEM. Its general objective was:

"To revalue peasant women's role, in order to achieve a formal acknowledge of their participation in the national productive system" (Carafa, 1991:8).

The specific objectives were as follows:

- . "...To increase the economic profit of the rural family, providing technical assistance to peasant women in cattle breeding and dairy production, using the natural resources available in the region.
- . To implement self-managed communal productive associations, through training in organizational and administrative processes, to achieve a new consciousness about their economic role, both in the familiar and in the communal spheres.
- . To develop parallel activities of coordination with

specialized institutions with the purpose of seeking to improve the nutritional, health and educational conditions." (Ibidem:8)

The activities of the project were related to cattle breeding, supporting women's productive role through technical assistance and training, and can be synthesizing as following:

- capacitation of women (and a small percentage of men) in cattle breeding management, milk production, animal health treatment and economic administration;
- alphabetization courses, in both Aymara and Spanish languages, addressed to women;
- partial financing in the construction of milk collect centers, familiar stables, artificial insemination center and a storehouse for credit services;
- implementations of permanent pastures of alfalfa and forage for improving cattle feeding;
- introduction of an artificial insemination program;
- supporting in the construction and equipment of a Dairy Training Center in Tiwanaku;
- supporting in the organization of communal associations of milk producers and also of a regional association that embraces the others.

Thanks to the project, it became possible to sell the milk to the "Industrial Dairy Plant (PIL)", the state enterprise in charge of dairy production. Therefore, families could get fixed economic profits that allowed them to face more safely the unstable peasant economy and to have access to credit and services offered by PIL for improving production. This allowed a permanent participation of families within the market, although they continued to sell cheese whenever it meant economically profitable.

The Project also supported the setting up of seven 'Milk Producers Associations', in the communal level, which together make up the 'Milk Producers Association of the Tiwanaku Zone',

which join the 'Milk Producers Association of the Department of La Paz (APLEPAZ)'. Indeed, it was achieved effective women's participation through associations and reached to improve the acknowledgement of women's role in cattle breeding activities. It is important to consider that Tiwanaku was the only zone in La Paz that reckoned with most women's participation as 'formal producers', attaining a percentage of 79% women. It means that they received directly the money for the sale of the milk, and they have access to credit, technical services and training. In other regions of La Paz, the average of women's participation is around 25%, although women remain responsible for the cattle management, and even bringing the milk to the PIL's collect centers.

The proposal of the Project was that associations should have not only a great number of women, but also women's participation in management positions; that was a traditional masculine function in other communal organizations, like peasant unions. Thus, the Project encouraged the creation of organizations with a strong feminine identity; for that, it highlighted that breeding cattle was essentially women's productive activity. The Associations, both in communal and regional level were driven by a management board composed by functions hierarchically located: president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and 'vocal'.

The expectation that women occupied management positions in associations' board constituted a starting point according to the principles of "Women and Development" approach, even according to "Gender and Development" perspective where they seek to empower women through their participation in organizations and public spheres, controlling resources and power decision. Indeed, that was what happened, at least during the first years the Project worked. Some men always occupied positions in the command of the associations, however most of them were occupied by women.

Nevertheless, each time more, meaningful changes began concerning gender relations within the associations. Men - both the few

'formal producers' and husbands of women considered producers – became to participate more frequently in meetings and to replace women in management positions, specially the most important. This dynamic increased gradually achieving a point that, nowadays, women's participation is minimum in associations' management board. Even though, women have maintained working in the production and have had the economic control of profits from the milk sale.

To provide a better visualization of the abrupt and deep change occurred within the associations, I systematized the data concerned to gender composition of associations throughout time in graphic bars (see the annex). I ascribed to each management function a relative value, according to the hierarchical order the producers consider, in the following way:

<u>Function in the Management Board</u>	<u>Ascribed value</u>
President	4 (four)
Secretary	3 (three)
Vice-president	2 (two)
Treasurer	2 (two)
'Vocal'	1 (one)

The proceeding, therefore, was to sum the ascribed value according to the function occupied by women and by men in each administration, having the total of each year. Whether we look at the graphic related to the situation of Achaca Community, which I consider the most typical example (graphic 3), we can note clearly the decrease of women's participation and the increase of men occupying the most important management functions. In 1991, the last year of the Project, is the distinctive mark of the presence of men as majority. In the last year studied, 1993, women have minimum participation: only one function.

The re-ingress of men in the political-administrative roles occurred both to the level of communal associations and of the

Tiwanaku association, although in the last one the transformation was more evident. The increasing actuation of men in management functions was followed by an also increasing men participation in meetings and assemblies of the association, specially in the regional one.

Graphic 2 illustrates the constitution of the regional association that, curiously, had a greater participation of men in the first administration. They were replaced by women in the following administrations, however, in 1992 they are in an almost-balanced situation and, in 1993, men decidedly take care of most functions and responsibilities.

All that was considered by the project team as the great failure of the project: women were not effectively empowered since they could not maintain their position in the management board. I think that it is important to separate this analysis into two completely different aspects. The first one, refers to women's social status after the project as a whole, the only way to analyze how the project contributed for their empowerment.

The second analysis tries to understand the dynamic of gender relationship in the management of associations. For that I propose to call upon what was discussed earlier, that is, the Andean concept of gender. It will be identified the presence of such cosmovision in explanations given by people – both women and men – through interviews.

The first analysis will be done subsequently and the second one will be developed in the next chapter.

Empowered or not empowered: how evaluate women's changes?

The Milk Project started in 1985, the same year that closed the Decade for Women, declared by the United Nations. Financed by UNIFEM, it was conceived under the influence of the issues

discussed during that time, particularly the ones concerned to 'equality' and 'economic status of women' (Tinker and Jacquette, 1987:422-423). The Project sought the recognition of a traditional feminine role through the inclusion of women as formal members of milk associations; moreover, it aimed to give them access to credits, to the control of the incomes and the introduction of technologies that supposedly would reduce women's labor. Through those strategies, they presumed that 'women's marginalization' was being reversed.

In economic terms, there is no doubt about the success of the Project. A detailed cost/benefit analysis made by external evaluators (Flora & Flora, 1992), as well as people's perception — who received directly earnings resulting from the Project — arrived to the same conclusion: there was a real increase of economic returns for the families involved. Benefits were made both through improvements in the genetic base and breeding which led to produce more milk and, through selling milk directly to PIL, instead of the traditional way of making cheese and selling them in local fairs.

However, the project went beyond that; we can perceive that, although the word 'empowerment' it is not mentioned, some ideas usually enclosed in this concept are present in the project. Indeed, different strategies mentioned by scholars who developed the concept of women's empowerment are similar than the ones applied in the Milk project. It carried out training actives to improve women's traditional knowledge on cattle breeding, it provided basic formal education (alphabetization) and different activities addressed to increase women's self-respect. Moreover, there was a special worry concerned to transform the milk associations in a feminine sphere, where women must be the principal managers.

Moreover, it is important to highlight that women kept control of economic returns of milk production, decided and administrated expenses from it. The only exception to this control was animals'

selling; such trading activity was shared with the husband. Promotion of milk production and trading by the Project consequently increased women's economic power since milk production became the principal income for these families. Although domestic economy always has been in charge of women, with the Project they increased their range of activities and decision power. Thus, women obtained more prestige not only within their families, but also in the communities.

Another crucial aspect needs to be emphasized; it refers to the social value given to an activity traditionally done by women: cattle production. Husbands and communities dispensed more respect to women who had been trained, since they improved their knowledge on cattle breeding and milk production. Such knowledge gave to women more influence both in households and in the community, because they have a whole control over this activity which became socially the most important. It was very common that these women gave orientation and instruction to other community's members (both women and men) concerned to cattle breeding. Consequently, the identity of "lecheras" (women milk producers) was created in these communities as a new social identity, as well as there was the exclusive masculine identity of "producers". All that contributed to increase women's prestige and social status which are also a kind of power.

the following day, the first of the month, the weather was
very good, and the wind was from the north, which was
very good for the ship.

The ship was in the harbor of the city of
the first of the month, and the weather was
very good, and the wind was from the north, which was
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IV. THE ANDEAN CONCEPT OF GENDER AND THE MILK PROJECT

Making the associations' history

Tiwanaku's milk producers' associations, both at communal level and at regional one, carry an ambiguity in terms of the gender concept in Andean culture. Associations have an aspect that belongs to what it is understood as part of the masculine sphere: representation, intermediation, public, political. Nevertheless, they have also another characteristic, that is that they are dealing with one of the women's traditional activities: animal production, that, moreover, is considered a domestic task.

This ambiguity of associations went through clearly different stages, nearly related to the genesis of Andean duality. The first stage, from 1986 to 1990/91, was the creation of associations and the start of innovations of the Project. At the beginning, women had the dominating power in both domestic-productive and public-representative spheres of associations. They managed to joint in their practice two spheres clearly separated in the Andean culture. This fact resembles the *Taypi* period, the first one for the ancient aymara mythology. In this period of genesis of the Andean world, different cultures lived together and all elements were not divided in opposite pairs as they were in following periods. *Tunupa*, the divinity of this period combined masculine-feminine elements. It is interesting to consider that, for women, this period of the Project became into a mythical time, where they lived the ideal of harmony. It can be noticed when analyzing their declarations:

" Among women, we understood each other better; we, above all, tried to attend all the meetings".

(Woman from Pircuta Community)

"When women were directors of the associations there was more work done and more advantages for all of us because

meetings were held periodically (...). There was more respect when women ruled, and we worked in all we could (...). Under women command, warehouses, the insemination service and the training center were set up".

(Woman from Achaca Community)

"When, at the beginning, women were at management positions, there were more activities in the associations".

(Woman from Achaca Community)

"When there were only women, we understood each other better and things went well".

(Woman from Chambi Chico Community)

"Concerning grass-root participation, there were more when the president was a woman; we were more confident for talking about our own proposals".

(Woman from Pircuta Community)

Furthermore, it must be highlighted that the relationship established in the first period between the Project and people involved was based on reciprocity, as it is characteristic of the Andean world. The Project never offered people anything for free; as never did people participate without obtaining benefits in exchange. Outstanding examples are the building of communal or family's infrastructure, as warehouses, stables, sheds and the Training Center. All these constructions were made with the cooperation of families and communities who collaborated with labor and local materials. The Project on its part, contributed with materials that were not available in the region. If we consider this relationship in wider scope, we can see how the Project offered to the communities a range of benefits, and them in return, accepted to make some concessions. Women's participation at management positions can be considered one of these concessions under the principle of reciprocity.

It was just since the last year of the Project (1991) when men participation in management positions began to grow. Therefore, when the offer of benefits was not so abundant, concrete actions could have seemed an unnecessary reward.

This period was another stage, a transition, because everyone knew that the Project would be over by 1992. This transition period resembles *Puruma* age, when all that was previously one, became to be divided into opposite pairs, it means, the emerging of dualism. It was exactly in that period, when masculine participation considerably increased both at meetings, where men began to represent their wives, and to occupy management positions. In this way associations became to have a similar kind of family's participation as Agrarian Unions.

Finally, the *Pachakuti* or *Awqa* age came up. It was when the world order is turned around, when dualism emerged as the new establishment. From my point of view, this period equates the last stage of Associations, the one they have been living since the end of the Project. Men have become the majority in assemblies, meetings and management boards. Women continue acting, but now nearly exclusively in animal production, milk delivery and receiving of payments. In this way the *Awqa* is established; associations are divided in two spheres: the public/political one and the domestic/productive. This can be clearly seen in the words of one of the most active woman participants of the Project when speaking of the changes that took place (bold are mine):

"We were more punctual: We always started at 10 o' clock and finished at 2 or, at the most at 4 p.m.. Nowadays, with men at the management board, it is not that way anymore; **everything is turned around**. The meeting begins only when they want, without a fixed time. Everyone acts in the same way from the president to the members, some of which are even worse. Sometimes meetings start at 1 or 2 p.m.. and this is very inconvenient for us

(women)".

(Woman from Pircuta Community)

When saying that "everything is turned around", one cannot avoid thinking on *Pachakuti*, above all, because the original word used in Aymara is *kuti* that means "back to front" or "around". When men began to participate in managerial positions the new era started, opposed to the previous ones; now division in opposite pairs is the rule.

It seems clear now that the only possible way in which associations, as organization instances 'foreigner' to aymaras communities, can be accepted by the people and maintained after the end of the Project was through "dualitization". Associations had the cultural need to adjust their logic to the organization of Andean world. It is important to do so to give sense to their own ambiguity caused by the mixing of elements of the public and domestic spheres.

It is striking the resemblance in the stages of the creation myth, with its representation of the setting up of duality, and the steps went through by the associations. Mythological stages were revived as part of the "acculturation" process. In other words, to assimilate a foreigner organization, mythical experience works as a kind of passage rite. Dualism is constructed in a new organization through history.

Returning to 'dualism'

How was this drastic change in associations provoked? How did the feminine, harmonic and unitary world change into a dual one, where the masculine is settled down? We saw a process similar to the cosmic movement of the creation of dualism, as the logic that gives sense and shape to the chaos of the universe. Associations would not fit in Andean society without this new order, in which political-representative sphere was separated from domestic-

productive one. The first one was taken by men and the second one by women. Without this adaptation of the associations' structure, they would come into collision with Andean way of thinking the world as opposite pairs.

Women played a key role in this process. They were who brought men into associations and reintroduced the division in two. It was women's traditional function as responsible of the maintenance of cultural which reappeared. This meant to reintroduce the dualistic logic. Women were the guards of the continuity of autochthonous world. This is their role in the symbolic traditional representations. Women are in charge of the native sphere opposing the foreigner or external one.

If women had remained in charge of all the processes – animal management, milking, milk delivery, productive control, meetings, ruling associations, etc. – there would not be place for men and consistently for duality. The following statements could be interesting to analyze (bold are mine):

"Women neglected their abilities and experiences; they do not respond in the same way like men because they have a lot of work to do at home; they have their animals and children, and above all they have to administrate the house. Men always go outside home, and therefore, **they preferred men to substitute them at the associations**".

(Men from Achaca Community)

"... there is an only problem for women: time. As they have more responsibility at home, with the children and so on, they are pressed for time; so generally they **delegate also to men to represent them**".

(Men from Pircuta Community)

"Nowadays the replacement of women by men at the management board is because **women do not want anymore,**

because they say they cannot anymore. As men have more spare time, women send men in their place. Women do have always more tasks at home: children, animals and much more to do so, we have no time left. That is why we easily send men. It is better, because if they stay at home, they complain with everything, also children get desperate".

(Women from Achaca Community)

"Nomination of men instead of women in the management board is because men go to meetings and women do not know how to read and write so, they make their husband to take their place".

(Women from Achaca Community)

"Choice of men now in the management boards, is because women seldom have time and head with the many things they have to do at home and with cattle. That is why they delegate on men, in spite of them having done that before, when associations began".

(Women from Achaca Community)

"As associations were addressed to women, at the beginning women were majority. Now, gradually we have been getting tired because at home we are responsible for many tasks and we understand more about cattle breeding. We have little time to go to meetings. Men have more spare time so, it is easy to delegate that on them. Results and benefits are for the household so it is the same".

(Women from Achaca Community)

"At the beginning women did well but, gradually they decreased their attendance to the meetings. Now they tell us: 'You go to the meeting. I have much work to do at home and with cattle'".

(Men from Achaca Community)

Statements are clear: women commission men to represent (them and their families) in the public sphere. In this way *awqa* (the world divided into two) is recovered. If men do not have this function, they lose their place and sense in society because there is no one for them in the domestic sphere. On the other hand, if women also take up the public sphere, they would be the 'owners of the world'. Their close relation with culture's support ordains two opposite and complementary spaces. Therefore, they cannot dominate the whole.

Thus, recovery of dualism raises the features previously mentioned: complementary, relational, hierarchy and division into compartments.

People's statements obviously make the division of the feminine and masculine spheres as independent compartments. Eventually, men do not interfere in the domestic sphere and women refuse to participate in the political domain, in which apparently they are not interested in.

On the other hand, when men are committed to represent the household as women deal with cattle production, complementarity is established between masculine-public and feminine-domestic spaces. In spite of the attempt to carry out an organization, almost exclusively feminine, people do not perceive it in that way; household remains as the basic unit of production and social reproduction as it is phrased by peasants of the region:

"In recent years, it is true that women in the communities have already committed their husbands with the management boards of the associations. They do not want to leave their children alone or make them suffer when walking to attend meetings. But, they [women] spend the money of the milk on themselves? No, it is for the household. That is why both have to help each other".

(Men from Achaca Community)

"Participation in the organization is both for women and men; both participate and contribute one with the other".

(Men from Achaca Community)

Women but, single: the ambiguity of leaders

Without doubts, there was a continuity in the dualistic logic through division of public and domestic spheres of associations and, through the establishment of complementary characteristics between masculine and feminine roles. In spite of that, something attracts our attention: through the development process of organizations until now, there are a few women who come to the fore for her dedication, converting themselves in leaders of milk producers of communities. Most of them have a specific characteristic in common: they are 'settled' single women, in other words, they are 'too' old to marry. How can be understood their position in this dual world and in institutions where the preeminently organizational unit is family?

Apparently, single women do not enter in the dual interplay because they do not have their own complementary pair. They do not fulfil the opposition equation; in other words, they are not completed persons or *j'aquí*. Nevertheless, these women are older than the age until when it is socially allowed to remain single and they could not occupy this even space. Thus, they have created a new social category that has brought about ambiguity.

Their social category is called 'new' because as far as we could know, a woman who remains single is a relatively new phenomenon in Andean societies; this fact would deserve a specific study. Through informal talking one can hear them saying that they did not get married because they do not want to suffer as their mothers. They want a better life; they search for a more profound change in gender relations. This means to open an ambiguous space

where it is not easy to obtain social acceptance and where much resistance is found.

Ambiguity can be interpreted in different aspects. On the one hand, being single, they have more freedom to choose any position — there must be remembered that Andean dualism is not in the essence of things but in their relationships. On the other hand, being women (biologically adults) they are one of the elements of the reference point of Andean dualism: human couple. Thus, they cannot turn their actions into masculine because that would mean to become men. Then, how can we analyze this dilemma within the Andean logic?

To start with, we can take the answer of one of them when asked about how was her insertion as a member of the management board in one of the Milk Producers' Association:

"I was one of the Association's leaders for almost three years. This was really very hard. Sometimes they even wanted to hit me. Nowadays, they recognize the effort I made and understand that I did it not only for myself; on the contrary I help to form an organization good for all the community. With the help of the Project's team, we had been trained in cattle production and management. We made many courses.

At the beginning they told me: 'You are only a woman, no more than that. You are only an *imilla*², what can you do?

Now they regard me as an older sister. Thus, they consult me when they have any doubt. They recognize my experience of so many years in different functions for the community. Now they thrust in me, they follow me, they talk with me with respect. When someone from

²*Imilla* is the Aymara word for single or young women. In a certain way, it is also used pejoratively; in most cases it implies an inferior state. It is stressed the peculiarity of not being a complete person, it oppose to the concept of *j'aqui*.

outside the community comes to visit the organizations and I do not go, they come to me to examine the information or the problems. I am always ready to collaborate with whatever they asked me for. I am also given orientation to the people, to the ones who have doubts; they are now along the same way I did, and I am helping patiently".

(Women from Caluyo Community)

From their words, we can see how she is affirming her feminine identity through a position like a mother. The auto-denomination as an 'older sister' not only means a social role of more responsibility but, also a socializing and educational one. It is similar to the maternal function, an exclusively women's one. In this case, she has assumed a kind of 'social motherhood'. Besides, many of the single women who had taken leadership positions in Associations are indeed mothers.

Being a woman and having children (no matter if they are biological or social) is a peculiarity that from an Andean dualism point of view makes me think that the relational interplay cannot be applied. The cause is that the man-women couple is the reference point and the model for the construction of all the other dual relationships. If femininity of women and masculinity of men are relativized, this pair would not be the model anymore.

Nevertheless, the peculiarity of being single is possible of relativization because both men and women, can be part of this category. The opposite would be being married. Thus, for these single leader women when occupying posts of the masculine sphere it is not activated the "women x men" dual relationship. The opposite pair for this case would be "single women x married women".

A new dual pair is then created where 'married women' can be classified as 'feminine'. As they maintain the autochthonous

tradition, being 'marriage' part of this tradition, they relate with the feminine part in Andean cosmology, with the domestic sphere.

On the other hand, 'single women' could be classified as 'masculine' because they are related with the public sphere. They also have an innovative nature and, they bring something strange for their social universe (to be single after the socially permitted age) all of these characteristics of the masculine sphere.

Through this dualist jugglery, these 'settle' single women can assume political functions and occupy them, even when men also take these spaces. Thus, it is the confrontation "tradition x innovation" that counts for the opposition "married women x single women", while the other opposite pairs (feminine x masculine, domestic x public) are maintained. Therefore, single women, public sphere and masculine gender remain on the same side, while married women, domestic sphere and feminine gender are on the other side of dualistic order.

Nevertheless, the route followed by a single woman to conquer a respectful position implies a clear game: she has to 'seduce' all the other producers to be accepted as leader by proving with concrete actions that she is completely able to develop whatever activity needed in the management function. On the contrary, men occupy these functions without making any previous effort, is something given to them. Nevertheless, there were exactly those single women who come to the fore and remain as leaders; men who were in the management board in general, did not worry with Associations. We will analyze this further.

Associations' hierarchy

Generally speaking we must admit that men neglect the associations of milk producers. There is a certain discredit of

these organizations as following statements show:

"Men only want to be part of the management board because they are selfish. When there are men as directors, they do not even demand to held meetings periodically, because they also participate in the Union. Thus, they do not have enough time for milk associations so, there is no progress; people also do not demand".

(Women from Achaca Community)

"There is an inconvenience about men in the management board: they always drink a lot after activities. When women are in the Boards, they drink less".

(Women from Achaca Community)

Inevitably, associations, as related with cattle breeding – a production traditionally carried out by women, link up with the feminine sphere. There has no importance if there are men in political positions. On the other hand, the more distant from the domestic sphere – therefore, closer of public domains – the more identification is established by men converting it in its own space.

A hierarchy of values is then set up among different organizations according to their relation with masculine-feminine spheres as can be seen below:

Masculine

Feminine

Agrarian Union - APLEPAZ³ - Regional Association - Communal Association - Cattle Production

Men regard the domestic sphere with contempt. This is sharply evident from the low importance given to associations, specially at communal level. On the contrary, they overvalue the public

³ APLEPAZ - Asociación de Productores Lecheros de La Paz - is a kind of federation of milk producers from the Department of La Paz.

sphere – therefore, they overvalue themselves – showing more interest and dedication to the Agrarian Union or to APLEPAZ, both more distant from the domestic sphere.

Identification of APLEPAZ as a masculine sphere can be deduced from the following statement:

Members [we] of the Tiwanaku's association are mixed, men and women. To send representatives to the regional level of APLEPAZ, I think they must be men because more experience and instruction are needed. Women always are more shy and can make us disgraced. That is why we [men] always have to collaborate in spite of them having the right as members".

(Men from Pircuta Community)

Women do not manifest their interest in participate in the public domain; moreover, they do not consider themselves able to assume public functions. They adduce, among other reasons, an 'incapacity' for talking. Therefore, it can be perceived their low self esteem when recognizing their (supposed) incapacity for participating in the public sphere. Consequently, they attach importance to men ability to talk and act 'politically', overvaluing the public sphere.

Process lived by associations can lead to the conclusion that, although men do not participate in associations according to women's aim and do not play well their role as members of the management board, women do not dare to take permanently the public sphere as their domain. If they would do that they would threaten the dual equilibrium of their culture. Therefore, women's political participation remains either as an idealized memory of a historical past (although became mythical), or it is feasible through the innovative perspective of single women.

V - CONCLUSIONS

The violent last centuries in the history of Andean societies, generated deep changes in their cultures. However, it is important to consider that every culture, despite having a violent history or not, is constantly changing and recreating its values, myths, cosmovision, therefore, its gender concept too. Thus, I think that we have to look to the Andean societies now regarding all this past, but with eyes of today.

Through knowing the history, we can perceive that gender-dualism is a fundamental characteristic of the Andean world with all its peculiarities explained above. Its genesis is continuously remembered through social organization and its geography. Most foreigner elements have been socially assimilated by recreation and reordering under dualistic logic.

Perhaps the previous analysis led us to think that projects and programs under the approach of "Women and Development" or "Gender and Development" find an unfathomable field of action. Therefore, no proposal would change women's position in society. Nevertheless, I consider this conclusion rash. As we have seen before, there are other dimensions of women's participation which lead also to their empowerment, if we consider empowerment since a larger perspective.

We have seen that, after the end of the project, men assumed most of the manager positions while women remained with the productive activities; nevertheless, this did not lead to a reduction of families' economic incomes. The problem here is that it was not taken into account a cultural dimension concerned to how gender relations are built in the Aymara society. Milk producers' associations embrace an ambiguity in its composition. They constitute a sphere that has a projection beyond the family and the community. According to this culture, this is a masculine space: the universe of representation, intermediation, public and politics. However, the associations also dealt with an activity

traditionally held by women – cattle breeding.

At the beginning, women had a strong participation in both productive and politic spheres of associations, undoubtedly due to the pressure done by the Project; that was the condition 'imposed' for its implementation. Gradually men began to represent their wives in meetings and political manifestations, and reality showed that this change was induced by women. In many of women's discourses they insistently said that they did commit their husband to be in charge of such tasks; they argued that they were not interested in these things and they had too much work to do with cattle.

To me, there was an only possible way by which associations could remain beyond the Project span; if we consider that they are organizations strange to Aymara communities, first they should be accepted and assimilated by people; this should be done through their re-structuralization according to their own logic. Sharing the work introduced by the setting up of associations between masculine and feminine tasks was a cultural need that gave sense to the new. Otherwise, a completely foreign instance that has no identity with the local way of ordering the world could not survive.

This situation does not necessarily mean, that either women lost power or they remained in a subordinated position, as it was evaluated after the end of the project. As it was argued before, power is not reduced only to leadership positions in public life, or to something presented in all kind of relationships. According to that evaluation if women lost their management positions they lost their power. Nevertheless, we have seen that women not only maintained the control over profits from the milk but also, managed and decided about the use of the money. Promotion of milk production and trade lead to an increase of feminine economic power since this production gives the principal income for the families. Although the domestic economy has always been in charge of women, after the Project they enlarged their radios of action

and decision power. Moreover, women improved their knowledge on cattle breeding and milk, and such knowledge also gave them more influence both in the family and in the community. They became more respected and had more prestige being a kind of "consultant" on those issues for the community.

Then, as a consequence of the Project, women did not change their role in society, since they had not preserved their political functions in associations, for example. Nevertheless, their traditional role as cattle producers and domestic workers got more prestige within the family and also socially. My interpretation is that they recovered the position they had in pre-Colonial time. Then, hierarchy existed in gender relations but, women's activities were not social residues; on the contrary, they had value within communities. As a general conclusion, women did not 'masculinize' themselves because of the Project; rather, the feminine sphere recovered its value without converting the changes introduced in a threat to the order culturally established.

From my point of view, knowing deeply the history and culture of a society is an important instrument for development actions based on the empowerment perspective for women. The respect to the culture and the history means valorization of people as they are and, doing so, development agents are not imposing their views and values; they are neither controlling nor exercising power. So, if the starting point is to know and respect the culture, that is also one of women's roles, development agents are trying to put themselves in the same position of women. That means that women are being valorized as they are and not being simple object of change towards a way other people think is good for them. Accordingly, the valorization of their history is the valorization of their identity constructed based on deep roots. There are some interesting experiences about the recovery of women in the history of the Andes (THOA, 1990). Valorizing their identity is a kind of empowerment, because their society begin to have the same social status then the others; it stimulates

the individual and collective selfesteem.

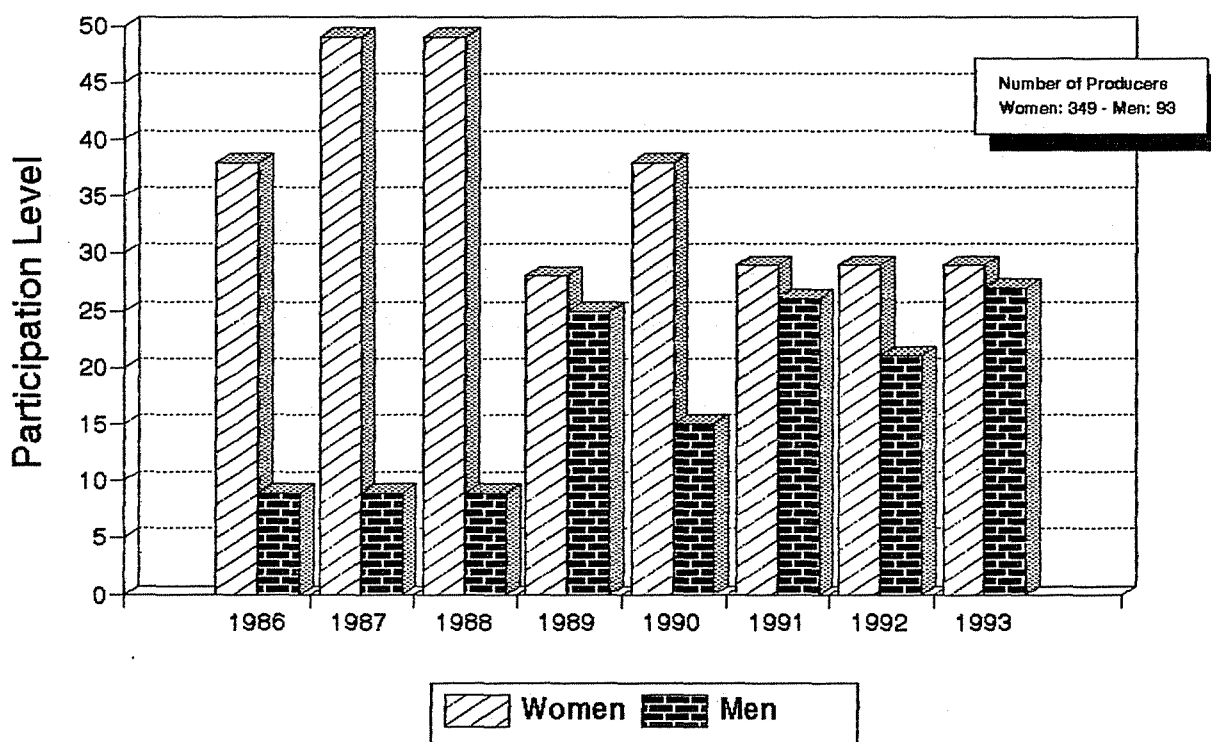
Furthermore, knowing the historical process of such a society gives us the comprehension of its dynamic. The societies that exist nowadays in the Andes are not composed by just a sum of elements from the different cultures that had influence over these peoples. We have a new society, created in base to the pre-Hispanic, the *Inca* and the Spanish cultures; but it is something original, with different logic, perspective and expectative. The relevance of comprehending the history is not for playing a kind of unfruitful game which goal is to recognize in societies of today, cultural elements originated from the past and, then, categorize such community as more or less traditional, or more or less Andean. I think that this kind of "game" does not lead to anywhere. The significance of understanding all this process and the role of women within it, is to have a perspective of the historical movement and the flexibility of the Andean culture and consequently, of the gender concept. Thus, we have more possibilities to project to the future and understand the process they are living now. If women, themselves, have access to this information, they will find that gender relationship was not always as it is now; therefore, they will have more power to exercise it in their own way.

In a sense, that is what we can learn from the case of single women. I am convinced that the great innovation in gender relations stayed in their hands. They are creating a new possibility of being women and simultaneously, participating of public spheres, without abandoning dualism; in other words, they can be a different kind of woman without denying to be Aymara.

Possibly, what have been calling as successes in development interventions are destructions of local cultures, while failures are transforming processes that, although more subtle, in fact are leading to an empowerment since the logic and dynamic of the people. Maybe this would be the moment of reflecting on why should be correct that all women in all cultures perform the same

role, as if they suffered the same kind of discrimination and had only one way of living with dignity.

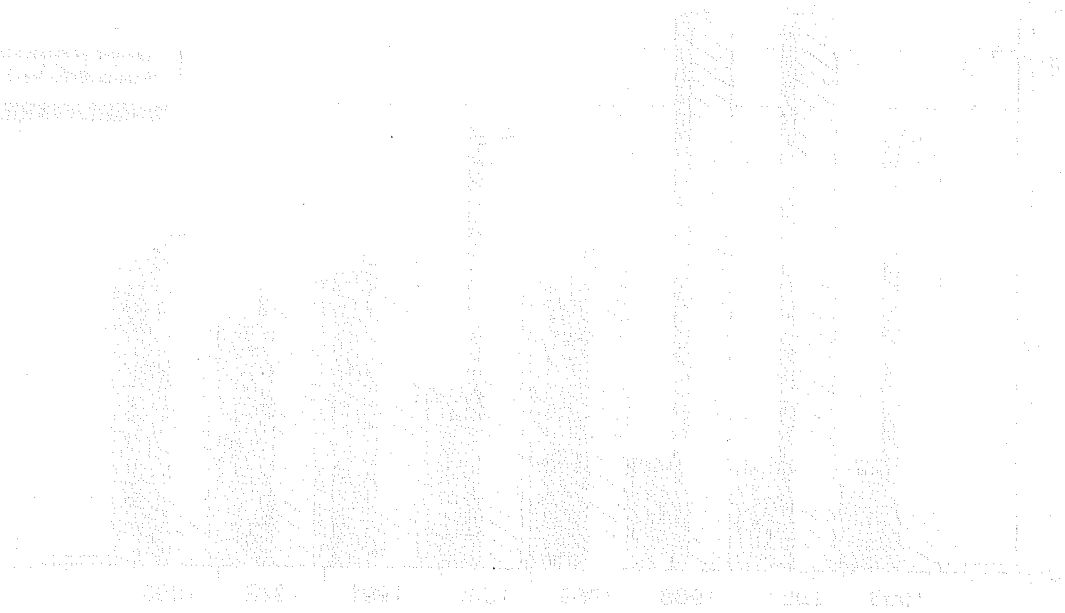
A N N E X

GRAFIC 1**COMMUNAL ASSOCIATION - TOTAL
Management Board Composition by Year**

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the present study indicate that the use of the proposed method for the determination of the concentration of the various components of the mixture is highly accurate and precise.

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1. The results of the present study indicate that the use of the proposed method for the determination of the concentration of the various components of the mixture is highly accurate and precise.

GRAFIC 2

MILK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF TIWANAKU
Management Board Composition by Year

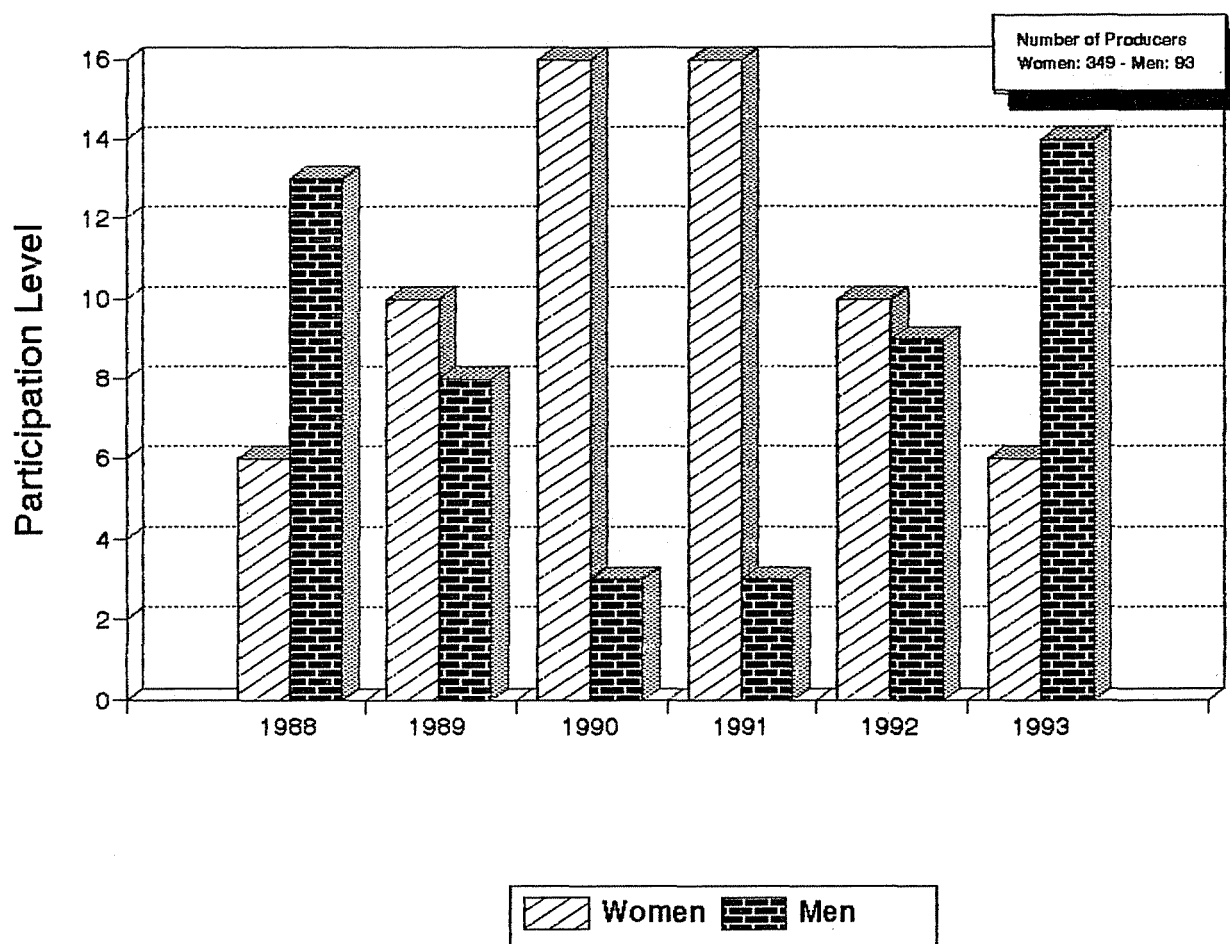


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the results of the analysis of variance for the effect of the treatment on the response variable. The results are presented in the following table:

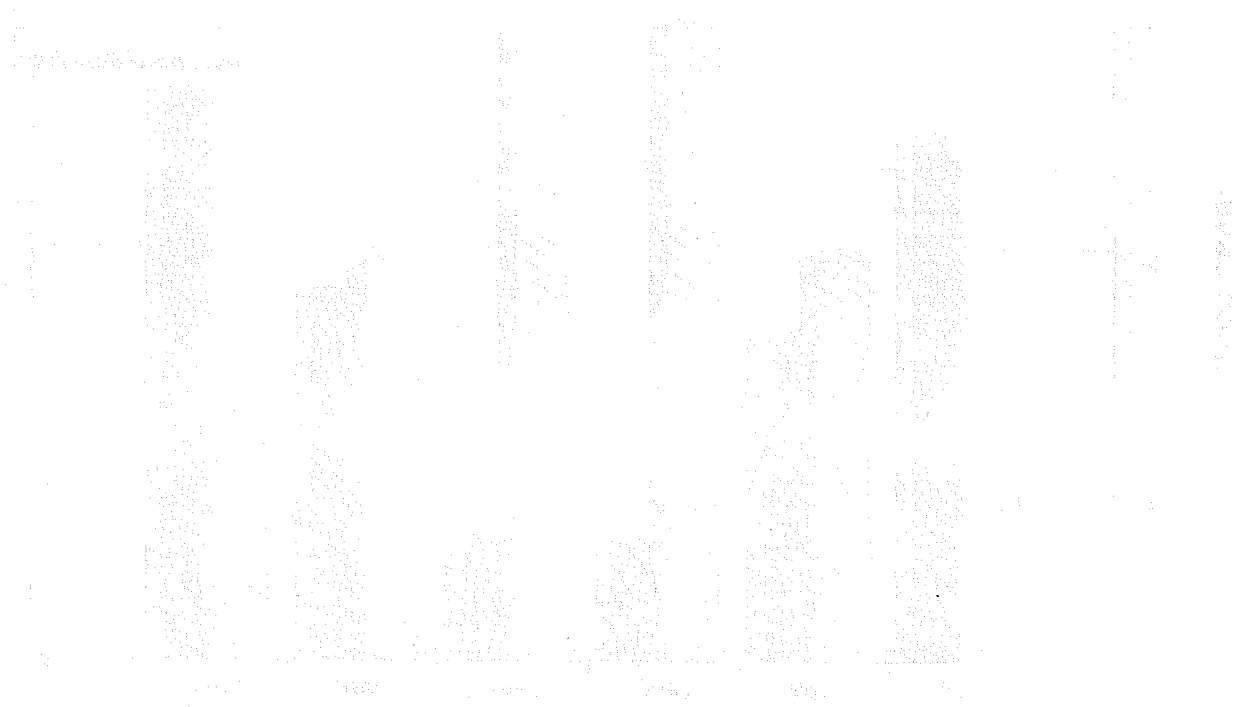
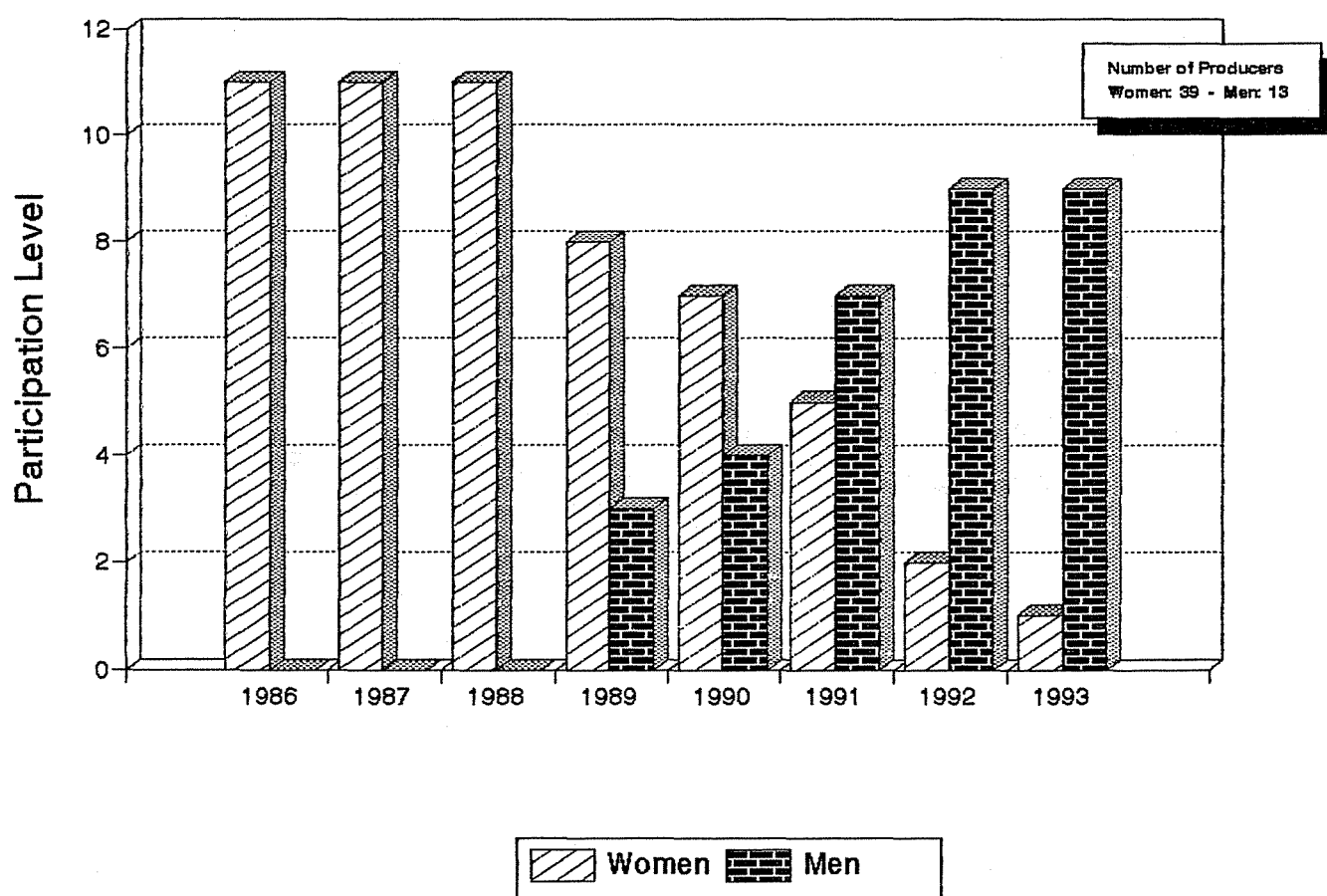


Figure 1 shows the results of the analysis of variance for the effect of the treatment on the response variable. The results are presented in the following table:

GRAFIC 3**MILK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF ACHACA
Management Board Composition by Year**

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