SYMBOLIC ARRANGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION IN THE DESPACHO

Gweneth Armstrong

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
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SYMBOLIC ARRANGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

IN THE DESPACHO

by

GWENETH ARMSTRONG

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts.

Institute of Amerindian Studies
UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS
September 1989
DECLARATION

(i) I, Gweneth Armstrong, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 70,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date 29.9.89 Signature of candidate

(ii) I was admitted as a research student under Ordinance No. 12 in October 1984 and as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in October 1984; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 1984 and 1989.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates the content and composition of the despacho, the ritual offering used to propitiate principal earth deities in the Bolivian mining town of Oruro (Department of Oruro). The despacho is also designed to increase suerte which is viewed not only in terms of material fortune, but also personal well-being and harmony with the cosmos. The concepts and terminology of the despacho are discussed, as well as the different types of despacho used, and particular features of their content, composition and presentation. The first part of the thesis shows how the content and arrangement of the despacho constitute a symbolic language, communicating what is important about suerte, and creating a miniature picture of life on earth in all its abundance. The despacho's symbolic language is particularly meaningful in terms of suerte and the Quechua and Aymara peoples' worldview.

The second part of the thesis investigates the use of six different curing mesas used in a ritual ceremony to restore suerte following a coca divination ceremony. Both ceremonies were performed by an Aymara ritual specialist from a village south of Oruro. The content and function of each mesa is discussed, and I show how the six mesas were used in a sequence to describe a transition from mala suerte to suerte, and as part of a broader sequence of ritual events. In this part of the thesis I demonstrate how symbolic language is also used in healing mesas to describe and bring about changes between different states, and to create access to suerte in ritual.
For my family, and Simon.
Acknowledgements

I would particularly like to extend my thanks to Elizabeth Carmichael of the Museum of Mankind, and to Malcolm Macleod and the Trustees of the British Museum for their support, and for enabling the fieldwork for this thesis to be carried out. I would like to thank all the staff of the Institute of Amerindian Studies at St. Andrews University (formerly Centre for Latin American Linguistic Studies) who have advised and encouraged me over the past four years: Douglas Gifford, Jo Shelley, Leslie Hoggarth and Tristan Platt. I am especially grateful to Douglas Gifford for all his personal attention and care in supervising my research, and for all the richness, love and humour he has given to my student life.

I am also indebted to many people for all the help which I received with my fieldwork in Bolivia. My special thanks go to Felicity Nock, for all her positive encouragement, friendship, companionship, and for sharing arduous and uncertain moments; Nilda Severitz Rivas, Celia de Severitz, and Santiago Fábrica for sharing their knowledge and experience with me; all my informants and all those who took time to answer my queries: Stefan Beck at the Instituto de Ecología in La Paz for his help in identifying some of the plants referred to in the text of this thesis; and Susanna Rance, Adrian Villaneuva and family for their support and friendship during this time.

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INTRODUCTION

The fieldwork for this thesis was carried out in Bolivia between February and August 1984. During this time I had been commissioned by the British Museum to collect and research the plants and curative items sold on traditional medicine stalls. The purpose of this collection was to illustrate the customs and ideology of the Quechua and Aymara who have adapted to urban life. It involved an extensive study of the items sold on these stalls, and their use in traditional medicine. This survey provided part of the fieldwork material for this thesis.

Fieldwork was carried out mainly in the town of Oruro (Department of Oruro) at the heart of Bolivia's mining area, situated on the altiplano south of La Paz at an altitude of 3,700 metres. In Oruro, the Diablada dances are an important part of Carnival celebrations, during which the miners portray Tío, the guardian spirit of the mines, with his consorts, and re-enact the penance of the spirits before the protective Virgin of Socavón. Traditional medicine stalls, which sell a wide range of herbal medicines, also sell elaborate ritual offerings which are made to the mine god and other principal earth deities at Carnival. These offerings, or despachos, form part of a cycle of ritual celebrations dedicated to feeding and placating the earth deities.

This thesis investigates the content and composition of the
despacho. My aim is to demonstrate how the content and arrangement of the despacho constitute a symbolic language which is meaningful in terms of the function and ritual context of these offerings.

The thesis is in two parts. In Part One, Chapter 1, I discuss the concepts and terminology associated with the despacho. I also document the different types of offerings used in Oruro, and give an itemised description of despacho contents. In Chapter 2, particular features of despacho content, composition and arrangement are discussed, and I go on to show how these are interrelated to form a symbolic language. The significance of this communication is considered in view of the desired outcome of despacho rituals, which in Oruro is largely a preoccupation with material prosperity and well-being, or suerte, as well as harmony with gods of the environment.

Part Two of my thesis investigates the practices of an Aymara ritual specialist from Condorikiña, a village approximately 10 kms. from Huanuni, a mining town to the south of Oruro. The material for this part of my thesis comes from a coca divination ceremony and a curing ceremony which were performed on my behalf, and which were concerned with my suerte and its restoration to a state of balance. Details of both ceremonies are fully given in Appendices 2 and 3.

In Chapter 3, I discuss the symbolism of the coca divination ceremony, and the concept of suerte in more detail. In Chapter 4 I discuss the content and function of six individual healing mesas which were used in the curing ceremony to bring about a change in my suerte. The symbolism and composition of these mesas, and their use in ritual, are discussed in Chapter 5.
From both parts of this thesis I aim to show how the arrangement of symbols in the Orureño despacho, and in the individual mesas of a healing ceremony, is a means of communication with access to suerte, and which when used in ritual is able to bring about desired changes. Since suerte arises from the Quechua and Aymara peoples' relationship with their gods, the use of symbolic patterns as a system of communication becomes meaningful in terms of the holistic effects and changes that may be induced when these patterns are activated through ritual.

Various studies document the use and content of ritual offerings in their different forms (e.g. Bastien 1979; Bolton and Bolton 1976; Carter and Mamani 1982; Casaverde Rojas 1970; Cummings 1981; Custred 1979; Dalle 1973; Flores Ochoa 1976; Lira 1969; Marzal 1971; Santander 1962; Tschopik 1951). Studies such as those by Custred (1979), Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego (1976), Platt (1983), Sharon (1969) and Urbano (1976) contribute to our understanding of how their content and composition is meaningful in different contexts and amongst different social groups. A more recent study by Martínez (1987) makes an in-depth semiological analysis of one particular mesa prepared in Sucre, and as with the above studies, I have referred to this material to show where my findings differ and conform.

The great diversity of despacho types, and the regional differences in content, presentation and usage, as well as individual style and preference, mean that there is still great scope for further research and documentation in this area of Andean ritual practice. My research is concentrated on the despacho and curative mesas used to increase and restore suerte.
in a particular mining district. The analysis of the symbolism and composition of these offerings is particularly valuable for our understanding not only of how suerte is thought to be maintained, but also of the way in which these communities relate to their environment, materially, mentally and spiritually.

The emphasis of my research is on present day ritual practices and while these are based on traditional customs, it is not my aim to document their historical background with evidence from chronicles. Nash's study (1979) gives a thorough account of Oruro's social and political history, and Platt (1983) and Silverblatt (1983) provide a useful insight into ideological change, and the influence of the colonial period on the structure of traditional beliefs.

The research disciplines for this thesis are primarily ethnobotany and ethnolinguistics, although the holistic nature of Andean traditional medicine requires that the perspectives of medical anthropology and psychology are also included in this study. Botanical names of plants are given where possible and available, but it should be noted that of the numerous plants sold on traditional medicine stalls in dried form, many require further specification.

Fieldwork material was mainly gathered through regular interviews with two particular stall-holders (informants A and B) in the Mercado Fermin López, the main source of despachos, herbs and ritual medicines in Oruro. The elaboration of Orureño despachos by comparison with those sold in other towns made them a particularly interesting topic of research. These informants were also comparatively willing to describe the use of plants and ritual artefacts on sale on their stalls, a factor which greatly...
facilitated research into a private area of Andean belief and practice. Research material was also correlated by information given by other stall-holders in Cochabamba, La Paz and Sucre, by other individual informants, and by data from a variety of ethonographic sources. Material for Part Two of the thesis is supported where possible with other ethnographic data, as well as the explanations given by the ritual specialist who performed both ceremonies. A list of informants is provided below.

It is important to note that since this fieldwork was carried out, further changes in socio-economic policy, as well as the collapse of the tin industry, have had a devastating impact on Bolivia's mining communities. Information about Oruro's ritual practices and folkloric traditions was gathered prior to these changes and the inevitable disruption to community life and culture.
List of informants

Informant A : Nilda Severitz Rivas, stall-holder, Mercado Fermin López, Oruro. Approximate age : 30-35.

Informant B : Celia de Severitz, stall-holder, Mercado Fermin López, Oruro. Approximate age : 40-45.

Informant C : Rosa, stall-holder, Mercado Municipal La Cancha, Cochabamba. Approximate age : 30-35.


Informant I : Angelica, La Paz. Approximate age : 30-35.


PO : Personal observation

PC : Personal communication
PART ONE
Plate 1: Tío and Tía, interior of private mine near Huanuni, Dept. Oruro.
CHAPTER I

FOOD FOR THE EARTH: THE DESPACHOS FOR PACHAMAMA AND TÍO
I) THE DESPACHO

i) Despacho function

Ritual offerings in the form of despachos serve as a comprehensive and active form of insurance policy for Andean man. They are used in both rural and urban contexts for a wide variety of reasons, and ritual offerings are substantially documented in ethnographic literature as forming an integral part of Andean ritual practices. Van Kessel describes these offerings as a central and indispensable unit of ritual ceremony (1983: 166).

In rural areas they are used to bring about rain (Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego 1976: 227; Tschopik 1951: 260), to prevent hail (Tschopik loc. cit.), to ensure the fertility and abundance of crops and livestock (Albó 1976: 153; Dalle 1973: 141; Gow and Gow 1975: 154; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego loc. cit.; Platt 1983: 55; Urbano 1976: 123-4, 130-1), to safeguard the health of animal herds, and to protect them from other predators (Gow and Gow loc. cit.; Urbano loc. cit.).

As a personal form of investment they are used to prevent illness (Bolton and Bolton 1976: 101; Tschopik loc. cit.; Urbano op. cit.: 127), to cure disease (Bolton and Bolton loc. cit.; Tschopik loc. cit.), to protect against theft (Bolton and Bolton loc. cit.), to ask for protection whilst travelling (Bolton and Bolton loc. cit.; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego loc. cit.; Tschopik loc. cit.), to ensure domestic harmony (Tschopik loc. cit.), and the well-being of family and household (Bolton and Bolton op. cit.: 100; Custred 1979: 389; Platt loc. cit.; Valderrama and Escalante 1976: 180). The despacho is
also widely documented as a vital means of guaranteeing protection from the deities of the natural world (Allen 1984: 154; Bolton and Bolton op.cit.: 101; Gow and Gow op.cit.: 155; Lira 1969: 36; Martínez 1987: 67; Urbano loc.cit.; Valderrama and Escalante loc.cit.). As Tschopik observes, "these categories are not always discrete and wholly independent from one another" (op.cit.: 261).

The despacho is ultimately destined to placate the forces of nature, which, as deities, are seen to control the balance of man's prosperity and the earth's production. Since these deities are believed to be animate forces, and are believed to possess human qualities of wrath and indignation, as well as benevolence, the Quechua and Aymara recognise that by mediating with them directly, i.e. by feeding them ritual offerings, these deities will be benevolently drawn into co-operation with production cycles and man's labours in reaping a harvest from the earth, whether it be mineral or agricultural. Informant B explained the basic principle of the despacho ritual as "damos para que recibamos más". In Oruro, despacho activity is particularly centred around Pachamama and Tío, the guardian spirit of the mines. These two deities constantly vie with each other for ceremonial attention, so lending a tension and dual focus of activity in the community's ritual cycle and ceremonies.

ii) Despacho terminology

The various names given to this form of ritual offering give an indication of its function and meaning. These are as follows:
a) alcanzo (sp. alcanzar, "to reach")

The term alcanzo refers to the ritual gesture by which the offering is extended outwards to gain the deities' protective attention and favour. Stall-holders, in referring to the number of ingredients placed in a particular offering, would often point out to a client, "no alcanza", implying that the number of ritual items was insufficient, and that the offering was therefore invalid. Contreras notes the use of the verb alcansu haway to denote the gesture of making a ritual offering (1956: 81). The term hawaykuq (q. "ritual officiant in charge of an offering") is also derived from haway (Valderrama and Escalante 1976: 178). The use of the term alcansu (sp. loan) is also documented by Dalle 1973: 139 (see also Gow and Gow 1975: 155; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego 1976: 227; Urbano 1976: 123).

b) despacho (sp. "dispatch", i.e. to the gods)

This is a common term used to denote all types of offerings which are burnt for purposes of ritual propitiation. In Oruro, the terms despacho and mesa [see (d) below] are those most generally used by traditional stall-holders to refer to readily prepared offerings of this type (informants A, B, C, D, E). The term indicates that the offering is something that is given forth as a means of establishing communication with and access to a particular deity. Its usage is also noted by Gow and Gow (loc. cit.); Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego (loc. cit.) and Urbano (loc. cit.).

c) despacho hampi ( hampi q. "cure")

The term despacho is often used alongside the Quechua term
for "cure", which emphasises the offering's healing influence on the relationship between the Quechua and Aymara people and the deities which govern their welfare (informants A, B). The despacho can therefore also be seen as a curative unit. Urbano also notes that the term hampi refers to the actual content of the offering, i.e. to the products and items which constitute the offering and its healing properties (op.cit. : 135). As will be shown later in part III of this chapter, many of the despacho ingredients have medicinal properties which are of use in other healing contexts. Individual items sold on traditional medicine stalls were frequently referred to by stall-holders as hampis. Platt records that ritual ingredients for offering made at the Churiña mine in N. Potosí, and for Carnival and 1st August, were collectively referred to as jampis (1983 : 54).

d) mesa (sp. "table" or "altar")

In Andean ritual, the term mesa refers to a special area designated for the manipulation of ritual artefacts (Bolton and Sharon 1976 : 65 ; Sharon 1979 : 223). Aguilo goes further and makes a distinction between misa (sp.) meaning an altar, and mesa (sp.) which he classifies as a cloth on which ritual items are placed (1983 : 110). These terms and their meanings often merge, however. Sharon describes the mesa of a N. Peruvian coastal shaman as an "altar-like arrangement of power objects" (loc.cit.). Flores Ochoa refers to a mesa which is specifically described as a constructed altar (1976 : 129).

In propitiation rites, the term mesa not only refers to the area occupied by ritual items and offerings, but also denotes the central focus of the offering, that of a feeding source. This meaning is further reinforced by the edible content of the
offering, and its presentation as a tempting platter, to whet the deities' appetite (see III below). In Oruro, the term mesa was also used to designate specific despacho types (e.g. mesa para la Pachamama, mesa dulce, mesa blanca, etc.) which are described in part II of this chapter. The use of the term mesa is also widely documented in other ethnographic sources (see Albo 1976: 153-4; Cummings 1981: 65; Dalle loc. cit.; Santander 1962: 44; Tschopik 1951: 253; Van Kessel 1983: 166). The term mesa was also applied to small bundles of ritually significant items used in the curing ceremony discussed in Part Two of this thesis.

e) pago a la tierra (sp.)

The despacho is frequently described by those who prepare and use ritual offerings as a form of ritual payment, or pago (see also Dalle loc. cit. and Urbano op. cit.: 130-1). Custred considers pago to be a revealing term since it implies that those involved in the ritual "owe the spirits an on-going debt which is regularly paid through the ritual offering" (1979: 380-1).

f) tierra mikhuy (sp./q. "food for the earth")

In Oruro, despacho content primarily consisted of ritual foodstuffs for consumption by deities of the earth. This food is described and itemised in detail in part III of this chapter. The term tierra mikhuy (mikhuy q. "to eat") is also documented by Dalle (op. cit.: 140).

iii) Pacha and suerte: the unseen world

The widespread use of ritual offerings reflects a belief that the despacho acts as a powerful channel of communication.
with deities of production and increase, who are thus allied with the health and well-being of individuals, work teams, or community groups. Ritual activity in this form, by addressing the animate world of nature, recognises the origin of beneficial sources of energy and seeks to maintain them in the form of beneficial deities upon whom ceremonial attention must regularly be bestowed. The despacho is a conscious acknowledgement of active forces which influence the immediate physical environment and which have created it in the first place.

The despacho is used, then, to communicate with the environment, and as I have outlined above, feeds the earth, as well as being a form of ritual payment. An analysis of the Quechua and Aymara term for earth, pacha, can further help us to understand the meaning of the offerings and the context in which they are used.

In the Quechua and Aymara language, pacha denotes far more than substance and organic structure - it also denotes time and space, "origin of all things and of all time" (Lira 1944). In his study of time metaphors in Aymara and Quechua, Douglas Gifford notes that in Aymara the suffix pacha denotes that which has not been apprehended by the human senses, but learnt by indirect means.

(1986 : 2)

Also, in the Quechua language,

the tense system is divided into that which is unseen and that which is seen: future time and 'other' time, which includes both past and present. Among the Quechua, time is seen as a river, in which one may stand facing downstream. What is in front, the water that has passed by, is the past. That water approaching from behind is the unseen future.

(Gifford op. cit. : 1)
The despacho, in nourishing the earth, also attempts to influence destiny in a positive way and may be seen as actively seeking to heal, and bring harmony and stability to the unseen future. The despacho therefore serves as a positive means of innovation and renewal of circumstances as well as reinforcement of the earth's cycle of production.

The concept of suerte, i.e. the potential for material fortune and spiritual well-being, as well as luck, also embodies this unseen future. As I shall discuss further in Chapter 3, suerte is thought of as a state governed by stability and unobstructed progress. Bastien comments that mala suerte is believed to be a major cause of sickness, and that sumaj suerte (sumaj q. "good") brings good health (1987 : 38). In Oruro, where the importance of suerte reflects itself as a rampant preoccupation with commercial and material prosperity, traditional medicine stalls specialise in the sale of despachos to cultivate suerte, and the deities of the earth which govern it, namely Pachamama and Tío. As I shall discuss in detail in part II below, Pachamama and Tío oversee different aspects of suerte, and the symbols contained in the offerings may be adjusted according to the type of suerte desired. In this way, the power of the earth may be evoked as a rich storehouse of unknown quantities of future wealth.

Pacha may also be interpreted as "the deepest part of something, something lying beneath or between" (Gifford op.cit. : 2 ; Takenaka 1986 : 66). In particularly difficult circumstances, coca divination rituals may be performed by a ritual specialist, or yatiri (a. "one who knows") to interpret the meaning of events when this has become obscured. This may indicate why, where and
for whom a ritual offering is required, and how harmony between the individual and the deities of his environment may be restored (informant F). How suerte is interpreted in divinations is described in Chapter 3.

Both pacha and suerte are concepts, then, which reflect deeper dimensions to life experience, the uncertainties of which may perhaps be better apprehended and reached more creatively through the approach of ritual and symbolic imagery.

The despacho may be seen, then, as an attempt to address the unknown future, that which lies beneath the powers of superficial sight and perception, and which is linked with the unconscious, inner world. The despacho approaches suerte through an arrangement of symbols and ritual artefacts which form a composition. This is designed to attract suerte to the individual (informants A, B) and is therefore both communicative and appealing. Through this communication it is hoped that the unseen world may somehow be reconciled with reality, i.e. that suerte will be manifest in the balance and stability of day to day life and well-being, i.e. on a physical and spiritual level, as well as materially.

An exploration of Jungian symbolic interpretation is perhaps helpful here in trying to understand the nature of the reality which the despacho seeks to shape.

The despacho contains symbols which are projected in ritual onto deified representations of the earth, i.e. Pachamama and Tío. As I shall discuss further in section II, these deities represent different facets of the earth's power, and in Jungian terms may be described as archetypal energies, each with a host of associated images and forms which appear in the despacho to evoke the earth's
creativity (see III).

The archetypes are forces which allow key areas of experience to become conscious,

for they are pieces of life itself — images integrally connected to the living individual by the bridge of the emotions.

(Jung 1964: 96)

Archetypes may be experienced as images, dreams or waking thoughts which connect our inner selves to deeper levels of consciousness; they are the compelling patterns that enrich life and give it meaning.

The despacho contains a wealth of imagery which springs from the Quechua and Aymara peoples' involvement with nature. I believe that the expression of these forms in the despacho is of primary psychic significance in that connections are being made between inner visions, thoughts, beliefs and insights and conscious reality. The contents of the despacho are chosen and arranged to form a pattern which describes an ideal picture of suerte, connecting the individual's circumstances and wishes with how these might be transformed in real life. In this way a bridge is made between unconscious and consciousness.

Pachamama and Tío, as key representatives of the earth's power, are a vital focus of emotional and spiritual investment. The multiplicity of images which appear in the despacho to express their sphere of influence, is, I believe, a means of describing and acknowledging a source of power from which all forms of life spring and in which they are thought to participate.

The experience of the archetype is frequently guarded as the closest personal secret, because it is felt to strike into the very core of one's being ... (These experiences) demand to be
individually shaped in and by each man's life and work. They are images sprung from life, the joys and sorrows of our ancestors; and to live they seek to return, not in experience but in deed. Because of their opposition to the conscious mind they cannot be translated straight into our world; hence a way must be found that can mediate between conscious and unconscious reality.

(Jung 1953 : 78)

My initial fascination with the despacho was triggered by the symbols contained in the despacho and the despacho's visual impact as a whole, and I was lead to question how such offerings could have therapeutic power.

I believe that the very bringing together of positive images is in itself a step towards making conscious what is desired, and must thereby activate in a positive manner an awareness that lies at the disposal of the images and their connections with the gods of nature and the cosmos. Mindell suggests that if the archetypes are not brought to consciousness, they become "the root images of complexes and diseases" (1985 : 168).

In the despacho, Pachamama and Tío are the key prototypes or archetypes of male and female life-giving energy within the earth. The abundance of images and symbols of food and productivity within the despacho reflect the nature of this power. Images such as the misterios [ see III : (i) k] which evoke Pachamama and Tío alongside symbols of their earthly manifestations are an acknowledgement of this vital source in the cosmos as well as specifying for which deity the offering is intended.

Since the symbols placed in the offering describe forms of suerte which are thought to be realised in ritual, these symbols possess a potential energy which is thought to be activated once the offering is 'consumed' by the gods. They are therefore similar to
the naturally formed illa (q. "amulet") used in Andean regions as ritual objects and repositories of fertility to accompany and protect livestock and household goods (see Flores Ochoa 1976: 120; Gow and Gow 1975: 146-7; Lira 1973: 899). These are sometimes called engaychu, i.e. possessing enqa (q. "life-force") which Flores Ochoa describes as 'el principio generador y vital' (op. cit.: 121). Allen notes that they are sometimes referred to as kawausquna, or "living ones" (1982: 184). Andean cosmology is rich in an immense interplay among all creation; the earth is full of potential forms of life waiting to become manifest. The despacho encapsulates this potential, and the human task lies in the ordering and shaping of its detail.

Harrison refers to the notion of Andean prototypes or archetypes stemming from particular life-giving forces such as stars in Andean cosmology (1982: 90), and in this particular context she cites Sharon.

Stars possessed the powerful huaca (force) of sustaining all the species of animals and birds on earth by providing the fertilizing powers that united them. The Pleiades, which represented a generalized form of this power for all living things, including humanity, received sacrifices and were called Mother. "* It is significant that the Peruvian Indians saw the heavens in the same terms of the earth, radiating holy influences. Stars and stones differed not at all in the intensity of their respective powers. One real difference, however, can be perceived on closer inspection between the stellar and the chthonic, namely that the stellar huacas served more as repositories for basic ideas and categories in creation, as blueprints and sources of all forms and shapes, whereas stone and earth possessed in a higher degree the vital element that enfused these forms. (1978: 136)

Images which refer to the earthly plane, e.g. the figurines of the chiuchi mesa [see III: (iv) a], are placed in the despacho
alongside images which suggest a connection with cosmological forces. The gold and silver leaf [ see III : (iv) b, c] placed at the centre of the offering, facing upwards, add a particular brilliance to the offering and add a complementary balance of light which is reminiscent of the sun and moon. Star-shaped sugar tablets [ ibid.: (i) h] accompany the despacho as a form of celestial guidance.

The substances and imagery of the despacho, while symbolising food for the earth, are also a means of calling upon active forces in nature and the cosmos. It is a universe in miniature in which all forms of life participate and are recognised.

Although Pachamama and Tío can be interpreted as essentially Andean archetypes which inspire a particular form of imagery and presentation within the despacho, they are like channels to a deep source of life-giving energy and potential in life. As Nichols points out,

although the specific forms these images take may vary from culture to culture, and from person to person, nevertheless their essential character is universal.

(1980 : 10)

I believe the therapeutic power of the despacho lies in its 'wholeness', i.e. in its effort to capture the full potential of life, observed in minute detail, through its creative imagery. To succeed in evoking this potential means that something is also created internally as well as in the world.

Both the despacho and the coca divination ritual can be viewed as ritualised practices designed to reach into the unknown, and to secure stability for the future. These rituals not only mediate with the gods, but create a channel of
ommunication and access to the unknown, as well as changing reality. Far from distancing the two, I believe the despacho to be a positive and creative means of bringing these different levels of experience into a more harmonised whole.

How then does the despacho actually achieve this? A detailed analysis of the symbolic language and composition of the despacho is given in Chapter 2. However, it should be reiterated here that the despacho is designed as a form of nourishment (tierra mikhuy) for the earth, pacha, in its organic and spiritual sense, and its meaning is derived from the belief in the earth's power of reciprocation and provision. The offering of the despacho in ritual is an active form of mediation, designed to activate nature's own power to mediate in human life.

The despacho attracts the power of the earth through symbolic food - it is assembled, arranged and conceived of as a tempting platter, an invitation to eat at a banquet, or mesa. The symbols and delicacies which make up the presentation may be adjusted and modified to alter the content and communication of the offering.

By evoking these archetypal energies through the symbolic imagery of the despacho, the door to the unknown may be opened and its less desired aspects perhaps brought under imaginative control.

When there is merely the image, then there is simply a word-picture of little consequence. But by being charged with emotion, the image gains numinosity (psychic energy); it becomes dynamic, and consequences of some kind must flow from it.

(Jung 1964 : 96)

So far from being a static composition, the despacho
may be modified to express different dreams, needs, desires and aspirations - an attempt to formulate some sort of positive identity with the forces of the natural world as these influence human life. In our modern, mechanistic world we have lost this vital connection with nature, and the source of creative energy within us. Yet the Quechua and Aymara have retained this link - pacha is their physical environment and also all that is shaped by time and space - all the riches within the earth and in the scope of human life.

The actual use of despachos conforms to a defined pattern of ritual activity for either deity when suerte can be best cultivated. Despacho activity is heightened at certain points of the earth's cycle, particularly during February and August when the earth is believed to be receptive and alive, and on a more regular basis, on marked days of the week when propitiation is considered to be favourable to a particular deity (see II). Despachos may also be offered at other times when vicissitudes of suerte (i.e. mala suerte) need to be rectified. In this way, despacho rituals address recognised patterns in the earth's cycle as well as the chance windfalls and pitfalls that suerte may bring.

In 1984 despachos were actively bought and used on a massive scale by all sectors of Oruro's population, for use within households, at local shrines, as well as in commercial and industrial places of work, including the mines. The proliferation and elaboration of despachos sold on traditional medicine stalls in Oruro, compared with other neighbouring mining communities on the altiplano, provided in themselves a visual testimony to their popularity. At this time, despachos were still being used as a
medium for expressing the basic needs and aspirations of a community. It remains to be seen how much of this popular culture of suerte has survived the ravages of recent Bolivian economic policy and the devastating impact of mine closures.
II) DESPACHO TYPES

i) Introduction

The despachos most commonly used in Oruro consist of an arrangement of miniature offerings of manufactured food, organic material, minerals, supplemented with sweets in specific shapes. Some depict images associated with the deity or shrine to which the offering is made. Collectively these items form a platter of ritual food which is considered to be both pleasing and nourishing for the deity concerned (informants A, B).

Because the principal deities, Pachamama and Tío, oversee different aspects of suerte and the earth's fertile potential (i.e. mineral and agricultural/domestic), despachos are carefully differentiated, both visually, and in content, so that communication with either deity is clearly defined within a specific ritual context. Although the same forms of ritual food are used, the despachos for Pachamama and Tío are clearly distinguished by differences in their visual presentation and symbolism. Different rules as to presentation and content, as well as when and where the offering can be made, apply to both despacho types.

As I will discuss further in Chapter 2, these differences in despacho presentation are extremely significant, since they constitute adjustments in the symbolic language of the offerings, and are also believed to influence the efficacy of the offerings in ritual.

ii) The animal shrines: condor, hormiga, lagarto, sapo, víbora

Despachos are also offered to the shrines of mythological
animals in the form of special geological features to the north, south, east and west of Oruro, and which are unique to Oruro's mythological past. The story is as follows:

Before the Conquest, the Uru Uru people (original pastoral and fishing community) worshipped their god, Huari. Huari was particularly enamoured of the sun god's (Inti) daughter, named Ñusta, and he pursued her with great passion. Inti eventually managed to deter Huari by hiding his daughter in a cave. Thus deprived, Huari turned into a wild rage, and took revenge against the Uru Uru by subverting them against Inti's authority. He tempted them with gold and silver from the mines, lured them into drunken revelry and idolatry, and bewitched them by calling forth toads, snakes, reptiles and ants in strange rites. The peace of the pastoral community was soon given over to vice and chaos.

One day, after a heavy storm, Ñusta appeared from her cave on a rainbow, and with the help of the chiefs and priests, restored order to the town. Huari, in his bitterness, plotted an even greater revenge, and from the north, south, east and west, sent a series of conjured up animal plagues to destroy the Uru Uru and their crops.

From the south he sent an enormous serpent, but Ñusta again appeared to slay the beast in two with her sword. Huari next sent a big-bellied toad from the north, but Ñusta again intervened to kill the toad with one fatal shot of her sling. From the east Huari sent a giant lizard which inspired terror as it approached, flinging mountains aside with its thrashing tale. This time, Ñusta appeared with a sabre and decapitated the reptile. So much blood flowed that a lake formed and the reptile's head was cast to stone. Lastly, Huari sent a plague of ants, but, undaunted,
Nusta cast them to stone and they turned to frozen mounds. Large rock formations stand in the places where these animals were believed to be slain [see also Beltrán Heredia 1958; Boero Rojo 1977; Borda Leaña 1966; Fortún 1961, 1986; Guerra Gutierrez 1970, 1977].

The myth reflects a period of turbulence and transition in Oruro's history which is imaginatively recorded as a story of a powerful struggle against threatening, outsized monsters embodying anarchy, destruction and instability. The impact of the Conquest and mining industry had already changed the community, and the figure of Nusta, a dazzling heroine dressed in white, becomes a figure of authority when the people of Uru Uru most lacked a coherent identity. With Christianity at her right arm, Nusta remoulded Oruro's social structure, and Catholic churches and shrines were built on the site of the slain monsters. Silverblatt interprets the disruption of this period as follows:

The breakdown of the sacred bond between Andean gods and their native adherents was manifested in illnesses caused by snakes, toads, and spiders. But in the process, the god Huari was also transformed, as it took on attributes in the colonial period that were associated with the devils of Europe.

(1981: 446)

Today, despacho burning rituals are performed at the shrines of the slain animals, and these rites follow their own cycle as a parallel activity to despacho burning in the mines and for Pachamama. Another shrine is that of the condor which is not related to the mythical plague, but which is also a site for despacho rituals. Informant B explains:

"El condor de piedra no está relacionado con esta plaga. Ha aparecido y trae suerte. Lo decimos a
la piedra que nos busque suerte."

Two sugar tablets, or misterios [see III : (i)k] depict images of the condor; one shows the bird in flight, and the other as stationary. Which one is placed in the offering is a matter of preference, although informant A remarked that misterios representing the animals are usually placed as a pair, male and female. As I shall explain in Chapter 2, [I : (iii) b] the pairing of misterios is an important aspect of despacho organisation.

The shrines represent further sources of suerte, and rituals performed there are linked to the belief that a miniature offering may be transformed into multiple riches, as a generous enlargement of reality. These despacho rituals are thus an extension of the type of rituals performed for Pachamama and Tío, and they are designed to support and placate the spirits of the stones in much the same way. As Nash comments:

> Present and past are fused in the struggle for survival and the people maintain their alliances with the old demons as they strive to strike a better bargain for the future.

(1979 : 21)

Informant B referred to the role of the animals as follows:

> "Todos son parientes del Tío, de la Pachamama. Es que, si no se lo adoran a la víbora, al Tío, a la Pachamama, piensan que les van a hacer mal, y es por eso que un poquito le dan un favor al Tío, así recuerdan para que no les haga daño, para quedar en amistad".

The most popular shrines are those of the sapo and víbora. Despacho rituals take place at the víbora and condor shrines on Fridays, and particularly the first Friday of the month. Informant B described Friday as "mas fuerte" than other weekdays for suerte cultivation. Despacho rituals for the sapo also take
place on the first Friday of the month, and to a lesser extent, on Wednesdays (informants A, B). The vibora shrine is a particularly popular site because of the Church of Chiripujyo which is situated below the site of the shrine.

Visitors to the rock either pass straight on up the hill to the shrine or spend some time beforehand burning candles and incense at the church before going on up to the rock itself (PO). Informant A explained that three types of prepared despachos are commonly available on this day, and refer to the three places where activity is centred, i.e. the Church of Chiripujyo (represented by the misterio Señor Espíritu Santo), the vibora (with misterios depicting the vibora and cerro, "con su riqueza adentro"), and the condor (also with misterios representing the condor and cerro).

Despachos are sold not only in the Mercado Campero and Mercado Fermin López in the centre of Oruro, but also outside the Church of Chiripujyo and on the approach path to the rock, alongside vendors selling brushwood, alcohol, cigarettes, candles, incense and food. Visitors buy despachos for a wide variety of personal circumstances, and the misterios are altered accordingly. A truck driver bought an offering with misterios featuring the vibora and a lorry; a business man bought a despacho for "casa y negocio"; another couple for "salud y negocio".

Fires are lit at the base of the rock at a chosen site, and all ritual paraphernalia is available from nearby vendors. The ritual is performed amongst couples, families or a social group rather than by individuals (PO). When the fire is lit, the despacho is placed on the bed of fire, and bottles of beer are
dramatically shaken so that when opened and directed towards the rockface, beer gushes out. Alcohol is libated in this way first by the men (usually with beer), followed by the women (usually with cane liquor). Further alcohol is then consumed by participants with regular libations to the despacho, coca is chewed and cigarettes are smoked. Some cigarettes are half smoked and stuck into niches in the rockface (P0).

A young couple from Oruro about to leave for Argentina were burning a despacho with misterios featuring the víbora, a house (representing their new home), a road and a train, (i.e. the journey). They had built their fire on three rocks gathered from the base of the víbora, and chewed wads of coca leaves were placed at the centre of the offering.

Despite the ostentatious and liberal libations of alcohol on the rock itself which were clearly visible to nearby spectators, the atmosphere of these rituals was private and secluded, and the attitude of the participants serious. Participants in the rituals varied between miners and families, business men and women, students, couples, elderly relations and well dressed townspeople. A stream of activity continued from noon until well after dark indicating the popularity of the shrine despite the considerable financial outlay involved (see Appendix 1).

Despacho burning at the shrines points to additional allegiances in suerte other than to Pachamama and Tío. However, images of the animals also feature in the misterios placed in the despachos for Pachamama and Tío, and are thus evoked alongside these principal deities as accessory sources of suerte.

While I shall focus primarily on the offerings used for Pachamama and Tío, it is important to note the influence of these
animal shrines in suerte cultivation. Not only are they sites of
ritual activity in their own right, they are also treated as
complementary earth deities, and, as such, additional channels
through which suerte may be courted, evoked and reinforced.

iii) Mesa para la Pachamama

Pachamama is viewed by the Orureños as a deity of
benevolence, and abundant domestic provision, and her influence
is registered in all manifestations of individual well-being and
commercial prosperity, whether this be in the acquisition of
material goods, in the success of a journey, new business or
enterprise, or in any aspect of domestic happiness and welfare
(informants A, B). Informant B explained that Pachamama oversees
the spiritual and physical aspects of well-being and daily life,
while Tío is particularly associated with material wealth, "el
Tío, él da dinero".

The despacho for Pachamama is commonly referred to as mesa
para la Pachamama. This type of despacho is particularly used on
Mondays and Saturdays when propitiation of Pachamama is believed
to be especially effective (informants A, B).

A small despacho may be bought at the traditional medicine
market and burned privately at home in the patio, or at the
premises of a shop or factory. During the first days of August
especially, and throughout this month, despachos are extensively
burned outside houses in the streets, and rituals using this type
of despacho involve the active participation of all sectors
of the community.

The mesa para la Pachamama is used to cultivate Pachamama's
benevolence and powers of increase, and despacho rituals are
Plate 2: Mesa para la Pachamama (semi-complete)
Plate 3: Mesa para la Pachamama (complete)
mostly performed outside in the open air. This despacho may therefore be used by women at the mine entrance, whereas women would be excluded from despacho rituals taking place in the interior mine which is regarded exclusively as Tío's territory (informants A, B). Informant B commented that the mesa para la Pachamama was more commonly used by women, although it was evident from the sale of despachos to clients of traditional medicine stalls that use of this despacho type was not exclusively restricted to women. Despachos for Pachamama were seen, then, to be particularly used in propitiation rituals performed above ground as opposed to the interior mine, and also in rituals performed outside in patios, streets, and at the animal shrines (informants A, B).

Since Pachamama is believed to be the benefactress of all food and nourishment provided by the earth, it is hardly surprising that despachos prepared for her benefit should emphasise tempting delicacies to whet her appetite, and to encourage her nourishing potential.

Although the same types of food and delicacies are used in both the mesa para la Pachamama and the despacho for Tío, colour is particularly used in the mesa para la Pachamama to enhance the visual presentation of its food ingredients. Despacho contents are arranged on a bed, or plato [see III : (ii), a] of twisted wands of llama wool dyed in bright colours, and the same coloured strands are used to dress the sullu, or llama foetus [see III : (ii), b] which accompanies the larger despachos.

Manufactured sweets are especially selected from a variety of bright colours for this despacho, and red sugar shapes and forms are used to contrast pieces in white [see III : (i) a, b,
c, d, g, h, k, m]. As I shall go on to discuss in Chapter 2, colour is used not only to differentiate between despachos, but also to contribute to the internal balance of the offering. The offering is also finally scattered with strands of brightly coloured tinsel [adorno, see III : (vi), a] to offset the despacho content and its appetising arrangement of delicacies.

The use of brightly coloured ingredients is therefore designed to increase the appeal of the offering for Pachamama, since it is thought that she is particularly receptive to bright, sweet offerings (informants A, B). This is one way in which the mesa para la Pachamama is clearly distinguished from the despacho for Tío which uses predominantly white ingredients. Because the sweet food content of this despacho is heavily emphasised through the use of colour, it is often referred to as m'iski mesa (m'iski q. "sweet"), or mesa dulce (sp.).

Cummings refers to a despacho type sold in Cochabamba referred to as puka mesa (puka q. "red") which comes pre-packed from the altiplano in plastic bags. This offering avoids white ingredients as far as possible, (although no indication is given as to why), and the offering consists of red, pink, or violet coloured ingredients. The puka mesa is particularly offered to Pachamama in the case of illness (1981 : 67). It is possible that the puka mesa corresponds to the despacho used in Oruro for Pachamama because of its predominant use of colour, and especially red in contrast to white. However, white sugar pieces were not excluded from the mesa para la Pachamama and this type of despacho was not referred to in Oruro as puka mesa. It is possible, however, that the content and function of the puka mesa is similar to that of the mesa para la Pachamama, and may
even be derived from the latter.

The mesa para la Pachamama also contains the plant q'oa which is spread out below the plato of llama wool and gives off a strong aromatic smell when the offering is burnt. Q'oa is believed to have healing properties as well as giving off a smell which is pleasing to the gods, and especially Pachamama [see III : (iii), e]. Because of the importance of the plant in the offering, the despacho is often referred to as the mesa q'oa. The term used for burning despachos, q'ear, is derived from the name of the plant.

As the despacho burns, flames begin to lick around the dry bed of q'oa, and bitter smoke billows out as the q'oa and despacho contents smoulder. The acrid smell created by the q'oa is tempered by the inclusion of fragrant herbs and spices such as anís, canela, copal and romero [see III : (iii), a, b, d, f]. Blended with these, the q'oa powerfully scents the air, and as the offering burns, it is believed that Pachamama is eating (informant A).

Because of the healing and purifying properties of q'oa, this offering is also used to cure forms of mancharisqa (q. "soul-loss") and is considered to be a healing mesa, since it invokes Pachamama's assistance when "el diablo está castigando el cuerpo" (informant A). Aguiló refers to a healing ritual specifically termed la q'owarada (q./sp.) and which involves the use of the plant as follows:

Es un rito muy antiguo, específicamente dedicado a Pacha Mama. En su origen parece no ser directamente curativo, sino un rito de fecundidad, realizado ya sea en las cosechas, ya sea en la "yerra" de los animales vacunos ... El material usado es la "q'owa"; se la quema haciendo sahumerios con otros productos, coca, incienso,
etc. En su forma original tiene un sentido de holocausto sacrificando y quemando una llama, etc. El rito curativo consiste en enterrar a Pacha Mama algunas pertenencias del enfermo, junto con algunos productos del campo, como signo propiciatorio ... Generalmente el rito se realiza para los enfermos "castigados" por no haber hecho a su debido tiempo el rito de la cosecha o yerra a Pacha Mama.

(1983 : 89)

The mesa para la Pachamama may be used, then, as a curative offering, not only because of its properties, but also because it invokes Pachamama as a benevolent mediator when stress or conflict manifest as ill health.

In Oruro, when used in a healing context, the despacho is passed all over the body of the patient while a fire is prepared. The offering is then placed on the fire and burns while prayers are said to invoke Pachamama. The smoke produced by the burning q'oa is believed to purify and cleanse the patient of malevolent spirits, and is also thought to be effective in invoking Pachamama's benevolent presence at the ritual (informant B).

The images of the misterios are used to indicate the ritual context in which Pachamama's assistance is needed, and they may be altered to specify individual needs.

If the despacho is to be used specifically for curing, when the offering is assembled in the traditional medicine market, the stall-holder will usually ask the client where the trauma took place. If it took place inside a house, the stall owner will choose two sugar tablets, one featuring the image of a house, and the other image representing Pachamama. If
the trauma took place on a road, or near water, then appropriate images would be selected instead (informants A, B). The images featured on the sugar tablets, or misterios, are particularly important for conveying specific information to the gods, and for specific areas or needs which need to be addressed and brought into balance [see III: (i), k].

Cummings notes the use of two types of offerings used in the Cochabamba region, which include q'oa. The sara q'oa (sara q. "maize") is a small offering dedicated to Pachamama and used in particular association with agricultural celebrations, and also during Carnival. Cummings notes that it may also be used to heal swellings and to counteract spells (1981: 72). An offering referred to as wira q'oa (wira q. "fat") is also dedicated to Pachamama and used at critical moments of the agricultural cycle. It may also be used with fumigations to attract benevolent spirits and to ward off malevolence (op. cit.: 73).

The mesa para la Pachamama is therefore used in rituals concerned with the maintenance of health as well as material fortune.

The mesa para la Pachamama is not considered to be complete without its "carne", or piece of untu (q. "llama fat"). This is crumbled and distributed amongst the other despacho ingredients. Untu is only used in the mesa para la Pachamama, despite the fact that the llama sacrifice is the most important means of ritual propitiation in the mines. The llama, however, is particularly associated with Pachamama, and parts of the animal which are
used in ritual have powerful associations with fertility and increase. Llama fat is a form of ritual food believed to be particularly coveted by Pachamama, and when used in the despacho represents a force of vitality and nourishment, as well as material livelihood [see III: (ii), c]. Llamas are particularly used in rituals associated with the earth, and llama fat is commonly placed amongst the foundations of a new house as a symbol of future prosperity and well being (ibid.). Almost every part of the animal may be of ritual value. During Carnival celebrations in the village of Bertuyu (Dept. N. Potosí), meat of a sacrificed llama was served from a ritual mesa, and afterwards the rib bones were collected up and placed in the eaves of the roof to protect the household (PO). In the Orureño despachos, the significance of llamas in connection with Pachamama is evident in the variety of forms in which the animal is presented in the offering: in the white piece of untu, in the plato of llama wool (as opposed to white cotton which is used as the plato in the despachos for Tío), the sully, the miniature sugar pieces in the shape of llamas [see III: (i), j], the metal figurines in the chiuchi mesa [see III: (iv), a], and in the images of the llama featured on the misterios which are placed on the despacho to represent Pachamama [see III: (i) k].

iv) Mesa blanca

The mesa blanca is clearly distinguished from the mesa q'oa because its contents are predominantly white in colour. It is considered to be most effective for the cultivation of material forms of suerte (informants A, B), and for use in the interior mine for the propitiation of Tío, or Supay (q. "devil") as he is also referred to.
Plate 4: Mesa blanca (complete)
Bandelier notes that

Supay is a Quechua term for evil spirits collectively, but any demon or fiend is Supay also.

(1910 : 150)

and La Barre refers to him as

a specialization along Christian lines of what was originally perhaps only one amongst many earth demons.

(1948 : 168)

Taylor (1980) established the pre-Christian meaning of Supay as "souls of the dead", or ancestors who inhabited the supaywasi (q. "house of the dead") which Taylor suggests was underground (see also Fortún 1961 : 26). Platt suggests that the concept of the devil was used as a means of what he calls "bautismo negativo" (1983 : 60) to bring pagan deities into the Christian world and their followers with them.

Tío has retained his semi-diabolic appearance (see plate 1) as a horned figure with mouth agape, and his personality is thought to be morally ambivalent, capable of both sudden violence and extreme generosity (informants A, B).

The mesa blanca is used on Tuesdays and Fridays, days of the week which are considered to be critical for the propitiation of Tío, and hence particularly rewarding in terms of material forms of suerte. Tuesdays and Fridays are referred to as sajra (q. "malign") by the Orureños, and are days associated with the activity of malevolent forces (informants A, B : see also Platt op.cit. : 54 ; Tschopik 1951 : 235). However, they are also days when potentially negative influences may be turned to good profit. Aguiló notes that these days are especially valued for curing and divination, and for counteracting spells (1983 :
104-105). They may be seen then as days when the balance of suerte is most vulnerable, but also easiest to manipulate or cultivate for individual benefit.

The mesa blanca is used in the mine, not only to satisfy Tío's voracious appetite and to ensure that in reciprocation he will feed the miners with rich mineral deposits, but also to ensure that the miner is physically protected in his work. Nash observes that Tío is "more important now in reference to accidents than as a generator of riches" (1979 : 102). The mesa blanca can be seen, then, as a means of bringing the potential dangers and risks of working the mine into balance with the possibility of material gain. Although fear of accidents certainly prompts the use of offerings in the interior mine, the mesa blanca is a means of nourishing the miners' relationship with the mine god, as well as appeasing the more volatile aspects of Tío's changeable personality.

The rationale for the use of despachos in the mine is that Tío, and hence the whole environment of the interior mine, is animate and continually in need of replenishment (informants A, B). The mesa blanca, like the mesa para la Pachamama, consists primarily of ritual foods and delicacies to nourish the earth as a source of mineral wealth, and offerings which are given forth in the mine are therefore directed at Tío, who is believed to govern these reserves. Despacho rituals are increased in August, referred to as "el mes del diablo" (informants A and B, see also Nash op.cit. : 155-6 ; Platt loc.cit.) when Tío, as a deity of the earth, is believed to be especially active and hungry. At this time, large elaborations of the mesa blanca may be offered to Tío by groups of miners working in the same section of the
mine. As in the despachos for Pachamama, the emphasis is primarily on appetising forms of foods, and the quantity and presentation of these appetising "banquets" may therefore be increased and elaborated at times when propitiation is critical.

The more Tío receives, the more he releases in the form of minerals. As informant A explained:

"Ayuda. Por eso quieren estar en bien con él Tío. Por eso le dicen "Tío". No es adorar, es un favor no más. Ellos le alcanzan, entonces el Tío devuelve. Es un entrecambio".

The need to feed the mine god is concurrent with the need to maintain the mine's output, which Tío controls. The mesa blanca is therefore a positive means of input and communication with the mine as a living environment. The quotation from a Bolivian miner with which June Nash entitles her book, *We eat the mines, and the mines eat us* (1979) can therefore be considered in another way; the mesa blanca in its mediating role as tierra mikhuy, ensures that the miner may "eat" from the mine, without the mine "eating" the miner.

The use of the mesa blanca should be seen as an extension of other forms of ritual activity which take place in the mine. On a daily basis, Tío may be offered coca and cigarettes by miners before they begin their shifts, and whenever a miner feels a particular need to communicate with Tío,

*en cualquier paraje de sus labores, tiene que detenerse a conversarle, encenderle un cigarillo y ofrecerle coca y alcohol, elementos que nunca faltan en sus aras.*

(Guerra 1973 : 35)

On a more elaborate scale of ritual activity, during Carnival and August, or when a miner's life is claimed and ritual activity needs to be quickly mobilised to the scene of an
accident, a very large mesa blanca may either accompany or be used as a substitute for the ritual sacrifice of a white, male llama,

para que el Tío, debidamente alimentado, se dedique sólo a proteger la vida de sus mineros y a premiar sus sacrificios con la entrega permanente de riquezas minerales, sin la necesidad de sentir los efectos de la hambre, de la sed.

(Guerra loc. cit.)

Rituals using the mesa blanca are performed throughout the ritual cycle, and may be increased in power and efficacy through the size of offering when needed.

A small mesa blanca may be bought in the traditional medicine market before the miner begins his working shift, and this will be individually prepared by the stall-holder according to the miner's wishes and the amount he can afford. The offering is taken into the interior mine and placed before one of the effigies of Tío which are placed in various sections and levels of the mine. It is always accompanied by coca and alcohol before it is burned, and Tío is usually first offered cigarettes - whether the offering is acceptable to Tío or not is indicated by whether Tío smokes his cigarettes down to the stub or not (informants A, B, H). Once the mesa blanca is accepted, it is libated with alcohol and burned, during which time it is assumed that Tío is eating (informants A, B).

The mesa blanca therefore serves the same purpose as the mesa para la Pachamama, in that it is designed as a nourishing offering and uses similar food ingredients, apart from the untu [see III : (ii), c] which is associated exclusively with Pachamama. The mesa blanca also consists primarily of sweets. Exactly the same shapes and forms are used, except that they are
all white in colour. Therefore, whereas, for example, in the mesa para la Pachamama, white and red versions of sweets such as the alfeñiques, colación and tablilla [see III : (i), a, g, m] are used, only the white versions are used in the mesa blanca. Similarly, sugar representations of llama and alcohol bottles which enter the mesa blanca are also white, as are the misterios [see III : (i),d, j, k]. Again sweets are predominant since, as informant A explained, "hay que poner cosas dulces porque sólo estas cosas traen la suerte". However, in the mesa blanca sweets are not as heavily emphasised by colour as they are in the mesa para la Pachamama. The plato, or base of the mesa blanca, consists of a bed of white cotton instead of wands of coloured llama wool, and similarly the llama foetus is also dressed in white cotton. In this way, the llama foetus is made to appear like a miniature sacrificial offering, like the white, male llama which may be sacrificed to Tío (informants A, B). The ritual sacrifice of a llama takes place during Carnival or August, or after a major accident (informant A : see also Guerra op.cit. ; Nash op.cit. : 123; Tschopik op.cit. 265 -269).

The adorno (see III : (vi), a) used as a decoration for the despacho consists of silver and white paper, rather than the bright colours used for Pachamama. Since the basic ingredients of the mesa para la Pachamama and the mesa blanca are the same, and since both offerings are a form of tierra mikhuy, this ritual food becomes the common ground on which Pachamama and Tío vie for ceremonial attention. However, which type of offering is used, when and where it is used, and the colours and symbols contained within the offering are means by which the destination and purpose of the despacho are clearly defined.
The mesa blanca emphasises the more material aspects of suerte, whereas the mesa para la Pachamama cultivates its more pastoral influences. As Nash comments:

An alliance to the Pachamama relates the individual to life, while a contract with Supay brings luck and the chance windfall that might change one's circumstances.

(op.cit. : 123)

These contrasting aspects of suerte and the deities associated with them are therefore reinforced by the simple use of colour, images and symbols in the two types of despachos. Furthermore, while rituals involving the mesa para la Pachamama tend to take place in the open air, or in the familiar surroundings of home or work place, the mesa blanca is offered to Tío in the depths of the mine, creating a basic difference in context in which either offering is used.

The mesa blanca is further specified for use in the interior mine by the misterios which feature images of Tío, and images associated with the process of mineral extraction, e.g. the mine (depicted as a conical shaped hill like the Cerro Rico of Potosí), the miner, the carro which is used to transport mineral out of the mine, etc. Tío is represented either on his own, or together with his female counterpart, Tía. When placed on his own, Tío is depicted either as passively seated on his store of wealth (referred to as banco), or as dancing with a gleeful expression (referred to as Tío bailando). The use of both active and passive images reflects those used to depict the condor [see II : (ii)]. The significance of this is not clear, and it might even just be a matter of preference.

Cummings also refers to a type of despacho called the juraj
mesa (juraj q. "white") or gloria mesa which is available in Cochabamba and which comes pre-packed in plastic bags from the altiplano. Cummings described this type of despacho as an offering to the "divinities that dwell in heaven" and infers that the use of white ingredients relates the offering to purity and hence Tata Dios and Heaven (op. cit. : 65). In Oruro, however, the mesa gloria is a completely different form of despacho which may be used any day of the week and which contains only a few ingredients together with a pair of misterios which depict Christian deities exclusively. This is generally a far less elaborate offering, and it is used in a completely different way to the mesa blanca. This, if anything, points to the extent of regional differences where despacho content, terminology and usage are concerned.

The white colour symbolism of the mesa blanca is associated with purity in the sense that the colour white is believed to increase the quality of goods contained in the offering. White objects not only attract suerte, but also the richer yields in mineral (informant A). Hence the llama used in the ritual sacrifice must be male and white, and the foetus placed with the despacho dressed in white cotton to emulate this quality [see III : (ii), b]. The desire for good quality mineral is so great that even the foetus of a vikuña may be used and disguised in white cotton, since "más sabe encontrar la mineral que la llamita" (PC).
III) DESPACHO CONTENT

i) Sweets

a) Alfeñiques (sp. "sweet delicacies")

Alfeñiques consist of coils of compressed sugar, approximately 10 cms. in diameter, and which are manufactured in different colours: red, white, and beige. In Oruro these were also called m'iski t'anta (q. "sweet bread"), or pan dulce (sp.). Informant B explained to me that the alfeñiques are manufactured in Cochabamba, which is why they are also sometimes referred to as pan de Cochabamba. Cummings notes that alfeñiques are a common ingredient of despachos prepared in Cochabamba, but he only mentions a variety of smaller sizes, and only red and white types. Two large, white alfeñiques entered the yuraj mesa (q. yuraj "white") and two large and three small, red alfeñiques entered the puka mesa (q. puka "red"; 1981: 54). In the Orureño despachos, only large alfeñiques were used, and these were placed in the larger sizes of despacho in pairs. Combinations of red and white alfeñiques entered the mesa para la Pachamama, while white and beige alfeñiques entered the mesa blanca.

As the term m'iski t'anta suggests, the alfeñiques are a form of symbolic food which contribute to the sweet content of the despacho. Symbolic types of bread also entered the despacho in other forms [see (iv), c]. Cummings suggests that the coiled forms of the alfeñiques may be connected with the concepts of kuti (q. "repetition", "overturning", or "reversal") and lloq'e (q. "movement to the left") in Quechua thought, and used in traditional medical techniques (loc.cit.). These concepts are discussed further in Part Two of my thesis, in the context of curing mesas [see Chapter 4, I : (v); III : (ii), b].
b) **Azúcar cuadrada (sp.)**

The azúcar cuadrada is a sugar tablet exactly the same size and shape as the misterios [see (k)], but it is blank and has no image stamped on it. These plain tablets were used to complement the misterios in the smaller despachos. Informants were unable to explain whether this shape was used in combination with specific misterios, or in specific despacho types.

The azúcar cuadrada was available in a similar range of colours to that of the misterios and when placed on the despacho, followed the same rules of colour distribution. The tablets were not necessarily placed in pairs, although Cummings notes that two white, square sweets entered the yuraj mesa, and two pink, square sweets entered the puka mesa prepared in Cochabamba (loc.cit.). I would suggest that these tablets played a supplementary role since they were more commonly placed in the smaller despacho sizes. It is possible that like the azúcar redonda (see below) their shape is of additional significance to their sweet content.

c) **Azúcar redonda (sp. "round sugar")**

The azúcar redonda is also a plain sugar tablet, in circular form. It was used in the same way as the azúcar cuadrada (see above), and particularly used in the smaller despachos. It was more commonly placed in the mesa para la Pachamama although it was not clear whether it had any independent significance when placed alongside other sugar tablets. Cummings notes that similar plain, round-shaped tablets entered the despachos prepared in Cochabamba, and that some had jagged edges which suggested a rude representation of the sun (op.cit. : 55). It is possible that this sugar tablet, like the estrella [see (i) below], through its
shape, has some sort of cosmological association with either the sun or moon. Since the latter are believed to have a therapeutic influence in human affairs (Urton 1981: 68-85, 129-195), and particularly on the health of men and women (Grebe Vicuña 1983: 158), the presence of one of these cosmological symbols would certainly serve to enhance the healing function of the offering.

d) **Botella** (sp.)

The **botella** is a miniature representation of an alcohol bottle, about 8 cms. in height, and manufactured in sugar. This sugar piece comes in a variety of bright colours, and also in white. The number of **botellas** placed was proportionate to **despacho** size, and always in even numbers [see Chapter 2: I, (iii)]. This sugar form was more commonly used in the larger **despacho** sizes alongside a greater variety of sugar shapes. Only white **botellas** entered the **mesa blanca**, while clients could choose from a variety of colours when selecting **botellas** for the **mesa para la Pachamama**.

The **botella** symbolises alcohol, which is an important accompaniment to **despacho** rituals [see (vi), b]. While this piece refers to alcohol, its actual substance as a condensed sweet, also contributes to the content of the **despacho** as a nourishing platter. Cummings also notes the use of bottle-shaped sweets in the **yuraj mesa** and **puka mesa** in Cochabamba (**loc.cit.**).

e) **Chancaca** (sp. "cane sugar")

Dark cane sugar is sold on traditional medicine stalls in the form of compressed balls. Small pieces of **chancaca** were broken off and distributed on the **despacho**, and contributed to its sweet content. **Chancaca** is also used for healing purposes.
and is documented as being used in a variety of preparations applied to the body in the form of poultices (Frisancho Pineda 1973: 87; Valdizán and Maldonado 1922b: 46-7).

f) **Chocolate** (sp.)

Chocolate also entered the despacho as a delicacy, but since it is an expensive item, it was only placed in the despacho in the form of small shavings, and because of its cost was absent from the smaller despachos altogether. Dalle records the use of chocolate in despacho offerings (1973: 140), but elsewhere other types of sweets are more generally referred to (see Aranguren Paz 1975: 106; Casaverde Rojas 1970: 232; Garr 1972: 148; Lira 1969: 35-6).

g) **Colación** (sp. "collation")

**Colación** consist of tiny balls of compressed sugar, approximately a half cm. in diameter and which are available in either red, or white. They are also referred to as **confites**. Combinations of red and white colación entred the mesa para la Pachamama, while only white colación entered the mesa blanca. The colación were not counted but were scattered on the despacho in amounts which corresponded to the size of the offering. Like other sugar ingredients of a similar colour (see a, m), the colación contributed both visually and in content to the despacho.

**Colación** are particularly associated with the time of Carnival when they are traditionally eaten as sweets (informants A, B) or thrown over crops, houses, enclosures and animals as a sort of ceremonial confetti (Cummings op. cit.: 40; Frisancho Pineda op. cit.: 25-6). They are also documented elsewhere as
entering despacho offerings for the earth (Garr *loc.cit.*; Lira *loc. cit.*; Marzal 1971: 273). Cummings notes that in the Cochabamba region, red and white colación entered the puka mesa and juraj mesa separately, and in varying quantities, and also entered the mesa negra in minute quantities (*loc.cit.*). The mesa negra consists primarily of plants and is a medicinal bundle. Its content and function are described in more detail in Chapter 4 [*I : (ii) ; (iii)*]. Martínez notes the use of green, red and yellow colación which he suggests as a combination of colours, reflects the use of graded colour in textiles (1987: 49).

Colación also entered the despacho in miniature form as colación menudo. This was distributed in the same way, and also in red and white.

h) **Estrella** (sp.)

The estrella, as its name suggests, is a star-shaped sugar tablet which like the azúcar cuadrada and azúcar redonda (see b, c above) occasionally featured in the smaller despacho sizes. When placed together with a pair of misterios, this tablet was described as "belonging" to the images featured on the misterios ("con éste es su estrella") as if connected in some way through suerte. The estrella entered the mesa para la Pachamama more frequently than the mesa blanca, although the significance of this is not clear.

Other ethnographic sources clearly point to a connection between stars and suerte. Grebe Vicuña records the use of sugar tablets representing astral symbols and used specifically in the context of curing rituals, where the stars are associated with ancestral spirits (1983: 158). Gow and Condori indicate that stars are particularly associated with destiny and suerte, and
that a specific *apu* (q. "ancestral or hill spirit") referred to as the person's *estrella*, is believed to act as that individual's guardian of *suerte*. The identity of the person's *estrella*, or guide, would be revealed through divination (1976: 39-40). Urton also writes that diviners base their interpretations on the observation of shooting stars and the scintillation of starlight (1981: 92-3). Martínez notes that in certain contexts the star can imply a connection between life and death (op.cit.: 57). It is possible then that the *estrella* accompanies the *misterios* to guide *suerte* in a desirable direction, being connected with both astral and ancestral energy.

i) **Galletas** (sp.)

Sweet, manufactured biscuits entered the *despacho* in various miniature shapes and contributed to its general food content. They were placed in amounts proportionate to *despacho* size.

**Galletas** are a common ingredient of ritual food offerings, and are documented as entering standard forms of offerings to Pachamama (see Aranguren Paz loc.cit.; Casaverde Rojas loc.cit.; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego 1976: 226). Lira notes that *galletas* were used in an earth payment offering once a sorcery bundle had been discovered (loc.cit.). Dalle records that *galletas* used in a *despacho* for Pachamama during a ceremony for the ritual pairing of llamas took the form of animals (loc.cit.). Garr comments that specific types of *galletas* may be used, but like other foodstuffs used in the *despacho*, "en general se trata simplemente de pequeñas porciones de la comida que puede ser común dentro de la comunidad" (loc.cit.). Cummings also records the use of *galletas* in Cochabamba, and suggests that they may be symbolic of the staple foods produced from wheat flour (op.cit.: 52).
j) Llama (sp.)

Like the botella, the llama is a miniature sugar representation of similar size, and comes in a variety of colours. The same rules of colour distribution and quantity apply also. The llama, as a source of sacrificial food, appears in the despacho in many forms, of which this sugar piece is one. It also appears in the plato of llama wool, the foetus (sullu) and fat (carne) which are described in section (ii) below, as well as in the images of the misterios (see k) and the chiuchi mesa [see (iv) a]. Both the botella and llama duplicate in miniature form the real bottles of alcohol and llama foetus which usually accompany the despacho, and when used in the smaller offerings, may be seen to act as sufficient substitutes. Like the botella, the llama also contributes to the sweet content of the offering, and so is important for its substance as well as its symbolic value.

k) Misterios (sp. "mysteries")

The misterios are small, flat sugar tablets, approximately 3 - 4 cms. square, which feature images of Pachamama, Tío and Tía, the mine, commerce and industry, institutions, houses, material objects, and many subjects associated with suerte and the deities who govern it.

When placed on the despacho the misterios indicate to which deity the offering is being made, and which aspect of suerte is desired. They are therefore symbolic landmarks which indicate the specific context and purpose of the offering. The misterios also contribute to the sweet content of the offering and therefore play an important role in feeding the deity, as well as communicating something through their images.
The misterios are sometimes also referred to as pastillas de conversación, emphasising the images or messages which distinguish the tablets (Cummings op. cit. : 56 ; Frisancho Pineda loc. cit.). Martínez notes that in Sucre they are called misterios-pasteles (op. cit. : 106).

The misterios come in a variety of colours, and the colours used always correspond to the type of offering in which they are placed. White is the most important colour used, because it is thought to cultivate suerte [see II : (iv)]. While both white or coloured misterios could be used in the mesa para la Pachamama, only white misterios are used in the mesa blanca, in keeping with the colour scheme designated to each despacho type. Martínez notes that in Sucre, coloured sugar tablets are especially used in sorcery, (loc. cit.), but this usage was never referred to in Oruro.

Each misterio has a specific name according to the image it bears, e.g. Pachamama, Tío, llama, sol, estrella, camión etc. They therefore have their own identity and ritual reference, and hence a specific meaning when placed in the offering. Images such as corneta, televisión, point to the innovation of images required to define suerte, and its increasing materialism, particularly when considered alongside more abstract images such as sol and rayo.

The misterios always enter the despacho in pairs, and always in subdivisions or multiples of twelve. Despacho buyers can select their own misterios as they are readily accessible in large boxes at the front of traditional medicine stalls. Martinez comments that the placement of misterios by stall owners is usually arbitrary, and no care is taken in the assembly of
offerings using these items (op.cit. : 55). In Oruro, however, stall owners would often recommend particular combinations of tablets, depending on the clients' needs, and despachos displayed would be especially altered to individual taste. The choice of misterios is therefore governed by the client and the circumstances in which they are led to make an offering, and also by the most appropriate combinations of tablets in terms of ritual efficacy. Martínez notes that particular care is taken in the selection of misterios for offerings made in August (loc. cit.), and this care is evident in the general elaboration and presentation of despachos during this month.

Misterios are also documented as being used in the ritual treatment of illness. Grebe Vicuña describes three curing rituals of the Aymara of Isluga, Chile, in which sugar tablets depicting specific astral symbols were used in ritual alongside the sacrifice of different animals, each on different days and at different times (op.cit. : 189). Cummings also notes that misterios may be used in combination with other medicines in the ritual treatment of illness, but does not mention in which context (op.cit. : 73).

1) Pastillas (sp.)

Pastillas entered the despacho in the form of small coloured lozenges which are commonly sold in bulk on Bolivian sweet stalls. Because of their bright colours, they were used in the mesa para la Pachamama, but excluded from the mesa blanca. The pastillas contributed to the large body of sweet items placed in the despacho to attract suerte. Garr also mentions the use of pastillas in despacho offerings (loc.cit.).
m) **Tablilla (sp.)**

Tablilla consists of large, flat slabs of condensed sugar which are especially manufactured as a form of ritual confection and distributed to traditional medicine stalls in Oruro. It comes in both red and white, and is broken off in small pieces to add to the colouring and sweet content of the despacho. While red and white tablilla is used in the mesa para la Pachamama, only white tablilla is used in the mesa blanca. I did not see tablilla in use elsewhere, although it seems to be a standard item of ritual paraphernalia in Oruro, and is particularly used to add to the bulk of larger offerings.

ii) **Animal matter**

a) **Plato (sp.)**

The plato refers to the circular bed of wool on which despacho ingredients are placed. In the mesa para la Pachamama, the plato consists of strands of brightly coloured, dyed llama wool which are teased out in wands over the newspaper base. In the mesa blanca the plato consists of white cotton prepared in the same way. The colour of the plato is clearly used to differentiate between offerings.

As its name suggests, the plato acts as the receptacle on which the ritual food is laid out and offered to the gods. It also binds the offering together so that when folded, delicate items are not crushed.

The role of coloured wools in offerings is documented diversely. La Barre (1948: 181, 189) and Girault (1972: 291, 459) note that while bright coloured wools denote an offering to Pachamama and benevolent earth deities, darker coloured wools
such as brown, violet or black, are used in offerings to malevolent deities and forces. Casaverde Rojas reports that wool dyed the colours of the rainbow, referred to as khawa, is used to annul the effects of disease caused by the spirit of the rainbow, or k'uychi (q.), and of pujyu (q. "springs") (1970 : 226). Valdizán and Maldonado mention that wool dyed in different colours, when burnt with garlic, prevents illness and protects an individual against the harmful effects of sorcery (1922a : 173). Lira observes that despacho ingredients were arranged on wool dyed in seven colours (1969 : 35-6).

In the Orureño despacho, the two different types of plato corresponded to the colour schemes designated to each despacho type [see II : (iv), v]. Coloured wool and white cotton were used to dress the llama foetus placed in the larger offerings in accordance with this scheme, and these dressings were referred to as adorno [see (vi) a].

b) Sullu (q. "llama foetus")

A sullu is considered indispensable in the larger despachos, especially during Carnival and August, but may be excluded from smaller offerings because of its cost.

Llama, alpaca, sheep and pig foetus are supplied to traditional medicine stalls by campesinos when a female llama is slaughtered and found to be pregnant. This is considered to be a financial bonus, since a foetus can fetch a good price. In August 1984, llama and alpaca foetus fetched 7000 sb. (large) and 4500 sb. (small); a pig foetus 4500 sb., and a sheep foetus 2500 sb. ($ US = 2000 sb.).

The llama foetus which accompanies the despacho should ideally be white and male, like the adult animal offered in
sacrifice. It is therefore a miniature sacrificial offering and is high in ritual value. Its colour and undeveloped form is particularly associated with purity (informants A, G). However, when neither the colour nor sex of the foetus can be identified, it is dressed in white cotton or coloured wool, like the plato of the respective despacho types [see (a)]. If a black llama foetus is disguised in white cotton, the offering is sometimes not accepted by the deity.

The sully is a particularly valuable and costly part of the offering. It is especially valued since it is believed to hold the soul of the adult animal (informant G). Nash interprets the importance of the foetus for Pachamama as

recognition of human intervention to assure an equilibrium between the food resources and the animals that graze on her pastures.

(1979 : 123)

Tschopik observes that the offering of a foetus is thought to compel the spirits to act where other offerings have failed.

(1951 : 248)

In Cochabamba I saw informant C dress a foetus head with strips of gold and silver leaf [see (iv) c]. She explained that this was to prevent the foetus from seeing that it was going to be sacrificed. Nash, in her account of the sacrifice of a pair of llamas in the mine, describes how miners were instructed by the ritual specialist to approach the animals with their hands behind their backs before slaughtering them:

they were then to kiss the llamas as they begged pardon for having to sacrifice them. The reason for their keeping their arms stretched out behind them was so that the llamas would not know who killed them
and revenge themselves after their death.

(op.cit. : 157)

Informant G said that when a foetus is dressed in this way, its purity is preserved in the presence of the mine god. Tschipik also mentions that foetuses are often covered in gold and silver paper (op.cit. : 248). Aranguran Paz observes that llama herders placed two foetuses in an offering for the earth, one of which was given a saddle of gold leaf, and the other a saddle of silver leaf (1975 : 106). Urbano also notes that use of paired sullu in the despacho (1976 : 125). In the Orureño despacho however, only one sullu was used, and this would be placed at the centre of the offering.

The sullu is valued, then, for its essential form. Although by far the largest item used in the despacho, it is viewed as a miniature version of the adult, and hence an important contribution to the ritual value of the offering as a whole when placed alongside other miniature delicacies.

c) Untu (q. "llama fat")

Small pieces of unty were placed in the mesa para la Pachamama, but were omitted from the mesa blanca. Informant A described it as "una carne para la mesa". Llama fat is commonly used in rituals, not only as a form of ritual food especially valued by earth deities (Casaverde Rojas loc.cit.; Girault op.cit. : 307), but also as a symbol of vitality (Bastien 1978 : 54; Van Kessel 1983 : 166). It is particularly used in offerings to Pachamama since it is thought to maintain her fertility (informants A, B). Large pieces of llama fat are sold in certain areas of markets in La Paz and stall owners all explained that
they were for use in offerings buried in the foundations of new houses.

Untu is extensively documented as entering despachos (see Albó 1976: 153-4; Garr 1972: 148; Marzal 1971: 273; Urbano op.cit.: 123; Valderrama and Escalante 1976: 180). It is sometimes recorded as accompanying arrangements of coca leaves (Bolton and Bolton 1976: 102; Lira loc. cit.). Tschopik notes that llama fat may be used in black and white magic, and in a variety of forms (op.cit.: 245-6). Girault notes that when llama fat is placed in offerings used for sorcery, it may be wrapped in black wool or pierced with porcupine spines (loc.cit.). Martínez describes how untu was fashioned into the shape of a llama for an offering to Pachamama. It was wrapped in llama wool, given some q'oa [see (iii) e] for its feet and two coca leaves as ears (1987: 20). The untu was not shaped in the Orureño despacho, although llama shapes and images featured in other forms i.e. the sugar llama, and as images on the misterios and in the chiuchi mesaa figurines [see (iv) a].

iii) Plant matter

a) Anís (sp. "aniseed"; Pimpinella anisum L.)

Small quantities of anís were sprinkled over the despacho to increase its aromatic smell (informants A, B; see also Bolton and Bolton 1976: 102; Lira 1969: 35-36; Martínez 1987: 57). Amongst many medicinal uses, Oblitas Poblete notes that anís is used to stimulate milk production in lactating mothers (1969: 69). P'axsi Limachi also records the use of anís in facilitating labour and expulsion of the placenta (1983: 29). It should be noted that romero [see (f)] is also noted as having the
same use, and there is a possibility that these plants may be believed to play a similar role in the despacho by opening and stimulating suerte channels.

b) Canela (sp. "cinnamon" ; Laurus Cinnamonum L.)

Small pieces of canela were scattered over the despacho to enhance its taste and smell (informant A). Canela is not documented elsewhere as entering despachos, but it is listed for a variety of medicinal uses, including the treatment of indigestion, stomach disorders and diarrhoea (Oblitas Poblete op. cit. : 110; Valdizán and Maldonado 1922b : 160).

c) Ch'ipi (q. "blinks ; Mimosaceae pipadenia?)

Ch'ipi are small, flat, shiny seeds, approximately 1 cm. in diameter, and they are scattered over the despacho in small quantities. Informant A explained that they represent money or "la esterlina del Tío", and that when boiled in water, they turn a silvery colour and look like small coins. Two ch'ipi are placed with the chiuchi mesa [see (iv) a] to attract suerte (informant A). Ch'ipi are also documented as representing suerte (Girault 1972 : 268, 392, 405 ; La Barre 1948 : 169 ; Paredes 1963 : 60).

Cummings notes that in the Cochabamba region, these seeds are called willka ch'ipi or willka kuti, and that two enter both the puka mesa and yuraj mesa, while five enter the mesa negra (1981 : 27). Frisancho Pineda notes that wilca cuti entered an offering to counteract the effects of sorcery (1973 : 102). Ch'ipi seeds also have a medicinal use. Informant A told me that up to twenty seeds are taken in mate (i.e. a herbal infusion) to assist a woman in labour. This assists the uterus to dilate.
usage is also supported by Cummings (loc.cit.).

d) **Copal** (sp.; Hymenaea sp.)

Copal is an aromatic resin, also referred to as lágrimas de arbol (informant A). Small pieces are crumbled over the despacho to scent the offering as it burns. Its smell is thought to be particularly pleasing to Pachamama (informant A). Martínez observed that it was used with llama fat to mould a miniature effigy of a llama for an offering to Pachamama (op.cit. : 20).

Tschopik records the use of copal in rites where offerings are burned (1951 : 250), and Cummings notes that its aromatic smoke attracts benevolent spirits (op.cit. : 42). Copal is also used to cure illnesses caused by malevolent entities in the wind and pulmonary disorders, as well as nervous spasms (informant A; Lira op.cit. : 20). In these treatments copal is burned and the smoke inhaled by the nose. Cummings notes that the resin entered the puka mesa and yuraj mesa prepared in Cochabamba (loc.cit.).

e) **Q'oa** (q.; Mentha pulegium)

Q'oa is a plant which grows on the altiplano and which is used as the base for the mesa para la Pachamama [see II : (iii)]. The term used for burning despachos is q'or or sahumar (q./sp. "to burn"). The plant gives off a strong aromatic smell when burning which is thought to be pleasing to the gods, and especially Pachamama (informants A, B; Martínez op.cit. : 33). Casaverde Rojas notes that q'oa is thought to nourish the gods of the natural world (1970 : 226-7) and Cummings writes that it is a medium of communication with them (op.cit. : 70). La Barre mentions that it is sometimes used in divination (1948 : 205, 220). Aguiló refers to the use of q'oa in offerings used in...
fertility rites for Pachamama (1983: 89). Bandelier also witnessed the burning of q'oa in cultivated fields to ensure a good harvest (1910: 95-7). Q'oa is also documented as entering standard despacho offerings for the earth (see Lira op.cit.: 35-6; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego 1976: 228).

Q'oa also has a curative function in treating the condition aire (informants A, B; Valdizán and Maldonado 1922b: 396), and the mesa q'oa which takes its name from the plant has a special role in treating susto [see II : (iii)].

f) **Romero** (sp. "rosemary"; Rosmarinus Officinalis L.)

Romero was scattered in small quantities over the despacho, to contribute to its aromatic smell (informants A, B).

It is a plant that has many medicinal uses (see Oblitas Poblete op.cit.: 313-5). Informant H told me that it is commonly used to bathe a woman's body a week after giving birth, to protect her from malevolent spirits. The plant is also taken in a hot drink to assist with contractions (informant A). Infusions of romero also help increase lactation (Oblitas Poblete loc.cit.).

Lira notes the use of romero together with copal for the treatment of wayra (q. "wind", op.cit.: 20), and Frisancho Pineda records its use in ritual fumigations (op.cit.: 84). Valdizán and Maldonado mention that branches of romero are kept behind the door to deter sorcery (1922a: 174).

The plant therefore has recognised properties as medicinally and ritually cleansing, and is also pleasing to the gods when burned in an offering.

g) **Trinchadora** (sp.; Rhijoma cyperac. Junc ?)

Trinchadora is the name given to pieces of root which
entered both despacho types, and which also enters the mesa negra (see Chapter 4: I). Informants A, B, D and E all confirmed that the root had no medicinal properties, but that it is used to represent a ceremonial tool with which to cut the offering, i.e. for the gods' benefit. Informant A explained that the root is used "para que se trinchen o se cumplen todos los deseos". Similar symbolic utensils are included in the chiuchi mesa [see (iv) a].

h) Wayruro (q./a.; Eritrina corallodendron)

The wayruro is a small seed, approximately 3 cms. in diameter, which is either black and red, or pure red in colour. A pair of black and red wayruro entered the despacho and also accompanied the chiuchi mesa [see (iv) a]. The seeds are associated with suerte and are often carried in a pocket as a lucky amulet (informants A, D, E; Cereceda 1987: 36). When worn or carried as an amulet, the wayruro protects against the illness ojeo (sp. "evil eye") and aire (Valdizán and Maldonado 1922b: 203-4). Informant A described the black part of the seed as "los ojos del Tío, para que vea que estamos dando". Valdizán and Maldonado refer to pairs of purely red wayruro as solteros, while, in contrast, pairs of black and red wayruro are referred to as casados (loc.cit.). Casaverde Rojas distinguishes between the red type, soltero, which is placed in benign offerings, and the black and red seed, referred to as viudo, which is used in offerings used for sorcery (loc.cit.). Cereceda also notes that the seeds are used in offerings to deities with malevolent potential (loc.cit.). Only the black and red type entered the Orureño despachos, and were designed to attract suerte to the offering. Cummings notes that seeds of both colour types entered
despachos in Cochabamba \textit{(op.

\textit{cit. : 26-7). Cereceda provides an interesting insight into the term \textit{wayruro}. This is the name given to the seed in the highland regions of Peru and Bolivia by the Quechua and Aymara, but it is not referred to as such in the rain forest regions where the seed originates.

Las semillas llamadas \textit{wayrurus} no tienen, pues, otra unidad que aquella que le dan los ojos andinos de las alturas, confundiendo, en un solo nombre, a todas las 'pepitas' rojas manchadas con negro. Este hecho sugiere que lo que está tal vez denominando la palabra es aquí, justamente, ésa combinación de colores.

\textit{(op.

\textit{cit. : 37-8)}

Cereceda suggests that the \textit{wayruro} seed is a metaphor for division and contrast, represented in microcosmic form on the surface of the seed \textit{(op.

\textit{cit. : 42 ; see also Martínez \textit{op.

\textit{cit. : 50). Other terms mentioned above also refer to one single colour, i.e. as lacking a contrasting factor \textit{(soltero/viudo)}, or refer to two colours in combination as a contrasting pair \textit{(casados). The combination of two colours therefore provides something of meaningful contrast and balance which is not achieved by the use of one colour on its own. While the seeds' general function is to attract suerte, the juxtaposition of red and black may be associated with the balance of factors controlling suerte. The pairing of the seeds may also be a reinforcement of the seeds' properties and symbolic role within the offering.

Wayruro seeds are also documented elsewhere as entering despachos \textit{(see Casaverde Rojas \textit{loc.

\textit{cit. ; Frisancho Pineda \textit{op.

\textit{cit. : 104 ; Lira \textit{loc.

\textit{cit. ; Marzal 1971 : 273 ; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego \textit{op.

\textit{cit. : 227).}
iv) **Minerals and metals**

a) **Chiuchi mesa** (q./sp.)

The *chiuchi* mesa comes in a small package and is almost a separate offering in itself. It consists of numerous tiny figurines manufactured from lead or tin which represent all features of daily life, the cosmos, and deities of the natural world. It is decorated with its own strips of tinsel, or *adorno* [see (vi) a] which heightens the brilliance of its contents. In it may be found human couples, livestock (e.g. llamas), buildings, houses and house implements, culinary tools, tables, chairs, Pachamama, Tío, sun, moon, stars, etc. It is like a tiny universe worked in tin. One of Tschopik's informants described the figurines as "they are just the things we like and want, and the spirits like them too" (1951: 247). They are also referred to as *chiuchi* recado, i.e. as gifts or messages to the gods (Cummings 1981: 56-7; Frisancho Pineda 1973: 97; Martínez 1987: 50). The plates, knives and spoons contained in the mesa are recorded as serving as utensils for the gods, with which they may eat the ritual foods presented to them (Bolton and Bolton 1976: 110).

The *chiuchi* mesa is kept separately in its package and the contents are scattered over the *despacho* before it is used. Aranguren Paz observes that animal figurines were especially selected from the mesa and placed at the centre of a *despacho* for the earth used in August (1975: 106). The figurines may therefore be used individually or as part of a mesa.

Frisancho Pineda has listed up to twenty seven variations of images featured in the mesa, and illustrates how they may be used in combination to express certain ideas. The combination of
knife, fork, and spoon, for example, represents "abundancia, banquete, honores" (loc.cit.). Cummings finds fifty types of different chiuchi figurines, and also observes that they may be arranged like hieroglyphs to form a series of messages (loc.cit.). Like the misterios, they are key symbols for indicating the particular aspects of suerte that are desired.

A complete chiuchi mesa accompanied only the larger Orureño despachos, and individual pieces were not selected for use in smaller offerings. Collectively the figurines represented all aspects and factors influencing suerte, and certain figurines, e.g. knife, fork and spoon, also reinforced the offering as a symbolic platter.

An important feature of the chiuchi mesa is that the figurines are always paired (informants A, B; see also Tschopik 1951: 246-7; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego 1976: 234). A pair of both ch'i pi and wayruro seeds also accompany the mesa. Martínez observes the use of single seeds only in this mesa (loc. cit.). The seeds are placed in the mesa to attract suerte [see (iii) c, h], and they are also documented as having uses in divination. Lira describes how the centre of the ch'ipi seed will be observed for traces and forms which may be useful in particular offerings (1946: 106) and Cereceda notes that the wayruro seeds are believed to change their appearance according to the circumstances of the owner. Diviners may also interpret suerte by observing the seeds (1987: 36). These seeds therefore also play a role in communication, as well as in attracting suerte.

The contents of the chiuchi mesa are therefore concerned with the cultivation of suerte through the proliferation of its
images, and this is reinforced by the placement of seeds with special properties within the mesa.

b) **Q'ollqe llinpi** (q."silver colour" Mica)  
   **Q'ori llinpi** (q."gold colour" Mica)

Both **Q'ollqe llinpi** and **Q'ori llinpi** come in separate packages and the contents are sprinkled over the centre of the despacho before it is offered. The packages contain a crumbly mineral which comes in both silver and gold forms, and symbolises these precious metals (informants A, B). Cummings identifies this as a silicate of aluminium, or mica (op. cit.: 43). It is documented elsewhere as entering despachos in these forms (see Garr 1972: 148; Girault 1972: 330). These are an expensive addition and are generally only placed in the larger despachos. Together they refer to complementary forms of wealth, and visually they create contract and balance within the despacho.

Cummings notes the use of white mica only in offerings (loc. cit.). Valdizán and Maldonado record the use of mica as an amulet to attract suerte when it is carried in a pocket (1922b: 30).

It should be noted that **Q'ollqe llinpi** and **Q'ori llinpi** are always placed together and are therefore important as a pair, for the effect this creates.

c) **Q'ollqe t'anta** (q."silver bread")  
   **Q'ori t'anta** (q."gold bread")

**Q'ollqe t'anta** and **Q'ori t'anta** come in a separate package which is placed on the despacho last of all. The package contains a piece each of gold and silver leaf which are arranged on the surface of the offering at the centre, and facing upwards. Because of their cost, they are generally only included in the
larger despachos.

Like the *q'ollqe llinpi* and *q'ori llinpi*, these pieces of gold and silver leaf refer to desired forms of wealth, and particularly rich mineral ore. The term *t'anta* also links with another type of "bread" within the despacho, the alfeñiques [see (i) a]. Girault refers to *q'ollqe t'anta* and *q'ori t'anta* as pieces of gold and silver leaf which contain a piece of sugar wrapped inside (op.cit. : 377, 460). These items are thus symbolic forms of "bread", i.e. symbolic of vital sources of nourishment.

When placed on the offering, facing upwards, the gold and silver create a striking contrast, and appear like mirrors, attracting light to the offering. I would suggest that the juxtaposition of gold and silver may represent cosmological balance, or be placed to attract cosmological forces to the offering. Tschopik observes the following:

The degree to which gold and silver are rooted in Aymara ceremonialism is clarified further by ritual incantations in which frequent reference is made to 'golden star', 'silver star', 'golden staff', 'silver staff', 'golden libation', 'silver libation' and the like. In such ritual utterances, the metals are always paired, and gold always precedes silver in order of preference.

(op.cit. : 247)

*Q'ollqe t'anta* and *q'ori t'anta* are also sometimes used to dress the sully [see (ii) b]. Aranguren Paz notes that gold and silver leaf is referred to as montura when placed as a saddle on a foetus (loc.cit.), and Tschopik observes that gold and silver leaf may accompany both the llama fat or foetus in an offering (op.cit. : 24). Urbano records that gold and silver leaf is
placed on the heart of a sacrificed sheep "para propiciar la reproducción" (1976 : 126). Casaverde Rojas notes that gold and silver leaf represents money in offerings (1970 : 228). In some sources, gold and silver leaf is referred to as q'ollqe libro and q'ori libro which perhaps is not only a reference to its form and texture, but also to a secondary level of meaning as something that contains knowledge. This requires further investigation, and further data on the meaning of gold and silver in offerings would be useful. However, both gold and silver leaf are widely documented as entering offerings (see Aranguren Paz loc.cit.; Bolton and Bolton op.cit.: 102; Dalle 1973: 140; Marzal 1971: 273; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego op.cit.: 226; Lira 1969: 35-6).

Gold and silver forms are clearly used to increase the symbolic value of the offering as a whole in the hope that they will generate material wealth externally. They are particularly powerful when juxtaposed. Their importance is also indicated by the position which they occupy at the centre of the offering.

v) Miscellaneous foods

a) Fideos (sp. "Pasta")

Fideos entered the despacho in various forms, and consisted of the same type of pasta used for ordinary consumption. In the offering they contributed as ritual food for the earth. It should be noted that pasta is increasingly valued as a popular alternative to rice and potatoes, and is therefore an important staple.

Dalle also records the use of fideos in despachos (1973: 59-6)
140), and Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego note the use of fideos in the shape of stars (1976: 226). Garr notes that fideos of a particular size or shape may be chosen especially, but that the choice is ultimately dependent upon the foodstuffs available (1972: 148).

b) Frutas secas (sp.)

A variety of dried fruits entered the despacho, including peaches, apricots and raisins. Only small quantities of peaches and apricots were used because of their cost, while raisins were distributed more generously, and according to despacho size. These items are regarded as sweet, and therefore particularly pleasing to the gods. Garr also notes the use of raisins in despachos (loc.cit.).

c) Garbanzos (sp."chick peas")

Garbanzos contributed to the general food content of the despacho and were placed in quantities proportionate to despacho size. They are also documented in other sources as entering despachos (See Aranguren Paz 1975: 106; Cummings 1981: 58; Dalle loc.cit.; Garr loc.cit.; Lira 1969: 35-6; Marzal 1971: 273; Frisancho Pineda 1973: 81).

d) Maní (sp. "peanuts")

Like the dried fruits, maní entered the despacho as a special delicacy for the gods, and were placed in quantities proportionate to despacho size. Maní are also documented elsewhere as entering despachos (see Casaverde Rojas 1970: 232; Dalle loc.cit.; Garr loc.cit.; Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego 1976: 226).
e) **Pallares** (sp. "lima beans")

Like the *garbanzos*, *pallares* contributed to the general food content of the *despacho*, and were placed in similar quantities. Cummings observes that in the Cochabamba region, *pallares* entered offerings in pairs. They are also extensively documented as entering offerings for the earth (Casaverde Rojas *loc.cit.*; Dalle *loc.cit.*; Garr *loc.cit.*; Lira *loc.cit.*; Marzal *loc.cit.*; Frisancho Pineda *loc.cit.*).

vi) **Additional items**

a) **Adorno** (sp.)

The *despacho* is finally decorated with strips of bright, tinselly paper, or *adorno*. The colours of *adorno* differ according to *despacho* type; brightly coloured paper is used in the *mesa para la Pachamama* while white and silver paper is used in the *mesa blanca*. The *adorno* makes the offering visually attractive, and is used to offset *despacho* ingredients in much the same way as a food garnish. The strips of wool and cotton used to dress the llama foetus [see (ii) b] are also referred to as *adorno*.

b) **Alcohol** (sp.)

Like the coca, alcohol is an indispensable addition to the *despacho*. Libations of alcohol are made to the offering while it burns, and alcohol is also consumed by participants in the ritual. Bottles of especially sweet wine, or *vino dulce* (sp.) are available at the traditional medicine market for sale with *despachos*, and in varying sizes according to *despacho* size. *Vino dulce* is thought to be particularly appropriate because of its sweet content. Clients also buy beer and/or cane liquor for both
personal consumption and for libations. The choice ultimately depends on personal preference and cost; like the size and content of the offering itself, the more the better.

C) Coca (sp. ; Erythroxylon coca)

Coca leaves are added to the despacho before it is burned and are contributed from the individual's own supply. The number of leaves placed varies according to despacho size; as few as six are placed in a small despacho while as many as thirty-six enter the large despachos. The number is usually a multiple of six.

Coca is also offered to the effigies of Tío and Tía within the mine when an offering is made, and those making an offering will usually chew coca as a traditional means of ritual participation. The cultural role of coca chewing is thoroughly outlined by Allen (1981).

d) Large sugar tablets

In the month of August, and during Carnival, very large sugar tablets are placed on the largest despachos as additional decoration. They are like enlargements of the images featured on the misterios and may be up to 20 cms. in height. They include botella, camión, casa, mariposa or llama (to represent Pachamama), Tío and Tía. They usually enter the despacho in pairs. Since one of these tablets can cost the same as a small despacho, they only enter the very elaborate despachos, which are bought collectively. These large sugar pieces not only enhance the sweet content of the offering, but also its ritual value and presentation as a whole.
CHAPTER 2

SYMBOLIC ARRANGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION IN THE DESPACHO
I) DESPACHO COMPOSITION

i) Despacho size

The despacho is believed to work according to a basic law of reciprocity, i.e., that which is invested in the offering by way of content and imagery will be returned in kind, and the greater the amount invested, the greater the returns will be. As informant B explained, "damos para que recibamos más".

In Oruro, the quantity of despacho ingredients was determined by the overall size of the offering. The larger the despacho, the greater its content, and hence also its significance in terms of personal investment and potential for reciprocation by the deity to whom it is offered.

Each size of despacho contains a proportionate quantity of basic ingredients and has a fixed price. In August 1984 (N.B. exchange rate $ US = sb. 2000) despacho prices varied from sb. 200 (minimum size) and sb. 500 (small size), to sb. 1000 (intermediate size) and sb. 2000 (standard size). The largest despacho available with the maximum range and quantity of basic ingredients cost sb. 30,000, exclusive of specific items which are listed, and studied in this thesis, as follows:

i) sullu [see Chapter I, III : (ii) b]

ii) chiuchi mesa [ (iv) a ]

iii) q'ollqe llinpi / q'ori llinpi [ (iv) b]

iv) q'ollqe t'anta / q'ori t'anta [ (iv) c]

v) large sugar tablets [ (vi) d]

Since a sullu, depending on its size, could cost anything between sb. 2500 and sb. 7000, it would only enter the standard or large size despachos. This ruling also applied to the other above listed ingredients, which are therefore only placed in the more comprehensive offerings.
These items are highly prized, because they increase the symbolic value of the offering and also enhance its overall presentation. The despacho therefore increases in both its material and symbolic value along with its size, content and price. The importance of these items is also indicated by the central position which they occupy in the offering [see (iv) ].

The size and potential of the despacho is eagerly advertised by stall-holders at Carnival and August when the competitive displays of traditional medicine stalls reach quite dazzling proportions. These displays not only show how popular despachos are, but also indicate what clients of these stalls are prepared to pay in order to invest in offerings. Informant A referred to her stall as "una mina de oro". The extravagance of these displays, which also encourages clients to buy, parallels the intensity of ritual courtship between clients and earth deities. During the peak seasons of ritual activity, i.e. February and August, stall-holders encourage clients to buy bigger and better offerings, on the grounds that this is the way to increase suerte. They will also advise clients in the most appropriate offerings and ingredients to suit individual needs.

Despacho size is an important factor of investment, because it is related to what the offerer needs in terms of suerte. It also influences the arrangement and quantity of ingredients placed, and the composition of the offering as a whole. Items are either placed in specific quantities, or are distributed in roughly equal amounts proportionate to the overall size of the offering [see (iii) ]. As I will go on to discuss in this Chapter, there is an emphasis on proportion and balance so that the right internal pattern is created within the offering,
however large or small it may be.

Both the small and intermediate size despachos contain very
token amounts of the sweets and plant matter [see Chapter I,
III : (i) ; (iv) ] arranged on a plato [ibid. : (ii) a] of llama
wool or cotton. These smaller despachos exclude the larger sugar
items such as the alfeñiques, botella, llama and tablilla
[ibid. : (i) a, d, i, m]. The arrangement of ingredients is not
emphasised in these smaller offerings because their content is
much less elaborate. They contain as few as two misterios
[ibid. : (i) k] which enter as a pair.

The larger sugar items begin to enter in the intermediate
and standard size despachos. The intermediate size despacho
contains either two or four misterios, and these may be
supplemented by the azúcar redonda, azúcar cuadrada, or estrella
[ibid. : (i) b, c, i]. The standard size despacho contains four,
or more usually six, misterios, and does not generally include
supplementary tablets. The number of botellas and llamas placed
tends to match the number of misterios in this size of
offering.

Because of the greater number of misterios placed in the
standard despacho, and because of the greater range of sweets
and foods which may be included, this despacho was described by
informant B as "más amplia", and is therefore considered more
effective in suerte cultivation. This, and the larger despachos
are especially effective if they include the expensive items
listed separately above ( i - v ), and if the contents and
composition fulfil the requirements of la mesa completa [ see
(ii) below ]. Significant returns in suerte can only be expected
from offerings which are fully supplemented in this way.
All despacho sizes require coca, alcohol, and usually also cigarettes. Since despacho rituals usually take place as a group activity, it is common for one or two bottles of alcohol to be bought for libations, and extra bottles to be bought for group consumption. Since coca and alcohol are indispensable ritual accompaniments [see Chapter I, III : (vi) b, c ], these items are not bypassed because of their cost, and like the despacho content are thought to influence the ritual more positively, the greater the quantities used. Because of the considerable financial outlay for these ritual goods, especially if they are purchased on a regular basis, the choice of despacho size and the frequency of offerings made ultimately depend on what the individual can afford, and the particular needs, circumstances and wishes at the time of purchase.

The ritual cycle of despacho activity also influences what is bought and when, and strongly influences the choice of despacho size. A standard size despacho is usually bought on the first appropriate day of the month (i.e. according to which deity the offering is made) since this is the time which is considered most effective for suerte cultivation (informants A, B). The offering of monthly despachos is thought to be a good way of maintaining suerte (informants A, B), as well as increasing suerte when there is a need to do so. Small despachos tend to be bought for occasional, or more frequent usage.

During February and August, when the earth is most hungry and the balance of suerte is most critical, the standard size despacho is especially popular, and this is the time when it is particularly crucial to make the despacho as large and as decorative as the individual can afford. Because of the need to
reinforce suerte at these times, groups of individuals may pool their resources to buy a despacho collectively, and groups often choose to invest in the largest despacho size, in which as many as thirty-six misterios may be placed (see plates 2, 3, and 4).

Despite these variables in despacho size and the times they are used, considerable emphasis is placed on the arrangement and composition of each offering, and this increases along with despacho size. The despacho is, above all, a composition of miniatures with a definite purpose in ritual, "para que nos devuelve más". The larger the despacho, the greater its content, and the more specific its arrangement. In this Chapter I will go on to discuss features of arrangement and composition, and this will particularly refer to the standard and larger despachos because of their composition and presentation, and the significance of this in terms of suerte.

ii) La mesa completa
a) Composition of la mesa completa

The despacho is far from a random display of ritual paraphernalia. Since it consists of tierra mikhuy destined for high ranking deities, it is assembled with infinite care as to presentation and detail.

Interviews with stall-holders were often conducted as despachos were prepared for display on the stall, and I soon became familiar with the pattern of assembly. The attention to detail involved in the preparation of even the smallest of despachos lead me to question the significance of composition and presentation. Why such emphasis on order and arrangement for an offering which is ultimately burnt, and what does the composition actually mean?
First of all, the q'oa [see Chapter I, III : (iii) e] is spread out on a square of newspaper. The llama wool is then teased out to form a circular plato, on which the food ingredients are arranged in small groups, starting with the basic foodstuffs and then moving on to the sugar items in assorted shapes and figures [i.e. alfeñiques, botella, colación, llama, ibid. : (i) a, d, g, j, etc.]. The misterios [ibid. : (i) k] are then selected and placed towards the periphery of the offering to form a rough circle. In the very largest despacho [see (i) above], the thirty-six misterios placed formed a tight bracelet of images encompassing the offering. The chiuchi mesa, q'ori t'anta, q'ollqe t'anta, q'ori llinpi, q'ollqe llinpi, sullu and alcohol bottles [see Chapter I, III : (ii) c ; (iv) a, b, c ; (vi) b] are then placed at the centre of the offering which is sprinkled lastly with adorno [ibid. : (vi) a].

Once the offering has been assembled in the above fashion with the appropriate images, the correct choice of colours and quantity of ingredients, it may be described as la mesa completa, referring to its wholeness as an arrangement and also its completion for ritual usage (informants A, B). The fact that the mesa is complete is an important factor of its efficacy in ritual, but how is this linked to content and composition?

Informant B explained that the special items listed in (i) above, which are bought separately and occupy a central position in the offering, are essential to la mesa completa. This term is therefore only given to the standard or large size despachos for which these highly prized items are exclusively bought. As I have mentioned in (i) above, these items play an important role in enhancing the value and presentation of the offering. Smaller
despacho sizes are therefore considered less powerful since they are not generally supplemented with these items.

The number of misterios placed is another important aspect of la mesa completa. In the larger offerings, the total number of misterios placed is a multiple of twelve. A small despacho may contain as few as two. Informant B pointed to the distinction between the number of misterios placed and despacho size as follows:

"aquí entra apenas doscitos, porque esto cuesta menos, pero cuando es una mesa completa, aquí ponemos los veinticuatro."

Martínez notes that in Sucre, la mesa completa includes ingredients for distribution amongst twelve platos; la media mesa for six platos, and la mesa chica for three platos. He also notes that twelve misterios entered la mesa completa (1987 : 106). In accordance with the rule, "the bigger, the better", greater care is generally given to the presentation of the larger offerings which can reach quite ornate proportions.

In la mesa completa, ingredients are arranged in neat groups, rather like small parcels of land, and the offering is populated at its centre with the figurines of the chiuchi mesa. Collectively, these figurines mirror life on earth in its totality, populating and furnishing the offering with images drawn from all aspects of daily life. As informant B described:

"todo está en par. Todo lo que existe en la tierra está aquí, hasta el matrimonio, la iglesia, tanto como vegetal y mineral."

The misterios placed around the edge create a pattern of images, like a boundary, encircling and enclosing the offering. The visual effect is of a picture, or a tapestry landscape composed of miniatures, and at the centre of the picture are the richest
offerings; the sullu, and the gold and silver "bread". In this picture, suerte is expressed as a wealth of riches and delicacies, as well as features of everyday life - it is all part of a desired whole.

Collectively the food ingredients represent tierra mikhuy, natural and man-made products which recreate the vital energy of pacha and life upon it in all its forms. The plato and q'oa [see Chapter I, III : (ii) a; (iii) e] bind the ingredients together in a way that evokes the essential nature of pacha as it embraces all aspects of life. An informant of Gow and Gow describes Pachamama in a way that vividly reflects the importance of pacha as the well-spring of life:

"La tierra nunca muere. Cuando morimos desaparecemos en la tierra, ella nos está absorbiendo. De ella crece el pelo. Ése es el pasto y ése es la lana para los animales. Los animales se alimientan con este pasto. A nosotros nos cuida. Cuida a todos los animales y a todos los hombres".

(1975 : 154)

Superimposed on this landscape of food are the specific images of suerte in the form of the misterios and chiuchi mesa figurines. Both pacha and suerte are therefore depicted within a compact arrangement of miniature forms.

La mesa completa is dependent upon the inclusion, juxtaposition and distribution of specific items and forms to create a "complete" picture, and one that is effective in ritual. How the offering is "completed" directly affects what flows from it as a result of ritual. We can understand the symbolic composition of the offering as this is brought together through the central metaphor of the despacho, that of tierra mikhuy.

b) "Whole" food : tierra mikhuy

In Oruro, suerte is dependent upon the renewal of the
earth's vital energy in a material, as well as a spiritual sense. The despacho, as a symbolic platter containing tierra mikhuy, works as a metaphor for this vital process of renewal. It also creates a context in which the component images and associations, and the way they are presented, can make sense as a whole.

On one level the despacho is a plato of ritual foodstuffs containing all the delicacies needed to nourish the earth deities in the most appetising way. They are differentiated in colour so that the food is channelled to the right deity. On another level, the despacho is dependent upon the correct internal adjustments so that it may be termed la mesa completa, in much the same way as a meal may undergo a variety of alterations to suit the consumer's taste.

It is of utmost significance to the efficacy of the despacho that the offering is "complete", so that its qualities of unity and plenitude will be reciprocated. In this way, the factors which govern la mesa completa are those which determine the overall quality of suerte which is hopefully "fed back" as a result of ritual. As Kaptchuk and Croucher point out:

Ritual is performance using symbols of what is thought to be powerful in the cosmos. This dramatic enactment changes the actual. It is part of all the healing arts, including scientific medicine.

(1986 : 101)

The central metaphor of the despacho, i.e. that of a food platter, becomes meaningful when the despacho is offered to the gods and burned. The content of the despacho, tierra mikhuy, is thus a way of mediating with pacha and its deities more directly, and the presentation of the offering as la mesa completa ensures that they are reached more comprehensively.

The consequences of failing to comply with ritual
requirements is detrimental to an individual's suerte, and can be fatal. A fine line is drawn between suerte and well-being, and mala suerte with its impoverishment, ill-health and misfortune. The acceptance of the offering is therefore crucial. Ashes and coca leaves may be closely scrutinised in case offerings are inadequate or incomplete [see Cummings 1981: 48; Dalle 1973: 42; Garr 1972: 145; Frisancho Pineda 1973: 107].

Informant A explained why the offering of despachos to Tío reaches a peak in August, when the earth is most "hungry":

"Todos alcanzan en este mes para que el Tío no les mande desgracias, que nos de la suerte. Él que no alcanza, a él le castiga".

The importance of the internal balance and completion of the offering is reinforced by the consequences which may be evoked by incompleteness and imbalance. Like suerte, mala suerte may also be reflected back as an enlarged reality.

c) Earth payment and suerte balance

The despacho is not only a means of ritual nourishment, but also payment [see Chapter I, I; (ii) e]. The belief in pacha as an essential resource is linked to the belief that pacha stores the souls of the dead and is a reserve of powerful ancestral energy, capable of literally consuming the lives of men, women and animals. As Custred describes:

It is explained that the hills, like people, must eat, and if the peasants do not pay them their due (which forms the nourishment of the spirits) then the hills have no other recourse than to eat the hearts out of men and their animals. It is this belief which explains to the peasants a wide range of sickness, accidents and production failures accounted in everyday life.

(1979: 383)

The meaning of despacho rituals and other earth-feeding ceremonies has also been interpreted as a response to
socio-political victimisation (see Custred op. cit.: 391-2). This view has been traced by Silverblatt to the disruption of the Conquest in indigenous religious practices:

The indigenous metaphor for giving offerings and showing devotion to divinities was "feeding them". And ever since the Spanish conquest, when Christian gods were competing with native deities, the huacas were hungry; the normative prescription which guided the relationship between Andean people and their deities had been undermined.

The failure of native Peruvians to appropriately honour their deities, "to feed them", could be used as an explanation of the tremendous deterioration of living conditions experienced by the colonized ... The devastation and despair experienced by the colonized were expressed through these symbols: huacas, themselves in spite of being "fed", began to consume their adherents".

(1981: 435-446)

Taussig similarly focusses on the drastic impact of the colonial mining industry on former indigenous and agriculturally based communities. He argues that the colonial mita and the disruption of social and economic organisation based around reciprocral change is embodied in the malice of Tío's demonic personality, which contrasts with the all-embracing benevolence of Pachamama:

un poder masculino, encarnado en un símbolo ajeno proveniente de la cultura de la Conquista, aparece como decidido a destruir la comunidad india; mientras que un poder feminino, que encarna los intereses indios, aparece manteniéndolo a distancia.

(1980: 210)

Platt goes further to argue that Tío as a diabolic figure became adapted to the campesino ideology of the underworld through what he describes as "una continuidad transformacional" (1983: 48).

The unpredictability of the earth, which reflects itself in Oruro as a rampant preoccupation with suerte, can be attributed
to the belief in the earth as an animate power, constantly capable of change. If the despacho constitutes a debt which is on-going, it is also because the earth is a vital source of livelihood which is in need of constant reinforcement and renewal. In Oruro, Pachamama and Tío receive different types of offerings because of the different aspects of suerte which they govern [see Chapter I, II : (iii) ; (iv)].

While I by no means deny the tragic erosion of indigenous culture and livelihood through the forces of Western social, economic and political intervention, the focus of my thesis is on the symbolic meaning of the despacho's internal arrangement. I would argue that this presents a positive and powerful structuring of a world view through its composition and constituent symbols, and that it reaches a powerful expression through its activation in ritual. The consequences of sustained mineral exploitation, and the socio-economic difficulties of maintaining a livelihood on the altiplano means that if anything, the relationship between the Orureño and the principal earth deities has evolved and intensified. Platt also comments:

si los mineros han entablado relaciones más profundas con el tío, se debe simplemente al hecho de que el trabajo minero se desenvuelve bajo tierra.

(op.cit. : 66)

It should not be forgotten that the despacho is also a token of acknowledgement and appreciation, and that when used in its appropriate context, acts as a gesture to reinforce an acknowledged relationship with the earth [see also Guerra 1977 : 48-52].

d) The role of metaphor

The metaphor of tierra mikhuy can be seen as a vehicle for
expression, creating a context in which particular needs and desires may be highlighted through selected imagery in the offering. Furthermore, la mesa completa can be seen as a metaphor for unity with the environment, so that the quality of presentation and arrangement as a whole has a positive influence externally.

Bastien illustrates how the community of Kaata (province of Bautista Saavedra, Bolivia) represent the mountain on which they live as a metaphor for a human body, which, while consuming ritual produce from the community, in return also provides food for its inhabitants. Diviners are responsible for feeding the mountain with ritual offerings of blood and fat. Bastien explains that in this way the mountain is "symbolically vitalised and is able to feed the community. The mountain/body metaphor is then complete" (1978 : 190). The action of ritual feeding can therefore be seen as a positive reinforcement and form of co-operation with the environment.

The belief that illness and misfortune are "the consequence of some disharmony in the cosmic order" (Capra 1982 : 335) is true of many traditional cultures. The very survival and proliferation of despacho rituals in Oruro, as well as the extensive commercial sale of ritual paraphernalia for them, reflects a positive community investment in this form of ritual tradition.

The despacho, when offered as la mesa completa, plays a healing role in recreating a sense of order and harmony so that conflicts in the living and working environment may be resolved and brought to balance through ritual mediation. This may be by an individual, or a group of individuals with similar interests,
e.g. miners etc.

The many symbolic forms contained in the despacho express a whole-hearted belief in the earth as a continuing material and spiritual source of energy. The unity and completeness of the offering is therefore of utmost significance in shaping reality and future hopes, and in the sustained output of pacha as this manifests in suerte.

iii) Numbers

a) Numbered items

As I have already mentioned in (i) above, despacho ingredients are placed in amounts which are proportionate to the size of the offering. Some items are placed in specific numbers, while other ingredients are distributed in roughly equal amounts to form neat groupings. Items are only placed in specific numbers if they are a particular shape (see table A). This is consistent with Dalle's observation of despacho composition (1973: 144).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBERED ITEMS</th>
<th>UNNUMBERED ITEMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfeñiques</td>
<td>Adorno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azúcar cuadrada</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azúcar redonda</td>
<td>Anís</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botella</td>
<td>Canela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch'ipi</td>
<td>Chancaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiuchi mesa</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca</td>
<td>Colación</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estrella</td>
<td>Copal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q'ollqe llinpi/q'ori llinpi</td>
<td>Fideos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q'ollqe t'anta/q'ori t'anta</td>
<td>Frutas Secas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llama</td>
<td>Galletas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misterios</td>
<td>Garbanzos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sullu</td>
<td>Maní</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayruro</td>
<td>Pallares</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastillas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Plato</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tablilla</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trinchadora</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Romero</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Untu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A: Despacho contents listed according to numbered and unnumbered ingredients
It can be seen from table A that items which are of primary symbolic significance, either through form or content, are counted, whereas items that make up the tierra mikhuy (e.g. chancaca, fideos, maní etc.), which assist the feeding process (e.g. plato, trinchadora), make the offering appetising (e.g. anís, canela) and attractive (e.g. adorno, pastillas) are not. In this way, items with distinct shapes and symbolic associations strongly influence the numerical composition of the offering.

The misterios play a particularly significant role in the numerical composition of the offering. These sugar tablets are always placed in pairs and add up to an even number (informants A, B). This is usually a subdivision or multiple of twelve, depending on the size of the offering. For example, as few as two would be placed in the smallest size despacho, four in the small size, and six or twelve in the intermediate and standard size offerings. As I have mentioned in section (ii) above, la mesa completa may contain up to thirty-six misterios.

If only two tablets are placed, these are positioned to the left and right of the centre of the offering amongst the other ingredients. If four tablets are placed this formation is doubled to make a square. This formation opens up when six tablets are placed, as these form a rough circle within the offering. When twelve misterios are placed, these are always placed in a circle, creating a ring of images around the other ingredients [see figure 1 : (iv) c]. Numbers are therefore linked to despacho composition through the placement of key symbolic items.

a) Pairs

The misterios play a vital role in linking the offering and its ingredients to a specific context and purpose [see Chapter I,
III : (i) k], and are key images which appeal to the deities with a specific communication. The pairing of ingredients is particularly crucial to the internal balance of the offering, and especially so in the case of the misterios.

In the Orureño despacho, the pairing of misterios applied either as duplicates of the same image, as for example two misterios featuring the mine in the mesa blanca, or as contrasting pairs, i.e. Tío in either his active or passive role as Tío bailando or Tío sentado. Informant B emphasises that the images chosen, as long as they are appropriate to the offering, are of secondary importance to the actual number placed, which must be a pair.

A misterio of Tío often enters the mesa blanca with a misterio of Tía, his female counterpart. Images of Tío on his own, or in conjunction with an image of the mine are more commonly placed. In the mesa para la Pachamama, an image of Pachatata is occasionally paired with an image of Pachamama. The misterio for Pachatata is often referred to as el panadero, and depicts a baker lifting loaves from an oven, "que no falte el pan" (informant B). He is depicted as complementing the domestic provision overseen by Pachamama: "entra con la Pachamama, porque su par es" (informant B). Pachamama is more commonly placed with a tablet depicting the mariposa, or butterfly, which represents suerte. Pachatata and Tía are thus cast in a secondary role as male/female counterparts to the protagonists, Pachamama and Tío.

When paired as male/female counterparts, these images are intended to create balance within the offering rather than conflict. If there is conflict at all, it emerges as an external conflict between Pachamama and Tío as they vie for ceremonial
attention between the types of offering available. Internally, the emphasis lies exclusively on unity and balance. In this sense, the images of Pachatata and Tía play a stabilising and complementary role as deities associated with suerte. Tablets depicting Pachamama and Tío may even feature together in the same offering, as long as the despacho is not for use in the mine. In this case they feature not so much as a couple, but as reinforcing both aspects of suerte when there is a need to do so. Individual despachos are more commonly offered to each or either deity.

Two is the minimum number of misterios placed, and is considered essential for the balance and stability of the offering. Informant B explained this as, "así dividimos la suerte". If the number of misterios is not equally paired, "no da". Informant B further explained, "un par que no tiene suerte es la mala raya". Pairs create contrast and balance, whereas liminal or spare elements are ambiguous. Aguilo makes the following observation:

Los números tienen una representación simbólica manifiesta: Representan la buena o mala suerte, son k'acha o sajra. En general dicen que el número impar es sajra o mana walejchu, por el hecho de significar "un cabo suelto", una pérdida del equilibrio a que tiende siempre el aymaro-quechua. El número par, consecuentemente, significa buena suerte, "k'acha", compenetración, equilibrio. De ahí que ser soltero, viudo (a), etc. sea tenido por perjudicial y maléfico.

(1982 : 99)

Spare elements which are not part of a pair create the wrong line of balance, la mala raya, and may tip the balance of the offering towards mala suerte. This is sometimes referred to as chulla (q. "without a pair") or chulla ajayu (q. "soul without a pair" : informant I). Aguiló also notes the following:
Platt refers to the concept of even and uneven entities in the context of a Macha marriage ceremony (N. Potosí). Usually when libations are made, i.e. the dropping of a few drops of alcohol on the ground in honour of a deity, they are performed twice. In the Macha marriage ceremony, this is called yanantin, and is done on behalf of both members of the married couple. In the same way, when coca leaves are offered to an invited guest, or a participant in the ritual, each person receives two handfuls of coca, which should be received in both hands. This is also referred to as yanantin. Yanantin thus refers to a pair, or male-female duality. Yanantin also applies to the eyes, hands, ears, legs, breasts and testicles. Chulla is the term designated to ceremonies for which single libations are made from a single receptacle. Furthermore, a one-eyed person is considered to be chulla, since one of the pair is missing. Chulla thus refers to a single entity when there should be a pair (1978:1096).

The same term surfaces in the terminology of Isluga textiles studied by Cereceda. In the textiles, graded bands of colour referred to as indir k'isa, or k'isas "enteras", are composed symmetrically forming a scale of colour shades which doubles itself around the maximum shade of dark or the maximum shade of light in the band. Each side of this structure is referred to as "ch'ulla", "para recordar que se trata de dos k'isas y no de una sola" (1984:47). In the textiles the stripe without a pair has a positive, highlighting role.

In the smaller despachos, in which only two misterios are placed, plain sugar tablets are used to supplement the misterios,
either as a pair of contrasting shapes, i.e. azúcar cuadrada
together with azúcar redonda, or, as with the estrella, as a
single form [see Chapter I, III : (i), c, i]. As I have suggested
previously (ibid.) these shapes may have cosmological
associations designed to enhance the healing function of the
offering, but their placement seemed to be limited to the smaller
offerings, and to be arbitrary and ill-defined. I would suggest
that, since excepting the sullu they are the only items in the
despacho which are placed on their own, they play a neutral
role and complement the misterios, and like the ch'ulla stripe in
Cereceda's textile, reinforce and highlight the despacho content
in a positive sense. In part two of my thesis I will discuss the
meaning of uneven numbers in the context of curative mesas [see
Chapter 5 : (iv), c]. Elsewhere in the despacho, however, the
emphasis is on unity, balance and completion, and uneven numbers
which may alter the prospects of suerte are carefully avoided.

Pairs are therefore seen to be a stabilising and balancing
influence on suerte, and are an important ordering principle in
the placement of key ingredients. Aguiló comments:

Los números pares, especialmente el 2, son benignos
y de buena suerte porque indican compenetración y
equilibrio.

(op.cit. : 101)

Like the misterios, other significant sugar forms such as the
alféñiques, botella and llama [see Chapter I, III : (i), a, d,
j,] also enter the despacho in pairs. The number of pairs is
always proportionate to the size of the offering, and never
exceeds the number of misterios placed.

The chiuchi mesa which is placed at the centre of the
offering is entirely composed of paired miniature figurines,
accompanied by a pair each of wayruru and ch'ipi which are believed to attract suerte to the mesa [see Chapter I, III : (iv), a]. Gold and silver, in the form of q'ollqe llinpi/q'ori llinpi, q'ollqe t'anta/q'ori t'anta, also form pairs at the centre of the offering. Here the juxtaposition of gold and silver symbolises a balance of material riches, and as I have suggested previously [see Chapter I, III : (iv), b, c] may be intended to attract cosmological balance to the offering. Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego also note that pairing may take the form of juxtaposed ingredients such as gold and silver leaf (1976 : 230). Aranguran Paz (1975 : 106-7) and Urbano (1970 : 124) also record the pairing of sullu in offerings.

The pairing of ingredients in the despacho not only predisposes the offering towards suerte, but when applied to key ingredients creates the necessary internal order and balance which is believed to ensure that the balance of suerte is even, or as informant B described, "well-divided". Tschopik witnessed the offering of a despacho performed by two ritual specialists, one of whom he recorded as saying:

"Let us arrange the things well; the sun, the moon, and everything should be straight and even".

(1951 : 273)

Pairing is thus an important vehicle for balance and harmony in the offering as this is hoped to influence the balance and harmony of the cosmos.

c) Twelve

As the size of the offering increases, so does the number of misterios, and these are usually a multiple of twelve. The number of coca leaves which eventually accompanies the offering will
also match the number of misterios placed. Santander notes that
twelve coca leaves placed in a despacho for the Pirquitas mine
(prov. Jujuy, N.E. Argentina) were selected in perfect condition,
each designed to represent a month of the year. The quality of
the leaf was therefore equated with the destiny for its
associated month (1962 : 46-9). Twelve is believed to be a
particularly strong number, and like the number two is especially
associated with suerte (informants A, B, F, I). Aguiló describes
twelve as "el número sagrado, benigno" (loc. cit.). He also refers
to the importance of twelve in the groupings of ingredients in
healing rituals, and in association with plants such as coca and
q'oa (loc. cit.).

The number twelve frequently emerges in literature on Andean
ritual, and as influencing the order and placement of ritual
ingredients. Aranguran Paz observes that the number of objects
used in a mesa para la tierra in August by pastoralists included
six of each object in la media mesa and twelve of each object in
la mesa entera (loc. cit.). The use of multiples of twelve is an
important aspect of la mesa completa [see (ii) above]. Informant
A pointed out that a large despacho prepared in August would be
accompanied by as many as twelve bottles of drink. Urbano also
notes that in a despacho prepared in Waka Wasi, Lares, Peru,
everything entered the offering in groups of twelve, except the
sullu which entered as a pair (loc. cit.).

Sharon gives an extensive list of Catholic associations with
twelve in his analysis of numbers as they applied to the three
zones of a healing mesa prepared by a N. Peruvian coastal shaman
(1979 : 229). Platt points out that the recurrence of this number
in ritual cannot be simply a remnant association with the role of
the twelve apostles. He notes that the doce milagros often referred to in N. Potosí correspond to natural places in the environment, e.g. lakes, volcanic fissures and places where lightning has struck (1983: 54). In the ritual he observed at the Churiña mine, the contents of each of the twelve plates, each containing a total of thirty six cerros, or balls of ground-up maize, were later buried in twelve sacred locations around the mine. Platt suggests that the number may represent what he calls "la simultánea unidad y multiplicidad del pacha transcendental" (loc.cit.).

A misterio often placed in the despacho depicts twelve circles and is called doce platos. This misterio is placed "para que no falte en la tierra" (informant B) and refers to a multiplicity of feeding sources. Again, the number twelve surfaces to convey a sense of abundance and fulfilment.

**d) The role of numbers in the despacho**

While two is the basic numerical unit of the despacho, twelve is used to symbolise unity and totality. When this number is multiplied it serves to reinforce la mesa completa, and, when subdivided, despacho ingredients approximate this standard in quantity and quality. What is consistent, however, is the placement of ingredients in even numbers, and in pairs.

The number twelve, then, symbolises unity, wholeness, totality and completion - concepts which express a definite quality as well as quantity. Like pairs, the number twelve is an ordering principle which, when applied to key symbolic items and forms, enables certain qualities to be projected through them. Numbers are therefore used to influence suerte on a level which is deeper than the merely visual and organisational. As von Franz
numbers are not concepts consciously invented by men for purposes of calculation: they are spontaneous and autonomous products of the unconscious - as are other archetypal symbols.

(1964: 304)

Even numbers, particularly pairs and multiples or subdivisions of twelve when applied to key despacho ingredients lend balance and unity to the offering as a whole, and hopefully influence reality in the same way when activated in ritual. In the Quechua and Aymara thought, numbers are thus believed to be able to influence and channel change in a positive or negative direction, depending on the items through which they are projected, and the combinations and context in which they are used. In this way, the balance of suerte may be effectively influenced by the juxtaposition and numbering of ingredients in an infinite variety of ways.

Even numbers attract positive energy and create an inherent strength and stability within the offering which may temper the unknown in a positive fashion; uneven numbers, by contrast, consist of liminal or spare elements (chulla) which may attract malign forces but which may also be harnessed positively to specific ingredients to defend against illness and la mala suerte. Even numbers promote suerte and balance; uneven numbers create imbalance but also enable transformation to take place when used to rectify existing imbalance:

los números impares, aunque son mana walej, sirven para curar en el sentido que ahuyentan y expulsan la enfermedad.

[Aguiló op. cit. : 99; see also Chapter 5: (iv) c].

Since suerte is an aspect of the earth's ability to provide,
numbers which are harnessed to forms of tierra mikhuy may cultivate this source of energy more effectively. As I have already stated above, numbers are applied to items which have a significant role in attracting suerte to the offering, and which facilitate its consumption.

The power of numbers is further reinforced by the use of appropriate colour symbolism, the symbolic forms in which they are invested and with which they are juxtaposed, and the days of the week when the offering is activated - factors which may all predispose an offering to particular aspects of suerte.

Numbers have always served as universal symbols to describe and make sense of deeper dimensions of experience, as is exemplified in all religions, as well as the Kabbala, the twenty two trumps of the Tarot's Major Arcana, and the ancient Chinese oracle, or I Ching. The latter developed from a simple diagram or map of numbers devised by Ho Tu called the Yellow River Map and came to us in its present form from 3000 BC. In this map numbers were used as a means of interpreting reality in a hierarchy of arrangements, and through different combinations of numbers, different aspects of reality and their transformations became codified. The process of consulting the oracle is directly related to cosmic processes. The meaning and nature of change can be interpreted through numbers which may surface in varying combinations. Richard Wilhelm in his study of the oracle acknowledges the fact that

the very absence of an immediate meaning in chance permitted a deeper meaning to come to expression in it.

(1982 : 263)

In the I Ching, the creative power of numbers and their correspondences gave traditional Chinese society access to the
meaning of change at a deeper level of understanding, and a means of understanding the human condition as this relates to external influences. In the despacho, numbers play a similar role in creating patterns of access to suerte and the unknown through their symbolic correspondences. They are used in the offering as important ordering principles and as a means of influencing suerte in a positive way. They not only influence the structure of the offering, but as symbols are perhaps a more powerful and penetrating means of reaching into the unknown.

iv) Dualism in the despacho

a) Introduction

The aim of the Orureño despacho is to influence the balance of suerte, and the content and composition of the offering is designed to ensure that it appeals favourably to the earth deities so that suerte may be attracted to the individual. In this way, conflicts in the cosmos may be pre-empted.

As can be seen from table B, the Orureño despacho ritual is essentially preventative in nature, since it seeks to promote suerte. This is done in the belief that the propitiation and feeding of earth deities will ensure a reciprocal flow of wealth and benevolent protection.

When disaster or abnormality occurs, the despacho may also be used in a placatory, interventive role, and the ritual performance usually requires the presence and direction of a ritual specialist to interpret the demands of angered deities. In both instances, the despacho is aimed to feed the earth and through its symbolic composition, seeks actively to further harmony and stability in human life, and in the cosmos.

Because of the earth's animate and changing nature, the fine
Hunger
anger
retribution
destabilisation
imbalance
abnormality
disaster/misfortune

MALA SUERTE

tierra mikhuy
benevolence
propitiation
harmony
balance
normality
well-being/fortune

SUERTE

Table B : How the despacho controls suerte
The line that exists between suerte and mala suerte is constantly negotiable, and access to suerte through ritual is seen to be a constant requirement. This is governed by a series of choices; which deity requires propitiation, which offering is appropriate, where, when, and in what quantity. These factors in turn dictate the content and composition of the offering so that the right colours, symbols and amounts are juxtaposed. Access to suerte is therefore carefully channelled through the despacho.

As I have already discussed in (iii) above, the balance and stability of the offering is principally achieved through the pairing and numbering of ingredients. The juxtaposition of ingredients within the despacho also influences the internal balance and composition of the offering. This takes the form not only of juxtaposed images in the misterios (e.g. Tío sentado/Tío bailando; Tío/Tía; Tío/minero etc.) but also in contrasting textures, shapes, forms, and also properties.

b) The juxtaposition of despacho ingredients

Sweets predominate in the despacho since they are believed to attract suerte [see Chapter I, II : (ii)]. However, manufactured sweets such as the alfeñiques, colación, galletas, pastillas, etc. are contrasted with organic foods such as frutas secas, garbanzos, maní, pallares, etc. Natural food products are thus intermingled with man-made delicacies. The sweet content of the despacho is also tempered by these more bland-tasting ingredients and also by bitter and aromatic smelling plant matter [see Chapter I, III : (iii) a, b, d, e, f] so that taste is permeated with smell when the offering is activated. In this way the components of tierra mikhuy are subtly contrasted so that the overall effect of the plato is one of culinary and symbolic
balance.

The plant matter which enters the despacho may be sub-divided further between plants that appeal and attract suerte, e.g. anís, canela, ch'ipi, romero, wayruro and plants that cleanse and expel negative entities, e.g. copal, q'oa [see Chapter I, III : (iii) a, b, c, d, e, f, h]. These also contribute their respective pleasant and more acrid odours to the overall "seasoning" of the offering. Seeds (e.g. anís; ch'ipi) are placed together with fruits (e.g. frutas secas; garbanzos, pallares, wayruro); stems and leaves (e.g. canela, coca, q'oa) alongside root (e.g. trinchadora).

Processed, shaped minerals in the form of the chiuchi mesa figurines, and the square pieces of q'ollqe t'anta / q'ori t'anta are contrasted with the roughly crumbled q'ollqe llinpi and q'ori llinpi. Beneath the ingredients, the thick bed, or plato of llama wool (or cotton in la mesa blanca) contrasts with the brightly coloured paper strips of adorno which festoon the surface of the offering.

While the despacho is a composition of miniature forms, even so there is contrast and variety in shape and size. The large sugar tablets which may be used in August duplicate and amplify the images of the misterios, and the misterios complement and amplify the tiny figurines of the chiuchi mesa. The llama is represented in a number of forms and sizes, i.e. in the sullu, the large sugar tablet, the llama misterio, the sugar llama, as well as the woollen plato and untu placed in the mesa para la Pachamama. Similarly the alcohol bottle placed at the centre of the offering is duplicated in miniature form by the sugar botella. The colación is also duplicated by the colación menudo.
Figure 1: Despacho composition
There is also considerable contrast in the texture of despacho ingredients e.g. plato and q’oa (soft and yielding); chiuchi mesa (hard); alfeñiques; colación, misterios, tablilla (compact); chocolate, copal, q'ollqe llinpi / q'ori llinpi (loose and crumbled); alcohol (moist); sully (dry). I would suggest that the diversity of material used to constitute tierra mikhuy in some sense evokes the immensely different qualities of pacha and hence scope of suerte.

c) Round and square forms

Despacho ingredients are further contrasted in their varying shapes and forms. Square shapes, e.g. azúcar cuadrada, misterios, q'ollqe t'anta / q'ori t'anta, tablilla, and the square of newspaper on which the despacho is laid out, are juxtaposed with round shapes, e.g. alfeñiques, azúcar redonda, colación, plato. Cummings suggests that circular shapes which consist of a spiral shape (e.g. alfeñiques, are associated with kuti and linked with the capacity for events to turn over, or turn round "but enclosed in a circularity that these types of movement imply" (1981: 39).

It can be seen in figure 1 that the basic structure of the despacho is formed by round and square shapes which are superimposed upon each other. Despacho ingredients are all arranged and enfolded within the circular structure of the plato which also has a central focus where items of high ritual value are placed. Other ingredients are arranged around this with the misterios forming a circle at the periphery of the offering. The simple circular shape of the plato not only serves as a metaphorical platter for tierra mikhuy, but also gives form to the offering, binding it together structurally and on a
symbolic level.

The offering is based on a square of newspaper which holds the plato more firmly, so that the offering may be folded and kept intact until it is used, and also so that it may be easily lit (informants A, B). It therefore plays a functional role as a preparatory base. The square misterios placed around the offering also play a directly functional role in depicting the areas of suerte which require reinforcement. They also echo the shapes of the q'ollqe t'anta / q'ori t'anta at the centre of the offering which express the balance of desired material wealth in its highest form. In this way, round and square shapes overlap and interact while the circularity of the plato has a generally unifying effect on despacho content.

In the smaller despachos, the misterios are placed more loosely to form a very rough circle when six are used, or a rough square when only four are used [see Chapter I, III : (i) k]. The ingredients are still bound together by the plato, although this is much smaller, and the quantity and diversity of ingredients are much reduced and less varied. The structure of la mesa completa can therefore be seen as a basic model in which content and presentation are concentrated to create what is considered to be the most effective level of interaction, and within this structure the interplay of round and square forms is more distinct.

I would suggest that the juxtaposition of round and square forms is another aspect of the offering's internal balance, but that the circularity of the plato predominates to give unity to the offering on a structural and symbolic level. Suerte must not only be "well-divided" and well proportioned in the offering, but
also unified so that the ingredients interact to form a balanced and integrated whole.

Cummings suggests that the use of symbolic opposites in ritual creates distinct forms of associated movement in what he calls "the development of reality" (loc.cit.) and that this brings about the state desired by those who perform the ritual. Bolton and Bolton in their analysis of two rituals, one an earth payment ritual and another to implement sorcery, observe a fundamental opposition between the symbols and gestures used in the two rituals (1976). While the earth payment ritual involved sweet foods, pleasant aromas, music, tactile involvement, food, gestures of respect, motions with the right hand, and burning the offering in the east, the sorcery ritual involved bitter or sour food, stench, silence, tactile taboo, non-foods and gestures of disrespect, motions with the left hand, and the burning of the offering in the west. They conclude:

The two rituals are clearly differentiated by the properties associated with the ritual actions and materials. Moreover, the differences noted in these rituals appear in relation to the human faculties of perception and the handling of space and time.

(op.cit. : 113)

Albó comments that a recurrent theme in Aymara symbolic organisation is what he calls "the union of contrasts, with an internal coherence that would delight adherents to dialectical philosophy (1974-76 : 92). While the use of symbolic opposites may apply in the differentiation of ritual content, action and gesture as in the rituals described above, in the Oruroño despacho symbolic opposites can be seen to complement each other to create diversification and to reinforce the offering's central message of balance and unity, and this is further reflected in
the composition of the offering.

d) The centre of the despacho

Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego observe a left/right balance around the centre, or chawpi (q. "centre") of the offering in their study of the despacho (1976). Objects placed on the left-hand side were associated with midnight, gold, east, north, day-time, the present, culture and benign spirits, whereas objects on the right-hand side related to dawn, silver, south-west, night, darkness, the past, nature and malign spirits. Food for the deities was placed at the centre of the offering and included both organic and manufactured produce. They conclude:

las disposiciones de los símbolos en el "despacho" reflejan la concepción y percepción del tiempo y del espacio del campesino aymara.

(op. cit. : 236)

Sharon, in his study of a mesa prepared by a N. Peruvian coastal shaman, points to a distribution within a curing mesa between two major zones or campos, separated by a third neutral campo. Each zone is associated with different numbers. The left-hand side of the mesa, or campo ganadero, contains artefacts associated with malign spirits, the underworld and negative magic and is governed by the number twelve. The middle, neutral field, or campo medio, is where positive and negative are evenly balanced, and this area is governed by the number twenty-five (i.e. 12 + 13). The campo medio, or chawpi, is described as "the place where one has to put all ... so that everything remains controlled" (1979 : 225).

Platt, in his account of the mesa prepared for deities tiu jorge and tia asunta luwisa of the Churiña mine in N. Potosí (1983) describes a male/female polarity in the distribution of
ritual elements, with a secondary duality in the feminine pole. Plants placed on the mesa and which are divided to the left and right are molle and urku-urku. Molle is referred to as qharilla (a./sp. "men only") and urku-urku as chinaghari (a./sp. "male-female"; op. cit.: 55). Platt observes that a secondary duality is implied in the Tía / Pachamama figure of tía asunta luwisa. This is not only implicit in her ambiguous sex (chinaghari) but also the division of colours associated with her (beige and white). Platt suggests that the placement of ritual items relates to the ambiguity of Tía/Pachamama’s role in the mine which is essentially a male domain (op. cit.: 58). Tschopik also observes a left/right division in a mesa in which a line is scratched down the centre. Pairs of the chiuchi mesa figurines are placed on either side of this line facing opposite one another (1951: 252).

Dualism is therefore a common feature of mesa content and form, and in the above data it is seen to be reinforced by the arrangement of ingredients to the left and right of a central, mediating area. In the Churiña mesa which Platt describes, this left/right organisation is related to male/female deities, while in the structures studied by Mayorga, Placios and Samaniego, and Sharon, the dualism is related to cosmological and spatial determinants and the division between the material world of man, and nature. Martínez, in his study of offerings prepared in Sucre for Pachamama and Gloria, observes a basic opposition in the texture, consistency, composition and form of items placed in the platos for each. While the plato for Pachamama consisted of irregular shapes, complex and figurative in form, rough and soft in texture, the platos for Gloria contained regular shapes,
simple and geometric in form, smooth and hard in texture.

Martínez concludes that these qualities may be described as a general opposition between "nitidez/confusión" (1987: 36). Three platos were prepared for Gloria within the mesa while only one plato was prepared for Pachamama. Martínez also notes:

Si consideramos la mesa entera, es decir el conjunto de los dos platos, podemos admitir que ella presenta tanto la oposición con la suma de los dos términos de la categoría.

(op.cit. : 37)

This points to the variety of ways in which dualism is presented in the spatial organisation of mesa contents. The Orureño despacho was never explained to me in terms of a left/right balance. Rather despacho ingredients were distributed within the circular structure of the plato and around the central area of key symbolic items of food. These items are an important aspect of la mesa completa but are also related to other forms of tierra mikhuy throughout the offering. In this way the centre can be seen as a concentration of meaningful symbolic items which is vitally linked to the offering as a whole. This area echoes what Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego describe as the chawpi, or area of "máxima sacralización" in their study of the despacho (op.cit. : 226).

e) Dualism in the despacho

Dualism is presented in the Orureño despacho in the form of paired ingredients, and the juxtaposition of complementary qualities and properties, as well as specific items and images (see table C). The structure of the offering is also created by the juxtaposition of round and square forms so that the internal balance and overall unity of the offering are presented on a
structural, as well as a symbolic level.

| man made   | organic       |
| sweet     | non sweet    |
| sweet     | sour         |
| attracts suerte | dispels suerte |
| pleasant smell | acrid smell  |
| seeds      | fruits       |
| stems and leaves | roots |
| thick and solid (plato) | thin and scattered (adorno) |
| round      | square       |
| large      | small        |
| soft and yielding | hard        |
| compact    | loose and crumbled |
| moist      | dry          |

Table C: Dualism within the despacho

Furthermore, suerte may also be selectively channelled through the use of different despacho types which are clearly differentiated in their usage and presentation (see table D).

Dualism is thus an important aspect of symbolic organisation within the offering and is also used to differentiate between the two basic despacho types so that suerte is effectively channelled and also well proportioned. Despacho content (i.e. tierra mikhuy) and form (i.e. plato) are well integrated on both a structural and symbolic level through the use of juxtaposed items and qualities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mesa para la Pachamama</th>
<th>Mesa blanca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>health and welfare</td>
<td>material wealth/safety in mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>home and commerce</td>
<td>the mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mondays and Saturdays</td>
<td>Tuesdays and Fridays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above ground/mine entrance</td>
<td>underground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men and women</td>
<td>men only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red and white</td>
<td>white only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bright colours</td>
<td>absence of colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plato of llama wool</td>
<td>cotton plato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>untu</td>
<td>absence of untu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table D : Differentiation in despacho usage and presentation
II) SYMBOLIC ARRANGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION IN THE DESPACHO

i) Symbolic language in the despacho

In part I of this chapter I have illustrated how despacho ingredients are arranged to form a pattern of balance and unity which has a positive influence on suerte. The symbolic arrangement of the offering can be seen as a form of meaningful communication with principal earth deities, and a means of reinforcing suerte on a regular basis and when there is a special need to do so. The symbolic content (see Chapter I, III) and arrangement (see Chapter 2, I) of the despacho interact to form what may be described as symbolic language. In this second part I will look more closely at the symbolic language of the despacho and its ability to communicate.

First of all the individual symbols, or units of symbolic language, need to be identified. Symbols are forms which have a positive force because they consist of shared meanings, and are, as Turner suggests "associated with human interests, purposes, ends and means" (1967 : 20). Their meanings may be explicit, e.g. a truck driver may choose a misterio depicting a lorry if he needs a new one, or a misterio depicting a road (buen camino) if he is asking for help with a forthcoming journey. Their meanings may also be less explicit. For example, in the despacho, the misterio depicting a butterfly (mariposa) is associated more generally with Pachamama and suerte although informants could not explain why. As Miller points out, symbols contain "grey areas which are ill-defined and which permit idiosyncratic creativity and deviation" (1975 : 477). A symbol can therefore be seen as a landmark around which meaning is concentrated, and as Turner
suggests, "something that connects the unknown with the known" (op. cit.: 48).

In the despacho, the symbols are the images and forms which describe suerte and are associated with it. They depict types of suerte, i.e. the objects and situations in which suerte needs to manifest, and the gods which govern suerte. The misterios and chiuchi mesa figurines are symbols which mostly carry this information. Symbols may also be in the form of especially shaped objects like the sugar llama and botella which refer to significant ritual practices (i.e. sacrifice and libations), or in forms which have special properties in attracting suerte (e.g. alfeñiques, ch'ipi, wayruro). Some items have an explicit value, for example q'ollqe llinpi, q'ori llinpi, q'ollqe t'anta and q'ori t'anta are like gold and silver, and ch'ipi seeds look like coins when they are boiled. They may also have other meanings [see Chapter I, III: (iii) a; (iv) b, c]. Some are culinary symbols, as for example the adorno, plato, and trinchadora. Many despacho symbols have a secondary meaning as special food, and this includes the large number of sweet items which are thought to be especially appetising to the gods, and hence rewarding in terms of suerte [see Chapter I, II: (iii); (iv)].

Key symbolic items are numbered because of their value and role in creating balance within the offering [see part I: (iii) a]. Items like the misterios and the chiuchi mesa enter as sets of symbols because they describe something about suerte collectively. Other less significant items are collectively symbolic of food, or tierra mikhuy, thereby adding bulk and substance to the offering.

There are therefore many different types of symbols within
the despacho, and each one contributes something to the plato as a symbolic whole. The more symbols used, the greater the power of the despacho in activating suerte, because the greater the capacity for these symbols to say something about the way in which the giver views suerte and would like it to be reinforced.

The ways in which these symbols are organised, i.e. the syntax, have already been outlined in part I of this Chapter. Together the despacho symbols create an ordered whole (i.e. la mesa completa) which is meaningful in ritual. Through the choice of despacho type, size, content, and together with a selection of misterios and optional extras, the symbols may be put together to suit individual needs in a creative and expressive way.

Tschopik refers to Andean ritual as "a meaningful jumble of details accreted throughout the centuries" (1951 : 297), and in doing so fails to enquire how ritual symbols may be important in any given context to those who use them. As Douglas states:

The analysis of ritual symbolism cannot begin until we recognise ritual as an attempt to create and maintain a particular culture, a particular set of assumptions by which experience is controlled.

(1966 : 153)

Custred argues that the understanding of Andean ritual symbolism would be helped if a formal mapping of the order of symbolic and non-symbolic operations could be made in different altitude zones and different geographical locations. This would reveal what he calls:

The deep structure of Andean symbolic language as well as the ordered variability of its surface manifestations.

(1979 : 384)

Such a study would need to be exhaustive, and be able to incorporate the difficulties of assessing these structures as
they relate to the different expressions of individuals and social groups. In my analysis of despacho content (see Chapter I, III) and arrangement (see Chapter 2, I) I have tried to show where this supports other ethnographic data on Andean mesas and where it differs. There are, however, bound to be differences in the ritual language of different communities, as well as similarities, and there is much work still to be done in compiling further data.

Bolton and Bolton, in their comparative study of two rituals conclude:

We would venture to suggest that the syntax of Andean ritual behaviour might indeed be relatively simple, in spite of the apparent complexity of surface manifestations.

(1976 : 106)

Behavioural aspects of ritual are discussed in section (iv) below. In the Orureño despacho, while the "surface manifestations" (i.e. the symbolic content and imagery) differ even between the different sizes and types of despacho used, rules of arrangement and composition follow a distinct pattern. This is particularly interesting since Orureño despachos are especially elaborated in their content and composition to increase suerte, and this pattern is somewhat amplified in these particular types of offerings.

The Orureño despacho can therefore be seen as a "map" of suerte. The symbolic language is formed through images and shapes which communicate specific things about suerte in the offering, and through the overall effect of its presentation. Martínez also recognises that the interaction of content and form is an essential part of all language and that "sin la existencia y unión de estos dos planos no hay sentido articulado posible" (1987 : 30).
ii) The role of metaphor in the despacho

The metaphor of tierra mikhuy gives unity to the despacho by binding the offering together, both structurally and symbolically [see part I : (ii) d]. This consciously extends the symbolic associations contained within the offering into the burning ritual itself when it is assumed that the gods are "eating". As the offering is consumed it is hoped that its content and presentation are acceptable and will be literally "digested", and that the plato will satisfy the earth's appetite.

In this way the offering mediates between the Orureño and the earth deities, so that needs can be actively communicated to them. Not only is the despacho an invitation to eat (see Chapter I, I : (ii) d), it is intended to invite a response ("damos para que recebamos más"). The despacho also shows the analogous nature of the way in which the Orureños understand their environment to work and respond; feeding the earth means that in turn they too will be fed.

Through the symbolic language of the offering, the Orureño is able to give thought to the unseen future and express what he or she most desires or needs in suerte. The metaphor of tierra mikhuy takes this further: the offering even as a composition of miniatures is food for the earth and in the ritual is eaten by the gods. While the symbolic language communicates something about what suerte means to the giver, the eating metaphor (i.e. the offering as a plato of tierra mikhuy) brings the whole offering alive, and the message is able to "become" as the eating/burning takes place.

Metaphor is an important aspect of Andean traditional
medicine, and reveals something about the way in which healing is believed to be brought about. As Bastien explains:

Culturally, Andeans understand themselves in terms of homologies that reflect their bodies, environment and social organisation ... However, this extends beyond self-knowledge in that they consider the reflective process as causally effective: in other words, if they catch the reflection of something or create a metaphor of it, they are in some way causing it to become. The world is created by endless reflections. Consequently, healing is principally concerned with making a ritual template of a complete ayllu, body, meal or kinship group.

(1987: 49)

By creating a plato containing all the things a person might need and want to make their life complete (i.e. la mesa completa), the individual enables this to happen. I have most frequently been asked if the despacho actually "works". The despacho works for those who use it because it is a way of thinking and acting that is actual, and which in ritual enables something to happen.

Grebe Vicuña describes a curing ceremony in Isluga, Chile referred to as saludo al sol, which is performed by a local ritual specialist, and which shows how metaphor is used in healing. In this ceremony, a pasterio (i.e. like the Orureño misterio) featuring the image of the sun is burned together with incense while libations are made from four separate jars containing special ritual mixtures. At the peak of the ceremony, the sun's rays are deflected onto the head and chest of the patient by the yatiri's use of a mirror, or metal disk, which is used to deflect the sun's power. As the pasterio burns, the sun's rays are directly applied to the patient's body as soon as the sun appears over the horizon. In this way, the image of the
pasterio works in ritual to reinforce what is actually happening.

Metaphor is also expressed in the form of individual curative items, for example the trinchadora root ("para que se trinchen o se cumplen los deseos") [see Chapter I, III : (iii) g] and in the spiral shape of kuti types of medicine (e.g. alfeñiques) which represent a capacity for movement in an anti-clockwise direction and an overturning, and which, when activated in ritual, are believed to recreate this movement (see Cummings 1981 : 29 ; Gifford 1986 : 4).

Metaphor therefore reinforces reality, and when used in ritual gives power and meaning to what is in the mind of the giver. The composition and arrangement of ritual items in which the metaphor is created is therefore very much part of an empowering way of thinking and acting, and its expression in ritual. In the Orureño despacho, the metaphor of tierra mikhuy is an important vehicle for what is fed back as a result of ritual activity.

The whole aim of the despacho is change and renewal, and we should expect some variety in content and imagery since offerings are adapted to individual needs and circumstances. Orlove insists that this is a necessary part of ritual activity and that we should not be hell-bent on uncovering what he calls a "mechanical or deterministic process" particularly since "different individuals may emphasise different symbols and ritual elements" and "the same ritual element may be used by different individuals in different contexts with different meanings (1978 : 88). He suggests that we should therefore approach ritual as "a diverse collection rather than a unitary system" (loc.cit.). While despacho contents are ordered in particular ways, the offering
is given both a particular type of power and flexibility by the misterios.

iii) Misterios and communication

These tablets are essential for communicating key information as for which deity the offering is intended and in which context suerte needs reinforcement, depending on the images that are selected [see Chapter I, III: (i) k]. In la mesa completa images commonly used are those which represent the deity for whom the offering is destined, images indicating where the offering is to be used (e.g. casa, cerro rico, comercio, fábrica, sapo) and images representing aspects of life and work which are relevant to suerte (e.g. buen camino, casa, camión, carro etc.).

Although the misterios are placed in pairs, there are no fixed rules as to which images are placed together. In this choice plays a large part, although clients would often follow the advice of stall-holders if in doubt as to combinations which may enhance suerte.

In table E we can see that misterios placed on a large mesa para la Pachamama consist of six images which feature the mythical animals associated with the shrines around Oruro, and thirty images which are equally distributed between Tío and Pachamama and their associated fields of suerte. This distribution of misterios shows how images of Pachamama and Tío are compatible within the same offering, and how they may be evoked together because of the contrasting types of suerte they can each bring.

It can be seen that misterios placed for Tío feature images which are particularly concerned with material wealth and aspects
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TÍO</th>
<th>MYTHICAL ANIMALS</th>
<th>PACHAMAMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 x Tío sentado</td>
<td>1 x hormiga</td>
<td>1 x Pachamama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x Tío bailando</td>
<td>1 x lagarto</td>
<td>1 x Choque Camiri Bernita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x Tía sentado</td>
<td>1 x sapo (M)</td>
<td>1 x águila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x Tía bailando</td>
<td>1 x sapo (F)</td>
<td>1 x casa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x cerro rico</td>
<td>2 x víbora</td>
<td>2 x condor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x minero</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x corazones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x banco</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x ganado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x colectivo</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x libro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x comercio</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 x mariposa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x empresa</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 x mesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x fábrica</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x 12 platos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x hornos</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x vicuña</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 x taxi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table E: Misterios placed on a large mesa para la Pachamama for use at the mine entrance
of mineral extraction in the mine (e.g. banco, cerro rico, hornos), whereas images used for Pachamama reflect her more pastoral role (e.g. casa, mesa, platos). Choque Camiri Bernita is another deified being, thought to bring suerte. Informant B identifies her as follows:

"La Choque Camiri Bernita es una señora, una cholita, hija de unos padres millonarios en Camiri, de la Paz más adentro, por Yungas. Estos padres no querían que la chica tenía edad para casarse, no querían que se case con nadie, con ningún pobre, con ninguna persona. Ha pasado mucho tiempo, no le dejaban salir a ninguna parte, y como ellos querían un rico millonario, el tío se le había aparecido. Entonces el tío le ha poseído a la chica, y de allí, se ha nacido un hijo, que es víbora, y a la víbora la mantiene en una olla de barro."

"Un pobre, un arriero que iba en busca de alimentos o de leña por allí iba por sus domínes. En cambio de lunas dicen que se convierte esta señora. Deja de ser piedra y se aparece al caminante. Le lleva, le aloja, le tiene en su casa para comer, y cuando sale de la casa lleva maíz amarillo y blanco. El forastero se viene contento por haberse encontrado con la persona que le ha ayudado, que le ha dado víveres. Al llegar a su casa, todo el maíz está convertido en oro, en plata. No hay ningún mal. Ayuda a los pobres. Trae suerte, y es pariente de la Pachamama."

She is therefore evoked alongside Pachamama as someone caring and feeding, and who also brings suerte in material form.

The images associated with the local shrines extend the field of suerte outwards so that all potential sources of suerte are included. The offering contains images which not only refer to the mine entrance and Pachamama, but also to the interior mine and Tío, and the sources of suerte which surround Oruro in the form of the animal shrines.

These misterios not only refer to numerous earth deities, but also to a wider and more complete spectrum of suerte because of the number of different sources which are evoked. Pachamama is
represented by eight consorts (águila x 1; Choque Camiri Bernita x 1; condor x 2; ganado x 1; mariposa x 2; vicuña x 1), whereas Tío is represented by two images of himself and two of Tía (Tío sentado / bailando : Tía sentada / bailando). This shows that Pachamama is still predominant within the offering, despite the inclusion of other deities, and their consorts. It should also be pointed out that while the misterios may be numerically subdivided as in table E, they are actually placed on the despacho as a complete ring of images encircling the offering, and in no particular sequence. They are therefore very much placed as a set of symbols. It should also be noted that other offerings may contain a completely different selection of images, depending on the intention of the giver.

While strict rules govern how many misterios are placed in a given offering (i.e. la mesa completa) the actual combination of images is flexible, and is a key area of content where pattern includes individual expression and variety. The misterios can be seen as the most personal form of investment in the despacho, and it is perhaps for this reason that they are referred to in some areas as pastillas de conversación [see Chapter I, III : (i) k].

The misterios therefore contain the most important information about the ritual intention of the offering, and the priorities, needs and allegiances of the person who gives it. They are the most personal and direct form of communication within the despacho and are offset by the chiuchi mesa which contains a whole mixture of suerte images, rather like a reserve pool, in case anything is missed out.

When placed as a set of symbols, the misterios create a ring of images which describe the most important things about the
offering and which encircle its contents as a whole. I would suggest that their power as symbols is reinforced by their placement on the despacho, i.e. as an embracing circle of suerte "landmarks". The chiuchi mesa figurines are also present as a complete reserve of suerte images at the centre of the offering.

As symbols, then, the misterios describe suerte and specify channels through which suerte may come, and in which form. They therefore constitute the message of the offering which is sent out in ritual to acknowledged powers in the cosmos.

The misterios are therefore particularly important units since they add to the basic content of the offering what is most important to the giver. When superimposed on the plato, they are the message inscribed in the offering, in the same way as a message is sent off in a bottle. Since they are images of what it is the giver wants, when presented amongst the tierra mikhuy they add a particular type of power to the plato since it is also what is in the mind of the giver as the offering is arranged. When placed on the plato in a certain way, i.e. as pairs and in symbolically significant numbers, they "become" something. In this way they are a crucial part of the content of the despacho's symbolic language. The images of the misterios are also what make the plato individually tailored, just as a cook may add special personal touches to a traditional dish.

iv) Ritual behaviour and symbolic language

Spoken language and ritual behaviour accompanying the offering should also be acknowledged as an important way in which the message of the despacho is reinforced in ritual. Libations of alcohol, invocations and prayer are an important part of despacho

Sharon, in his study of the coastal shaman's mesa, describes how specific areas of the mesa are activated in turn with prayers and invocations, and how these are applied to solving the patients' problems (1979: 227, 231). Allen also observes that ritual drinking is designed to:

open up channels of communication with other categories of being, particularly with sacred places.

(loc.cit.)

Since what is said and done at the time of ritual is so much part of inherited tradition, variations in ritual practice should also be expected in additions to variations in despacho content and organisation. However, these gestures must be seen as reinforcing whole-heartedly the central message of the offering, and as acknowledging powerful forces in the environment. Cummings concludes the following on his interpretation of the ch'alla (q."sprinkle", i.e. libation):

These were both an act of thanks and a request for a more abundant harvest. They were performed in order to incorporate Pachamama into the gaiety of the celebrations based on the Quechua belief in a reciprocal relationship between man and his deities. It is assumed that the sharing of the celebrations by means of the ch'allaku - an outpouring of welcoming joy, a gift of food and drink in the form of libations and offerings, and a sign of respect - will help to ensure that Pachamama in return bring good harvests, good health and prosperity.

(op.cit.: 22)

While prayers and gestures are the imaginative part of
ritual in which deeper levels of thought can be shown, they perhaps necessarily elude precise definition because of their intensely personal nature, and the imaginative task required in order to understand them. By identifying the basic pattern of the despacho, its symbolic language and particular composition, we can understand what the offering is trying to create and its meaning in ritual. The significance of the despacho can be revealed from the inside, and form allowed to emerge from its visual chaos.

v) The despacho and the talega

Cereceda has made a parallel discovery with her study of the talega, small bags woven in Isluga, Chile, in which medicinal artefacts are frequently stored (1978). These bags, distinguished by their plain stripes in natural wools, serve as containers for seeds, plants, medicines and ritual foodstuffs. By talking to the weavers of Isluga who designed them, Cereceda uncovered a complex and coherent design system which is woven into each bag, in much the same way as Orureño stall-holders follow a basic design when assembling their despachos. By examining various elements in the design (i.e. colour, distance, width, position of stripes in relation to the overall design), she effectively decoded a textile "language". This is particularly unusual since the imagery (or linguistic units) is practically invisible to the onlooker.

Cereceda discovered a distinction between the inside and the outside of the talega. While the exterior has a tendency to be visibly out of proportion, the interior usually always forms a square. This, she says, gives the bag a double function; the exterior of the bag is where the message or communication is
worked; and the interior, or "secret" of the bag where the magic-religious use of the contents is effected (op.cit. : 1019).

Cereceda also discovered that the different coloured bands of the *talega* corresponds to different parts of a metaphorical body. The central band, or *chhima*, is the heart, and the edges of the bag the mouth through which the textile speaks and communicates with the outside world. The other bands are arranged symmetrically around the centre, on either side of the *chhima*, acting as arms and legs, or offspring of the central band, and duplicated on both sides of the bag. The *chhima* or heart therefore acts as an organic centre, supplying meaning and proportion to the body, which, like an animal has two sides, front and posterior.

La *chhima* est un lieu, à la fois de rencontre et de division des deux côtés; il joue un rôle double, ambivalent; il sépare et crée deux parties, et en même temps, il les relie et constitue le territoire commun qu'elles partagent.

(op.cit. : 1020)

There are basic parallels between the symbolic language of the *talega* and that of the *despacho*. Both contain a central metaphor - i.e. the bag as an animal, and the *despacho* as a plate of food. Metaphor brings constituent parts of the design together and brings the whole piece alive. As Cereceda notes:

L'animal - sac n'est pas mort comme une peau déssecchée, il a besoin de sa bouche pour entrer en contact avec le monde et communiquer avec lui. Et l'animal n'est pas non plus sur le tissu comme une peinture sur une toile. Il est le tissu même. L'un et l'autre ont la même vie.

(op.cit. : 1027)

It is this animacy of the *talega* and the *despacho* that makes them meaningful in relation to the outside world; both are able to communicate something to the outside world about their
contents through the use of metaphor. They both can be seen to have a double function: the message carried in the design and the symbolic meaning of the contents.

In this way, both the *talega* and the *despacho*, content and presentation are interdependent and constitute a symbolic language. In the *despacho*, the way in which the *tierra mikhuy* is presented on the *plato* is a vital means of its ability to attract *suerte*, and its purpose in ritual as appetising the gods.

The central area of the *despacho* is similar to the *chhima* of the *talega*, and the area which Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego refer to as *chawpi* (1976: 235). In both the *talega* and the *despacho* this is a central area from which other parts take their meaning; it is an area in which symbolic meaning is concentrated, and yet which has basic correspondences with other parts of the design as a whole. In the *despacho* these are the reproduced forms of *tierra mikhuy* throughout the offering, and in the *talega*, the bands of colour which radiate outwards.

The importance of this gathering point is further reflected by the way in which the design radiates outward from the centre, either as bands of graded colour, expressed in the *talega* as

\[ ABCDODCBABA \]

or, as the circle of *misterios* and the *plato* which relate structurally to the centre of the *despacho* (see part I: (iv) c, figure 1).

By looking inside the *despacho* at the types of symbols used, the way in which they are placed together and relate to the offering as a whole, we can see how they communicate something in ritual to the outside world. In this way we can see the offering as having a symbolic language, in much the same way as Cereceda
has discovered the meaning of the *talega* by understanding how its design relates to its form, and what the weavers actually think about the cloth they are weaving (i.e. the bag as an animal). Martínez also suggests there may be a link between the language of textiles and that of ritual offerings (1987: 45).

The meaning of the *despacho* is based on the way in which the users view the offering as a plate of food which is accepted by the gods and eaten during ritual. Because this is a sacred form of contact with the cosmos, the way in which the *plato* is presented and composed internally is of utmost significance. By looking at its symbolic language we can learn a great deal more about what is thought to take place as a result of the ritual ceremony, and why the *despacho* is meaningful to those who use it.

vi) *Symbolic language as therapy*

Scheff criticises social theorists for dealing exclusively with the verbal and cognitive aspects of ritual to the exclusion of emotions. He suggests that the wealth of ritual activity in traditional societies may be explained in that ritual:

> provides a context that is both psychologically enabling and a socially acceptable occasion for repeated catharsis.

(1979: 118)

Certainly the ritual cycle of *despacho* ceremonies enables regular communication with powerful forces in the cosmos to take place, and this may be reinforced whenever there is a need to do so. It is perhaps because the idea of the *despacho* as a plate of food is so straightforward and simple that it is such a versatile and popular ritual item. Certainly the ideas contained within the offering, i.e. the balance and completeness, are ones which send
out a positive message to forces believed to control suerte, and
the giving of the offering itself is a positive attempt to create
harmony in the world at large.

Despacho rituals could be classified as holistic and
preventive medicine since their aim is not only to increase
material fortune, but also to maintain the balance of a person's
well-being as he or she relates to the world around them. While
the despacho is designed to increase suerte, its central message
of balance and unity shows that it is also equipped to deal with
internal stress, since physical well-being is so closely linked
to social, spiritual and environmental factors.

The truly creative part of ritual is that it allows
something to take place. The despacho rituals enable internal
conflicts with the external worlds to be resolved, so that suerte
can be increased. It is above all, as Martínez describes, "an act
of communication" (1987 : 29). A connection takes place between
what the individual thinks and wants, and the way in which the
earth deities are thought to respond.

McGuire states that one of the key factors in healing
illness is:

mobilising resources of power, typically by
enhancing the individual's state of personal
empowerment.

(1983 : 222)

He believes that ritual language, or positive affirmations of
state (e.g. "I am getting better") work to project and evoke what
is desired. In his study, ritual language, and positive imagery
expressed verbally, acted as channels through which healing
energy was raised and transmitted, either within a person, or
outwardly towards another. Respondents who described experiencing
power through language channels stated that it amounted to "an accurate perception of feeling stronger" (op. cit. : 229) which McGuire believes was "likely to be influential in the healing process" (loc. cit.).

In the same way as words and thoughts can be seen to mobilise an individual's own healing resources, the despacho as a form of ritual language may similarly benefit the giver by projecting a positive picture about how he or she wants suerte to improve outwards to receptive deities. Through the metaphor of food, the despacho projects a positive pattern which is thought to be acknowledged in ritual as the deities "eat" the food presented to them. The metaphor makes a positive link between what is thought and what actually happens during the ritual, and as a result of it. As McGuire suggests, the ritual assertion of order may actually produce a sense of order and predictability, and thus a sense of being in control (op. cit. : 223).

Bastien, in his study of Andean healing, concludes:

Cross-culturally, Andeans have much to teach us concerning the use of a projective-reflective model for curing. They emphasise a final and formal causality for healing a patient in that they perceive the cure as embedded in a symbolic mapping out, usually in ritual, of the person's well-being or completeness, which is reflective of their land and social group. They figure that if they can symbolically put their ayllu together, then this will reconstruct their bodies ... The value of his approach is that it predisposes and activates energies within the person to assist in the curing process. Moreover, there is social and cultural reinforcement of the therapeutical process.

(1987 : 69)

The despacho, when fully assembled as la mesa completa, describes suerte within a balanced and unified arrangement of symbolic images and forms, in a way that is meaningful to the individual.
I believe that it plays a deeply creative and beneficial role in communicating a sense of order and stability to influential deities who are thought to control suerte. Despacho rituals are a way in which individuals can regularly do something to empower their own lives by communicating what they most need and want, and in the belief that their thought and gestures will be reciprocated. The symbolic language of the offering is an important means by which this communication is created.
PART TWO
INTRODUCTION

In Part One of this thesis I have considered how suerte is presented in the despacho through the symbolic imagery and arrangement of its contents. On the one hand suerte is viewed of in terms of material prosperity, and the despacho works according to the rationale that the greater the amount of tierra mikhuy placed in the offering, the greater the return in the individual's life, a belief which is rooted in the Andean concept of the earth as a fertile force. On the other hand, suerte can only come about when there is harmony and balance between man and the cosmos, and the importance of this spiritual dimension is reflected in the emphasis on balance, order, abundance and wholeness in the arrangement of despacho contents.

Material and spiritual aspects of suerte are therefore mediated through the symbolic language of the offering both in terms of quantity and quality of presentation, so that a fundamental relationship with natural and cosmic forces is acknowledged and sustained.

In Part Two of this thesis I will focus on what happens when this sense of pattern and harmony with nature breaks down, giving rise to mala suerte. I will look at how his imbalance is diagnosed through the symbolism of coca divination (Chapter 3) and rectified by the symbolic language used in a specific healing ritual designed to restore suerte (Chapter 4).

This will show how the Andean concept of healing centres around re-establishing a sense of harmony between man and nature, so that the course of a person's life follows a natural and stable pattern. While the symbolic language of the despacho seeks to maintain suerte
by describing a state of stability, order and wholeness, any departure from nature's way or conflict with the cosmos may be healed by specific adjustments to the suerte picture using symbolic imagery.

The aim of the second part of the thesis is to show how the symbolic language used to describe and bring about changes in suerte has deep significance in terms of Andean healing techniques.
Plate 5: Santiago Fábrica, Fleurelia Fábrica and grandchildren
Plate 6: The condor rock at Condorikiña
CHAPTER 3

SUERTE SYMBOLISM IN A DIVINATION CEREMONY
I) THE CONCEPT OF SUERTE

In Part One of my thesis I have discussed how the despacho is used to promote suerte in Oruro. In the mines, suerte is bound up with the successful extraction of mineral ore, and physical security in the mine itself. Elsewhere, suerte is generally associated with prosperity; success in commerce, material acquisitions, and assistance with material provision at work and in the home. Suerte is also associated with physical and spiritual nourishment and well-being, and this is particularly governed by Pachamama as a life-giving force [see Chapter I, III : (iii)].

Suerte arises from the way in which the pattern of human life is closely linked to that of the cosmos, and particularly forces of the earth, whether these be principal deities, sacred locations, or the dwelling-places of ancestral spirits. Sacred entities of this type serve as projected life models, not only in characteristics and attributes, but also in life style (Gow and Condori 1976 : 39).

Suerte can be understood not only as "fortune" but as a norm, i.e. a state of balance and harmony which exists between the individual and the external world. Any deviation from this condition is viewed as a departure from nature's way, which brings about mala suerte. Suerte is also concerned with the quality of life experience as well as the balance of material gain. This is reflected in the arrangement of despacho ingredients which are organised to create balance and unity within the offering (see Chapter 2). The despacho is a means of promoting suerte by ritual homage to earth deities, and suerte is maintained by observing norms of conduct which respect the
tradition of giving to the earth and receiving from it.

Communication with earth deities, spirits and cosmic forces is able to take place through the mediation of ritual specialists with varying degrees of power (i.e. q. yachaq, a. yatiri: "one who knows", "diviner/medicine man"; q. papa, layqa, sp. brujo "sorcerer"; see Gow and Condori 1976: 72; Grebe Vicuña 1983: 189; Martin 1970: 426; Quintanilla 1979: 154; Santander 1962: 44; Tschopik 1951: 219-225; Van Kessel 1983: 166; Webster 1973: 127). These specialists usually acquire their gifts following some special signal from the cosmos. This is commonly through being struck by lightning and surviving (informant F; see also Gade 1979: 783; Bandelier 1910: 120; La Barre 1948: 201; Mishkin 1940: 237-9).

Santiago Fábrica received his powers as a hereditary gift from his father, who was struck by lightning. Santiago was not struck by lightning himself, but from an early age showed special gifts in assisting his father. These gifts became especially developed after his father's death, when Santiago underwent a period of acute sickness ("casi andaba con locura") which was interpreted as a sign that he had received the castigo, the term he uses to describe this empowerment.

Gow and Condori note that these powers may also manifest through dreams, physical deformation at birth, the birth of twins, or through lines on the palm of the hand (op. cit.: 294-303). As a result of these powers, ritual specialists are able to divine sickness, communicate with spirits, deities and cosmic forces, and mediate with them on behalf of others.

Meteorological phenomena, and stones or objects in special shapes are also thought to contain special powers derived from
the cosmos, and especially powers of fertility and increase, or *enga* (q. "life force": see Allen 1982: 184; Flores Ochoa 1976: 120-1; Gow and Gow 1975: 148; Lira 1973: 89). Stars are especially associated with *suerte*, and are thought of as guiding forces, containing powerful ancestral, as well as astral energy (see Chapter I, III: (i) h). One of the most important pieces of Santiago Fa"ábrica's equipment consisted of two, perfectly rounded black meteorite stones which he kept by him at all times, and which were placed on the *mesa* and used during the coca divination ceremony (see Appendix 2).

In opposition to these positive signals from the cosmos which can bring about increases in power and *suerte*, a phenomenon such as hail hurled from the sky is thought to be ruinous to crops and thought to be an expression of wrath by earth deities and ancestral spirits (see Bandelier op.cit.: 93; Carter and Mamani 1982: 290; Gow and Condori op.cit.: 7). Large kinds of hail stones known as *runtu* (q. "egg") are capable of crop devastation (Gade op.cit.: 782). Minute white shells which resemble hailstones and which are referred to as *runtu* are sold on traditional medicine stalls for use in sorcery (PO). Lightning and rainbows also induce special forms of sickness (Aguiló 1983: 163, 196). Quechua myths also interpret the movement of key constellations to provide explanations for changes in the earth's fertility and human welfare (Grebe Vicuña 1981: 157; Urton 1981: 68-85, 129-195).

*Suerte* is like a barometer which reflects swings in nature's vitality as this influences human life. I believe *suerte* is a Spanish term which has been coined to express the concept of material fortune as this is derived from the environment, but
which more traditionally expresses the connection between the earth's fertility and the cosmos. The analogous relationship between humans and nature enables vicissitudes in suerte to be understood as imbalance in this relationship. Stability on both sides is thought to be maintained by the careful control of ritual output, the mediation between extremes, and the balance of opposites (i.e. purujman haywayku: q. "we give to both sides simultaneously"; Platt 1978: 109). In the despacho I have described how key ingredients are paired to create balance and stability in the offering, and so that suerte is "well-divided" [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) b]. Gow and Gow also describe how pairs are thought to express balanced power:

Suerte is therefore dependent upon the regular exchange of balanced offerings to the earth, so that stability in life may thereby be guaranteed. Suerte involves every aspect of life, since the whole universe is a network of affinities, reflections and projections. This is the effect created by la mesa completa and the chluchi mesa [see Chapter I, III : (iv) a ; Chapter 2, I : (ii) a].
Suerte, although in urban contexts is heavily associated with material fortune, is also rooted in the flow of life itself, as this relates the individual to the changing world in which he or she lives. Like the Chinese view of change, suerte may be described as "an essential aspect of the universe" (Capra 1982: 19-20). Capra further explains:

Change, in this view, does not occur as a consequence of some force, but is a natural tendency, innate in all things and situations. The universe is engaged in ceaseless motion and activity, in a continual cosmic process that the Chinese called Tao - The Way.

In the Chinese view, then, there seems to be two kinds of activity - activity in harmony with nature, and activity against the natural flow of things.

Suerte is the middle course way, the path in life which generates stability and well-being, and unity with the environment. It is also the path in which activity is regulated as far as possible according to natural laws, and the way in which everything is nourished by the life force and vitality of nature and its gods. A passage from Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching best describes this innateness:

All things arise from Tao.
They are nourished by Virtue.
They are formed from matter.
They are shaped by environment.
Thus the ten thousand things all respect Tao and honour Virtue.
Respect of Tao and honour of Virtue are not demanded.
But they are in the nature of things.

Therefore all things arise from Tao.
By virtue they are nourished,
Developed, cared for,
 Sheltered, comforted,
Grown, and protected.

(1973: 51)
We can also understand more about suerte through the symbolism used in divination.

II) SUERTE SYMBOLISM IN A COCA DIVINATION CEREMONY

A coca divination performed by a ritual specialist, or yatiri, may be sought after for a variety of reasons: to identify disturbances in social relations, to confirm curses and acts of sorcery amongst community members, to pinpoint the external factors influencing health, to interpret the wishes of local deities and spirits, and to investigate suerte as this is affecting an individual's life, in the present as well as in the future (see also Bastien 1987: 39; Bolton 1974: 196; Bolton and Bolton 1976: 100; Dobkin de Rios 1972: 92; Grebe Vicuña 1983: 159; Lira 1969: 32; Martin 1970: 426; Tschopik 1951: 222).

Bastien points out that divination is an important form of diagnosis for the Kallawaya (famous healers and diviners from dept. Bautista Saavedra) because:

it enables them to probe into the environmental and symbolic causes of illness. It allows them to dynamically interrelate these causes to sick peoples' feelings, moods, dispositions and social relations.

(loc.cit.)

Santiago Fábrica performed a coca divination to find out about my particular suerte (see Appendix 2). The way in which the leaves fell on the divining cloth was used to interpret information about my present and future life. My suerte could be deduced by looking at the juxtaposition and spatial arrangement of leaves on the cloth, and through Santiago's capacity to interpret these patterns.
The divination took the form of a ritual enquiry, the stages of which are described in detail in Appendix 2. Two coca leaves were selected by Santiago to represent myself, and a smaller leaf was chosen to represent my suerte. Other leaves were selected because of their shape and size to symbolise different 'contexts', e.g. travel, work, family, health, home, envy etc. A leaf bent double was chosen to represent maldiciones and a shrivelled leaf to represent suerte. A total of twelve leaves were named and used together. They were clearly distinguished from other leaves by their individual shapes and some leaves were given special markings so that they could be clearly identified.

Santiago proceeded to ask the coca leaves specific questions about my suerte, the answers to which were obtained by interpreting the pattern which the coca leaves created on the cloth as they fell. General indications as to positive and negative influences on suerte were given by which side each leaf fell; if a leaf fell on its green side it indicated suerte, but if it fell on its silvery underside it indicated mala suerte. Particular information about suerte was deduced from the pattern the 'context' leaves created around my 'subject' leaves, and the position of the suerte leaf in relation to these.

The use of coca leaves as symbols is similarly documented by Bolton (loc.cit.), Bolton and Bolton (op.cit.: 19), and Palevecino (1935 : 1). Bastien describes the Kallawaya technique as follows:

Herbalists question participants according to associations produced by coca leaves or tarot cards. They associate the leaves or cards with essential elements of Andean life: spouse, children, relatives, friends, animals, house, land, crops and fortune. Then they designate the leaves or cards with negative elements of Andean life: enemies, bewitchings, hail, drought, frost, landslides, and bad fortune. These items pair together, enabling herbalists to enquire further
until they have uncovered guilt, violation of taboos, animosities, and social infractions.

(loc.cit.)

Crankshaw records exactly the same technique as that used by Santiago:

Information is interpreted on the basis of the spatial relationships the fallen leaves have to the cue leaves, whether the leaves have fallen the right side up, or upside down, and where any disfigured or torn leaves have fallen in relation to the cue leaves.

(1980 : 162)

As Santiago enquired further into my suerte, leaves acquired new and more detailed associations, so that more specific questions could be answered (see Appendix 2).

The clustering of leaves was interpreted by Santiago as an indication of complications and conflicts, particularly if leaves crossed each other and created a tranca, or blockage. Leaves falling separately meant that la vía de la suerte was unobstructed, i.e. the spatial channels between the leaves remained clear. Trancas, or obstructions, are thought to block the flow of suerte in an individual's life. The pattern of coca leaves is thus a mirror of the client's life, and each time the leaves are cast for an answer to a particular question, the pattern may be reinterpreted as the position of the leaves changes.

The coca leaves form a pattern, then, which represents the relationship of factors influencing suerte, and the way in which this affects the individual. The contexts are created by the symbolic referents of the leaves themselves, and the questions asked by the diviner as the leaves are thrown. The leaves can be cast in any number of combinations to make sense of any given set
of circumstances. They can be used to clarify the present, or to provide insight into the future. Advance warning of obstructions can help the individual assess how existing trends and patterns could be altered to avoid these future obstacles. Imbalance, once it is identified, can subsequently be dealt with, and if necessary, with the ritual specialist's guidance and mediation.

The nature of the coca divination ceremony enables the individual to see a visual pattern created out of confusion and the unknown. This must provide a positive opportunity to rectify imbalances in suerte when they arise and to transform mala suerte into something the individual can understand and deal with. The divination may trigger insights into withheld suspicions and fears about the causes of mala suerte as they may arise from disturbances in social relationships and in the cosmos.

The concept of la via de la suerte enables areas of conflict and imbalance to be readily identified as disruptions (trancas) on a spatial "map". Suerte is perceived as unobstructed progress and flow, and this is symbolised by leaves which are well spaced from each other, so that the situations and subjects represented are not in conflict. Suerte is also the general balance of the "map" as a whole, as well as its constituent parts. The number of leaves used, i.e. twelve, is symbolic of completeness and totality [see Chapter 2,1 : (iii) c].

If a tranca appears, the flow of la via de la suerte is structurally obstructed, symbolising the obstruction of suerte in a person's life. This means that the quality of suerte as a whole is affected, since there is disruption in the channels. The particular leaves involved in the tranca give further insight into the nature of the conflict, the personalities involved, the
gravity of the blockage, and which aspect of the individual's life will most be affected. The pattern created by the coca leaves creates a basic framework into which further detail can be worked, with the individual's assistance and further consultations with the leaves.

In my particular case history I gave Santiago Fábrica no information with which he could have predicted my suerte "map". He was indeed surprised that my balance of suerte in the present was unproblematic, and when the first tranca appeared in the leaves, was astonished that I could not provide the names of suspects. The outcome of the divination was that my path of suerte was encircled by maldiciones, and in a reading for my future suerte the leaves revealed that my life was endangered by a fatal obstruction, indicated by the shrivelled leaf (representing muerte) which lay directly across la vía de la suerte. Since this leaf lay near leaves representing myself and my family, Santiago suggested that the obstruction indicated a tragedy involving myself and my immediate family within a period of ten years.

Since my path of suerte was seen to be hampered by such harmful obstructions, Santiago Fábrica thought it necessary that I should undergo a special ritual designed to limpiar la vía, in order to bring about my salvación. This meant that my future suerte could be altered by ritually cleansing the channels indicated on the suerte "map" and harmonising the factors involved in the obstruction. Trancas which may obstruct suerte can therefore be removed by rituals which reverse this process. In my case, the obstructions were considered sufficiently harmful to merit a full curing ceremony, which is described in detail in
Appendix 3.

As in the despacho, the coca leaves form a symbolic pattern which is meaningful in terms of suerte because of the way in which this pattern corresponds to the individual's life. While the despacho creates a "map" of what is most desired in suerte, the pattern of coca leaves on the divining cloth reveals what the person's suerte actually consists of. The way in which suerte symbols work together helps make sense of the relationships at work in a person's life.

The diviner who performs the ceremony plays a vital role in interpreting these symbolic patterns. It is through his special insight and handling of the leaves that the leaves are able to "speak" to him in the context of his enquiry. The coca leaves and their symbolic patterns are a link between the subjective experience of the client and the objective insight of the diviner. Communication takes place through the patterns the leaves create on the divining cloth. Troubles in the client's life can be meaningfully explained from the network of symbols and the way in which they interact. The leaves depict how a person is surrounded by influences and factors at work in shaping suerte, and the course of the person's life.

The state of a person's suerte can be interpreted, then, from the way in which symbols are offset against each other, collectively forming a "map" of suerte in which the complexity of influences at work in a person's life are represented in microcosm. The patterns and arrangements formed by the coca leaves are symbolic maps which enable the individual to orientate him or herself, since the system of relationships formed are analogous to forces at work in the person's world. I believe that
this gives the individual access to an understanding of the way in which life is shaped, and the way in which relationships in the external world may be improved, if necessary through the mediation of a ritual specialist.
CHAPTER 4

THE CONTENT AND COMPOSITION OF SIX SUERTE MESAS
Plate 7: Preparation of a mesa negra, herbal street stall
I) MESA NEGRA

i) Introduction

A complete mesa negra had been stated as required for the curación, but when this took place, only certain items were selected. These, together with one extra item, a tooth from the jaw of a dog, were placed on a piece of white paper, immediately folded and put aside. These items were selected for their particular properties, but were not organised in any particular arrangement for use in the curación. Before discussing the symbolic value of these items individually, I will first describe the usual curative function of the mesa negra.

ii) Function of the mesa negra

The mesa negra is a standard curing mesa obtainable from traditional medicine markets and widely used throughout the altiplano. It is referred to by a variety of names: mesa negra (sp.; informants A, D, E); yana mesa (q. "black", informant A; Cummings 1981: 13); ch'íara mesa (a. "black" mesa, Carter and Mamani 1982: 297); hatun hampi (q. "big" or "major cure", informant F) or hatun mesa (informant A); yana hampi (q. "black cure", Cummings 1981: 13); alto mesa (sp.; informant A); kuti hampi (q. "cure of reversal" informant C); mesa contra las maldiciones (sp.; informant C) or contra mesa (sp.; informant C: Cummings loc. cit.).

The mesa negra is used to treat victims of sorcery and maldiciones. The mesa is not burned, but the contents are boiled and the water used to cleanse the body. The contents are also sometimes taken as a herbal infusion. Informant A described a standard method of treatment in which the whole contents of the mesa are boiled. The patient takes part of this mixture as a
drink, then washes his or her hands with a small amount of the liquid. Part of it is also used to sprinkle the house, and the remaining liquid is then cast out into the street, "al lado donde sale el sol". The mesa negra can also serve as a form of protection against sorcery and curses (Carter and Mamani 1982: 297). The mesa therefore acts as a means of cleansing the individual both physically and spiritually of harmful influences using plants which are thought to provide a form of counterbalance or defence.

This mesa is referred to as "black" because of its associations with illness and death as a possible consequence of sorcery and curses (Cummings op. cit.: 47). The name of the mesa refers not so much to the actual colour of its contents but to the field of negative influences which the mesa is designed to combat. However, I saw mesas of this type for sale in Cochabamba the contents of which had been deliberately dyed black to emphasise their function. A stall owner confirmed that this was a purely cosmetic effect, and did not either alter or strengthen the curative action of the mesas.

Since the mesa negra is used to protect against and treat the consequences of malevolent interference in an individual's life, it has, above all, a positive, and essentially healing function. Despite the fact that black is a colour normally associated with death and the spirit world, and is also especially associated with sorcery rituals (Cummings op. cit.: 17-18), here black is used in a positive ritual context. The role of black colour symbolism is discussed in more detail later in this Chapter [see III, (iii)].

Cummings suggests that the mesa negra may also have a
negative function because the method of treatment implies that
the malevolence can be turned against its instigator (op. cit.: 47), i.e. by discarding the contaminated bundle or the water in
which it is boiled near the target of suspicion. While this could
be the potential outcome of ritual treatment, such practice is
ultimately the choice of the victim involved and would require
the professional intervention of a ritual specialist to direct
and control this activity. Santiago Fábica admitted he knew how
to perform sorcery rituals, but discredited the activity as far
more damaging than beneficial to all those involved. Informants,
when referring to sorcery, stressed that specific items were
required, such as dust from a cemetery, or personal artefacts
belonging to the intended victim, and emphasised the use of the
mesa negra to counteract such practice. Furthermore, ritual
practices which are principally concerned with cleansing the body
of harmful energy (which may come from a variety of suspected or
known sources) usually involve considerable precautions which
must be taken when removing the impurities and depositing them
far from human habitation. This is done so that they will not
cause further harm [see also V: (ii) b].

The mesa negra is a form of defence and a means of
counteracting harmful imbalances in the physical and spiritual
body. As I will discuss below, mesa negra ingredients play a
predominantly curative role in that they work to counteract
malevolence when applied to the body through their symbolic
associations with protection, defence, and the deflection of
harm.

iii) Items selected from a mesa negra
a) Ch'aski marquerita (q./sp.; Bactris speciosa)
The above name is given in Depts. Oruro and La Paz to the fruit of the palm tree, which is small, oval-shaped, and characterised by its fibrous outer coating (Frisancho Pineda 1973: 107). I was unable to establish whether the fruit has any medicinal properties, but both Cummings (1981: 23) and Frisancho Pineda (loc. cit.) refer to the fruit as a counterspell by the name of kuti moscado, the term kuti in Quechua meaning "overturning" or "reversal". Cummings notes that the fruit only enters yana or kuti mesas (loc. cit.). Valdizán and Maldonado record that the fruit is kept in a pocket as a lucky amulet to provide protection specifically against curses (1922a: 173).

b) Churcu (q.; Caryocar amigdaliferum)

Churcu always enter the mesa negra in pairs. They are small, oval-shaped fruits with a surface rather like that of a peach stone. They come in a variety of dark shades. Informant A distinguished between the lighter type, churcu cafe, and the darker type, churcu negro. One of each would be placed together as a pair: churcu cafe is believed to be male, and churcu negro female, although no reason was given for this.

Casaverde Rojas (1970: 227), Cummings (op. cit.: 25) and Frisancho Pineda (loc. cit.) refer to churcu as sajsa kuti. Sajsa, when used as a noun in Quechua, means "abundance" and when used as an adjective also has the meaning of "variegated".

The term sajsa, therefore, either emphasises the strength of kuti powers contained in the artefact, or may refer to its varied capacity for colour, as mentioned above. Other ethnobotanical data confirms its medicinal and symbolic function as a fruit with kuti powers; Girault (1972: 283, 392, 396) and Valdizán and Maldonado (loc. cit.) describe the fruit as a protective and
preventative amulet used against illnesses and curses.

The fruit can also be taken in mate to cure various forms of wayra (q. "wind") and to treat rickets or illnesses which are associated with the toxic gases given off from putrefied bones (Lira 1946 : 65). Valdizán and Maldonado note that it may also be simply rubbed over the temples of a patient to treat wayra (loc.cit.).

c) Estrella de mar (sp.; Tichaster aurantiacus Meyen Heliaster helianthus Lamarck)

Valdizán and Maldonado distinguish between two species of starfish; the star-shaped Tichaster aurantiacus Meyen, and the round-shaped Heliaster helianthus Lamarck (1922b : 413-4). In the Andes, these are classified as male and female types. Girault refers to the star-shaped species as q'achu warawara (q'achu a. "feminine" ; warawara q."a. "star") and to the round-shaped species as urqu warawara (urqu a. "masculine" ; op.cit. : 318).

The same distinction between male and female types was also made by informant A. Cummings notes that only bits of the male starfish are used in the mesa negra in the Cochabamba region (op. cit. : 21).

The starfish has both symbolic and medicinal properties.

Oblitas Poblete notes that it is used in fumigations for the treatment of illnesses induced by malevolent entities in the wind, (i.e. wayra) and also medicinally for the treatment of epilepsy, headaches etc., (1971 : 41). Both Frisancho Pineda (op. cit. : 80) and Valdizán and Maldonado (loc.cit.) mention the use of the starfish to cure the condition aire , and Valdizán and Maldonado also note that it is used to treat the condition mal de corazón (loc.cit.).
Lira describes its usage as an amulet when placed alongside money and garlic, "que así no cumplirá que 'el diablo se lo carga', porque dicen que la plata tiene su diablo" (op. cit. : 32). Both Cummings (loc. cit.) and Casaverde Rojas (op. cit. : 226) refer to the starfish as estrella kuti, again emphasising the property of kuti medicines in deflecting harmful influences and promoting suerte, and, as Casaverde Rojas specifically explains, "puede causar en las víctimas un retroceso en su suerte, o anular los efectos producidos por los espíritus malévolos, de donde viene su nombre de kuti" (loc. cit.). It has been suggested that in offerings the starfish acts as a form of food for the spirits (e.g. Girault op. cit. : 315) and informant A described it as "una carne para la mesa", as well as it being taken in an infusion to treat wayra. In this sense it is like the untu which enters the mesa para la Pachamama which is also described as carne [see Chapter I, III : (ii) c].

d) Kata (q.)

Kata is the name given to the root of the plant called tani tani. Its botanical name is unavailable. For medicinal purposes, the root is ground and heated with cowfat, and rubbed on the shoulders to relieve pain (informant A). Lira notes that the root, when ground and added to alcohol, also serves as a tonic for the nerves and for a generally weak physical condition (op. cit. : 50-52). He also notes that the root has both a male and a female type, but gives no further reference as to their different use, if any, in curing. However, he lists the main use of the root in the treatment of sustos and mal de nervios [when it is ground and taken as an infusion (loc. cit.)]. Kata is also
the Quechua term given to an object which serves as a covering, either in the form of clothing or wrapping. Lira explains the name given to the plant as follows:

Esta hierba kkata, tiene su nombre así, porque dice ella:- Puedo ser tu abrigo y también tu yermo. En la parte que andas, yo seré tu defensa principalmente con so'ka wayras. Si es que quieres que no te sucede nada, acompáñate conmigo. No hay "wapu" que se ponga conmigo, ni macho que me haga rendir. Anda firme y resuelto, que no te pasará nada. Si te encuentres con el cañazo, estás conmigo y no te pasará nada. Si te estás conmigo estarás seguro por más que venga "otra vida".

(loc.cit.)

The plant therefore has symbolic properties as a defence against malevolent intrusions or attacks which may harm a person physically and spiritually and which may strengthen the body to withstand them.

e) Kuti waynitu (q. kuti "reversal" : q. wayniy "to fear, be shocked")

This cylindrical shaped seed is clearly distinguished by its form, a yellow helix. Informant A explained that when the seed is taken in mate, "se saca la mala suerte". Its botanical name is unavailable. Like the churcu (see b) there is a male type, wayna q'ewej, and a female type, warmi q'ewej (q'ewej from q'ewey q. to "fold" or "curve"), Cummings (op.cit. : 24), although no mention is made of how they are differentiated or differently used. Frisancho Pineda (op.cit. : 107) refers to the seed as kuti mozo (mozo sp. "single" or "unmarried"), which emphasises the use of the seed as an amulet to bring success in love (see also Cummings loc.cit.). However, the seed is also a kuti medicine, and Frisancho Pineda also refers to it as contra amarilla (loc.cit.).
referring to its colour, but also to its association with reversal or overturning. Girault documents the seed as being named by kuti kuti (op. cit. : 265, 392-4, 406, 459), which stresses the seed's properties of transformation. Cummings notes that the kuti waynutu is excluded from the mesa negra in the Cochabamba region but is found in the puka mesa, yuraj mesa and sara q'oa (loc. cit.). As its name suggests, it may be thought to protect a person if he or she is in danger of being harmed.

f) Millu (q.; aluminium sulphate)

Millu is particularly used in fumigations for the treatment of mancharisqa or susto (informant A). It is used as a lump or in powder form, and it is sometimes referred to as collpa (Frisancho Pineda op. cit. : 86). Frisancho Pineda also refers to a ritual specifically called khollpask'a or millujana which is designed to treat susto and in which millu is rubbed over the patient and then cast out in an isolated place (loc. cit.). When placed in offerings, millu symbolises protection from illness caused by malevolent spirits, and it is also noted as being used in counter-sorcery (Tschopik 1951 : 247 ; Van den Berg 1985 : 122). Tschopik comments that millu has "the power to reverse the state of things" (loc. cit.), and its properties are therefore associated with those of other medicines referred to as kuti.

Another important use of millu is in divination. Oblitas Poblete describes how Kallawaya herbalists mix millu with urine and then study the formations of foam which are created, to determine where a patient may have fallen ill, or where the susto trauma might have occurred (1971 : 81-2). Lira also refers to the use of millu in the diagnosis of illness. Millu would be first rubbed over the patient and then added to hot urine, before being
observed for significant formations (op.cit. : 49). A combination of urine and mily can also be used to cure a patient of susto, and the mixture will afterwards be discarded, after it has drawn out the illness from the body (Oblitas Poblete loc.cit.).

g) Quina quina (q.; miroxilum Peruniferum L.; Oblitas Poblete 1969 : 88-91)

This is a yellow fruit, the size and shape of an almond. When boiled in mate, it can be used to bathe the ear for ear infections, or a wound. It can also be used to bathe the whole body to reduce fever, and is used to treat serious illnesses such as malaria because of its fever-reducing properties. Informant A described the fruit as "muy poderosa" since it has many varied medicinal uses. Lira (op.cit. : 59-60) and Oblitas Poblete (loc.cit.) also refer to its varied medicinal uses.

The fruit has strong antiseptic qualities, and its extract is particularly useful as an expectorant for serious bronchial congestion (Oblitas Poblete loc.cit.). Lira describes how the fruit is boiled in water and used to bathe the body "contra los malos vientos" (loc.cit.), which suggests that like many other items which enter the mesa negra, the fruit also has symbolic properties which may assist with warding off disturbances to the body, mind and spirit.

h) Retama (sp. "broom"; Spartium junceum L.)

Retama flowers are particularly associated with suerte, and when branches of the bush are placed in the form of a cross behind the door, as informant A explained, "libra así de las maldiciones" (see also Cummings op.cit. : 70). Oblitas Poblete comments that the shrub is highly valued not only for its
Medicinal properties, but also for its use in counteracting maldiciones and sorcery. He records that, in the case of sorcery, the victim can be bathed in retama boiled in water, and the liquid then poured onto the door of a person believed to have posed the curse (op.cit. : 311-12).

Valdízán and Maldonado also describe how retama flowers are rubbed over a person suffering from susto and are then discarded as contaminated by the illness (1922a : 72). Medicinally, retama flowers are boiled and used to treat rheumatism (Frisancho Pineda (op.cit. : 84). Like many of the items listed above, retama has special symbolic properties in that it can draw out illness from the body, and also protect harmful entities from crossing the threshold.

i) Sajcha (q.)

Sajcha is a white coloured fibrous root or stem which enters the mesa negra in small amounts. When taken in mate, it is used to treat forms of aire. It also entered a special mixture of plants referred to as sajrahampis (q. "curse cure"), prepared and sold on traditional medicine stalls in Sucre. The botanical name for this plant is unavailable, and I was unable to find further ethnobotanical references to it, although Cummings refers to a root or stem resembling "rough pieces of string" which he includes amongst unidentified vegetable ingredients listed as entering the mesa negra (op.cit. : 46). However its symbolic properties in cleansing the body of the effects of aire, as well as its use in dispelling curses, link sajcha to other ingredients selected from the mesa negra for use in the curación.
j) **Tojillo (q.)**

This is a tiny, black, round fruit with two curious indentations which give the fruit the appearance of two eyes set in a face, and is why the fruit is also sometimes referred to as *calaverita*. Because of its colour and appearance, it is associated with sorcery and curses and is used as an amulet (informant A). It was not possible to botanically identify the plant of origin.

k) **Waji (q.; Aristolochia Maxima L.)**

Oblitas Poblete refers to this root by the name of *bejucodelas yungas* (op.cit. : 96) and describes its use to treat catarrh and urethritis. The extract of the root is also used to heal poisonous bites, or bleeding wounds, or cuts. Oblitas Poblete also lists *waji* as a basis for poultices, prepared by Kallawaya herbalists for the treatment of rheumatism or body swellings (loc.cit.).

Lira refers more to the plant's symbolic properties in treating forms of possession by malevolent forces, and susto. If worn around the neck, the plant defends the carrier against such attacks. When dried and used as an amulet, *waji* serves as a general form of defence against negative influences and forces at large in the environment (op.cit. : 27).

1) **Wayruru (q./a.; Eritrina coralloendendron)**

The *wayruru* is the same red and black bean used in the Orureno despachos and used to attract suerte [see Chapter I, III : (iii) h]. As I have already suggested, its strong colour division may be associated with balance, its black part being equally contrasted with red. Valdizán and Maldonado also note that wearing a necklace composed of *wayruru* prevents the illness
ojeo (sp. "evil eye", 1922b: 111). In this way, as well as acting to maintain a positive balance in suerte and general well-being, it assists in deflecting malevolent influences from harming an individual. Wayruro beans were also listed by Valdizán and Maldonado as part of the ingredients for a cure referred to as cutiche (kutichiy q. "to cause reversal") used to treat victims of mancharisqa or susto (q./sp. "soul-loss"). They were placed in a package along with an alpaca foetus, alpaca fat, an egg, twelve coca seeds, twelve coca leaves in good condition, incense, quinoa, pan de plata, silver and gold thread, and items from a chiuchi mesa. The package was rubbed over the patient's body and then burnt in an isolated place (1922a: 70).

iv) Additional item

a) Dog tooth

The dog tooth was the only item placed in the bundle which was not part of the mesa negra. However, dogs are thought to give warning of the imminence of death, or the proximity of spirits (Oblitas Poblete 1971: 59). Bandelier also comments that the barking of dogs at night time is an evil omen (1910: 102).

Oblitas Poblete also notes that dog skin is used to counteract the invasion of the body by malevolent spirits. The skin of a recently killed dog is applied to the victim to suck out the malevolence. He also notes that dog skin is used in the treatment of susto (loc.cit.). Plaxsi Limachi notes that dog skin is used to rub the body to assist with all forms of rheumatic and muscular pain (1983: 35-6).

Dogs are therefore an assistance in dealing with malevolent forces, and in giving warning against danger. It is likely that the dog tooth was placed in the bundle as a symbolic form of
warning or protection.

v) Function of the mesa negra bundle in the curación

The bundle containing items from the mesa negra was one of the bundles placed on my body during the active stage of the curación. It was then later removed in a series of ritual gestures as if it were contaminated [see Appendix 3: (v)]. It was used to withdraw and remove forces which were thought to be obstructing and impairing my suerte, and in doing so, reinforced the action of the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones (see II and III).

The mesa negra bundle was used, then, as a form of ritual cleansing. As I have described in section (ii) above, many of the ingredients selected are associated with the treatments of illnesses such as wayra, or mancharisqa which are caused by the invasion of external forces (see Aguiló 1983 : 173-5, 221-3; Armstrong 1983 : 18-23). By removing obstruction in the form of negative impurities, the bundle plays an important part in bringing about a change in suerte, and this is further indicated by the placement of mesa ingredients on white paper. White is especially associated with suerte and purity [informant F, Cummings 1981 : 52; see also Chapter I, II; (iv)]. The bundle therefore also cleared the way for the balancing and cleansing action of the mesa para el cambio de la suerte and the ch'oa mesa (see IV and V).

The power of the bundles lay not in the organisation or arrangement of their ingredients, but in the collective strength of their symbolic properties. The positive action of this bundle is also indicated by the number of different plants selected from
The mesa negra, i.e. a total of twelve. Twelve is a number which has positive associations with suerte and signifies completeness [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) c].

It must be pointed out that Andean medicinal plants are used to treat the spirit as well as the physical body, since illness can manifest in either. Aguiló distinguishes between two types of illness in Andean medicine; "mythical illness" and "natural illness". He defines "mythical" illness as:

una agresión de un demiurgo, más o menos antropomorfizado, proveniente del espacio hostil o de la Pachamama, que produce una lesión permanente a la par al "ajayu" (= espíritu, en aymara, contradistinto del "alma" o principio vital) y al cuerpo,

while natural illness is:

toda agresión, y consiguiente lesión en las zonas periféricas del cuerpo, sin incidencia directa al "ajayu" o espíritu, y realizada por un agente exterior, por tanto se queda "afuera" del enfermo, sin dejar nada de sí normalmente en el enfermo.

(op. cit. : II)

Treatment is therefore aimed at the level in which the illness is manifesting. As Aguiló explains:

La enfermedad mitica es siempre interna y exige una curación mágica. La enfermedad natural puede ser externa o interna, según que el "agente agresor" lo haga extrínsecamente al cuerpo o lo haga intrínsecamente al "ajayu".

(op. cit. : 12)

Ingredients were selected from the mesa negra which have properties in expelling negative external forces which have become internalised. Ingredients such as ch'aski marguerita, churcu, estrella de mar, kuti waynitu and millu [see (ii) a, b, c, e, f] are attributed the properties of kuti. This implies the
process of overturning or reversal, and therefore when applied in ritual and curing contexts, describes the process of changing a condition by deflecting harmful entities and reversing the cause of illness. Cummings describes the type of medicine referred to as kuti as:

an object, which because of its abnormal form, or because of properties it may have which are opposite to those of a given set of circumstances, can be used to halt and reverse the development of the said circumstances.

(op. cit. : 39)

The mesa negra is also referred to sometimes as kuti hampi and contra mesa [see (i)] because of its capacity to reverse conditions which are involuntarily caused by sorcery or curses.

Forces which obstruct suerte can therefore be removed through the use of counteracting items which can transform this type of imbalance. The use of symbolic medicines in this type of ritual treatment implies that obstructions to suerte, and negative or "black" causes of illness which attack the individual on a deeper level than the physical body, may be transformed and neutralised.

When this takes place, the healing process can be seen to involve a movement between two states or conditions (i.e. mala suerte / illness, and suerte / well-being) which is brought about by the manipulation of symbols in ritual. Ritual medicines like the plants contained in the mesa negra possess symbolic properties which are not static qualities, but when activated in ritual, contain a particular type of force which is powerful in certain contexts. As Turner points out:
It must not be forgotten that ritual symbols are not merely signs representing known things; they are felt to possess ritual efficacy, to be charged with power from unknown sources, and to be capable of acting on persons and groups coming in contact with them in such a way as to change them for the better or in a desired direction.

(1967: 54)

Many of the ingredients selected from the mesa negra [see (ii) a, b, c, d, f, h, l] have uses as protective amulets and are attributed with powers to deflect misfortune. When these are used in the context of ritual curing, their powers may be applied so that they help to expel and clear negative forces from the body and spirit. Once the bundle had been passed over my body, it was treated as contaminated and removed emphatically from the room.

Ingredients selected from the mesa negra for use in the curación were chosen to perform the following functions through their symbolic properties: to expel internalised negative forces, and to prevent the intrusion of further negative forces. The total number of plants used i.e. twelve, has positive associations which gives them a collective power. Frisancho Pineda also notes that kuti medicines are usually used in amounts of twelve (1973: 107). The extra dog tooth placed alongside these ingredients provided an extra form of protection [see (iii) a] in much the same way as a dog may be placed with a herd of animals to ward off predators.
II) MESA PARA CAMBIAR LA SUERTE Y LLEVAR LA MUERTE

i) Introduction

The contents of both the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones (see II) were prepared on pieces of black cloth. When they had been assembled, they were placed together so that the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones was contained within the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte. These were the only two bundles to be prepared on black cloth and they were kept together throughout the curación.

Once the bundles had been assembled and folded together, they received special libations of pure trago, or trago blanco. All the other bundles had been libated with diluted trago, and so the change emphasised the significance of these "black" bundles. I was also instructed to repeat a prayer which called for my salvation and for the deliverance of my suerte from its obstructions, and I was told to voice this prayer while I carefully libated the bundle. Other participants, in turn, voiced similar prayers on my behalf while they also libated the bundles. At this point, a generous quantity of fresh coca was distributed to each participant [see Appendix 3: (iii)].

The sudden intensification of ritual activity surrounding these two bundles emphasised their importance in the curación. Furthermore, while the other mesas were placed either on or around my body, these two black mesas were held under Santiago Fábica's arm and then passed over my body by him, from head to toes and across the chest in the form of a cross before they were removed outside to the hallway. This took place before any of the other mesas were removed. These mesas were therefore
important in initiating the healing process by withdrawing the most harmful and potentially dangerous obstructions, as the names of both mesas indicate. While both mesas were used together in the curación, I will discuss the contents and composition of each bundle separately. The role of black colour symbolism in both mesas is discussed in section (iii) of part III.

ii) Mesa contents

a) Ch'aski marquerita (q./sp.; Bactris speciosa)

A total of six ch'aski marquerita were placed in the mesa. As I have discussed earlier [see I: (iii) a], the ch'aski marquerita is attributed the property of kuti and also serves as a protective amulet against harmful forces.

b) Contras negras (sp.)

A total of three contras negras were placed in the mesa. Contras are a particular type of protective amulet which consists of a plant root which is cut into discs which are then dried and dyed. They are then pierced and strung together like a necklace. The contras come in three distinct colours: yellow, black, and white, and each have different functions as amulets. Informants conflicted in opinion as to their uses, either because the contras have a variety of uses, or because their uses are more specialised than informants were prepared to divulge. However, as their name suggests, contras are generally used to counteract and deflect harmful influences. While the contra blanca is used to counteract the effects of sorcery, the contra negra and the contra amarilla are both used to counteract malevolence in the form of venenos or poisons (informant J). While this could
refer to literal poisons, I suggest that the meaning is less literal and refers to any form of contamination which affects the body, mind and spirit.

Valdizán and Maldonado support the use of the contra negra in counteracting venenos (1922a: 173), but do not refer to contras of other colours. Lira (1946: 26) points to a male/female classification in that the contra hechizo is considered to be masculine, and the contra veneno feminine, but he does not mention colour associations. Cummings refers to the contra negra only as an ingredient of the mesa negra prepared in the Cochabamba region (1981: 29). Frisancho Pineda, even less specifically, lists the contra negra as a type of ritual medicine referred to as cuti or contrahechizo (1973: 107-9).

I am unable to identify the plant from which the contras negras are cut, but both informant A and Valdizán and Maldonado (loc. cit.) classify the contras as part of the root called lirio. As well as possessing magical properties which assist in fending off harmful, negative influences by working "against" them, the contras are also boiled and used to wash wounds, and in particular the type of wound inflicted by rayo, or lightning. Contras also enter the tierra mesa which is used in the event of someone being struck by lightning. The tierra mesa is usually bought in triplicate. One is used for burial where the lightning struck, one is ground up and placed on the inflicted victim, and the third is used in fumigations "para limpiar la victima" (informant A).

c) Maíz (sp.)

A total of six grains of maize entered this mesa. I was unable to identify the particular maize type used or its
significance in connection with this particular mesa. However, Santiago Fábrica took considerable care to select the darkest grains of maize available, in keeping with the black colour content of the mesa. Grains of maize also entered the ch'oa mesa and are associated with ritual cleansing [see v : (ii) b]. Since this mesa was especially aimed at removing harmful forces and changing suerte, as its name suggests, it is likely that maize was used for properties which would assist this process. The number six is a powerful and positive number, since it is even, and a subdivision of twelve [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) c, d].

d) Semillas de coca (sp.)

I was unable to establish why coca seeds were used in preference to leaves, but Santiago Fábrica took great care in sifting the seeds out from our limited supply of coca, and at one point appeared very agitated that there would not be enough. A total of twelve seeds were eventually extracted and placed with the other ingredients.

While my suerte had been diagnosed using coca leaves, and while twelve leaves were placed on the mesa para el cambio de la suerte [see IV : (i) e], the significance of coca seeds in this bundle was not clear.

Flores Ochoa records that coca seeds and leaves were placed in ritual bundles containing illa or amulets, and that they represented the pasturceland where animals graze, "porque la coca tiene la característica de conservar su color verdezco durante mucho tiempo" (1976 : 126). Combinations of coca seeds and leaves are also documented elsewhere as entering ritual offerings (see Custred 1979 : 382 ; Valderrama and Escalante 1976 : 180). Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego (1976 : 227) and Marzal (1971 :
273) refer to coca seeds as entering despachos independently of leaves, and Aranguren Paz mentions that a total of twelve coca seeds, (q. mujllu), entered a despacho prepared for the beginning of August (1975: 106). The question which raises itself is, why are seeds sometimes used in preference to leaves?

The leaf itself is the product of the mature coca shrub [see Chapter I, III: (vi) c]. Perfectly rounded and mature leaves are especially selected by yatiris for use in divination (informant F). The seed, however, is the fruit of the dying plant and contains the potential for new life and growth. It is perhaps for this reason that coca seeds were considered more appropriate for the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte. The new life and growth embodied in the coca seeds are perhaps associated with the renewal of suerte and its potential growth. Twelve coca seeds were placed in the mesa, and this formed the largest quantity of any of the mesa ingredients. As I have already described, twelve is a number with positive associations with balance and completeness [see Chapter 2, I: (iii) c, d].

e) Teeth of a dog, cat, and fox

Two teeth were extracted from the jaws of a dog, cat, and fox, which were part of Santiago Fábrica's personal ritual equipment. As I have discussed earlier (see I, ii, m), dogs are animals which play an important role in protecting man from malevolent forces. Dogs' teeth were used in a black bundle directly associated with death, and must be thought to play some part in assisting suerte, and the removal of life-threatening forces.

Oblitas Poblete notes that cat flesh is believed to strengthen the body against attacks of sorcery, and helps promote
long life and suerte. He also documents the use of cat and dog skulls in sorcery to either cause success in love between human beings, or to cause it to turn sour (1971: 43-44). Bastien notes that women ritualists send curses by placing an object representing misfortune inside the skulls of a cat and dog, and then clenching the teeth so that the skulls adopt the appearance of a cat and dog fighting (1978: 160). Bolton, in his account of a Kallawayas sorcery session, describes how hair of a cat, dog, and monkey were moulded into a plate-like object which was intended to prevent the sorcery from turning round and falling on the perpetrators rather than the intended victims (1974: 208).

Foxes are particularly associated with misfortune, and when they appear, are believed to be a sign of impending misfortune, particularly when they appear on the left (Oblitas Poblete op.cit.: 71; Paredes 1963: 143). Foxes are also associated with astuteness and cunning. For this reason the tip of a fox's tail is considered a lucky amulet to attract success in business (Oblitas Poblete loc.cit.), and to assist in the individual's general powers of intelligence (Valdizán and Maldonado 1922b: 521). Girault notes that fox fat is often used in sorcery to perpetrate harm (1972: 309) while fox blood is taken or its flesh is eaten to counteract the effects of sorcery (Oblitas Poblete loc.cit.; Valdizán and Maldonado loc.cit.).

These animals have powers, then, to assist humans in attracting positive influences, or in causing negative ones to be kept at bay, and parts of them may be used in ritual to cause harm to others. However, three questions remain: why were the teeth of these three particular animals used, why were they used
in conjunction, and why were these animals in this particular ritual context associated with suerte change and the removal of life-threatening influences?

Informants were noticeably reticent to divulge what the teeth of these animals were generally used for, although traditional medicine stall-owners admitted trading these items to curandero clients. Santiago Fábrica quietly and unobtrusively extracted the teeth to place them in the mesa, but took great care to immediately replace the skulls in the cloth in which they had been folded, and was not prepared to comment on their significance. This marked reticence indicates perhaps that such items are not commonly used, and may be thought to have extremely powerful properties.

Numerically, while teeth from three animals were used, the total number of teeth placed on the mesa amounted to six, i.e. an even number and hence associated with balance and unity [see Chapter 2, l : (iii) d].

iii) Mesa composition and function

While items were not placed on the mesa in any particular arrangement, it was clear from the meticulous care which Santiago Fábrica took over his calculations that the numerical composition of the mesa was extremely important. Unlike the ingredients selected from the mesa negra which were not placed in particular quantities (see I), ingredients for this mesa were carefully counted. Apart from the three contras negras, all other ingredients were placed as groups of six, and the coca seeds doubled this figure as a group of twelve.

Since the numbers six and twelve, as I have previously shown
In the context of Orureño despachos [see Chapter 2,1 : (iii) c], have positive associations with balance and totality, the presence of three contras negras would seem to upset the numerical balance of the mesa content. The number three is considered to be sajra (q./a. "malign") or conductive of mala suerte, and since it is an uneven number and cannot form a pair, contains a spare part which is thought to be ambiguous and dangerous (Aguiló 1983 : 100). However as Aguiló points out, the number is used in curing rituals to treat illnesses which are amongst those most feared by the Quechua and Aymara. For example, a total of three tierra mesas is necessary for the complete cure of a victim of a lightning strike [see (ii) b]. The number three then, can, according to its context, play a positive and harmonising role.

The number three also influenced the mesa in the number of animals represented, although since the teeth of these animals were placed in pairs, the total number formed a complete, even unit of six. Both the grains of maize and the ch'aski marguerita were also placed in units of six.

While even numbers, in Andean thought, are powerful because they represent stability, balance and positive strength, uneven numbers are powerful because they represent incompleteness and instability – the spare element which cannot make a pair can tip the balance either way, towards negative or positive. The number three therefore has a flexible and dynamic strength which is not exclusively negative.

It is for this reason, I suggest, that the three contras negras were an important influence in the mesa and its function in the curación, particularly since the number three was applied
to ritual items which have an innate capacity to create change and transformation [see (ii) b]. It is also significant that the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones, with which this mesa was placed, consisted of three items, one of which was a spool of black thread which had been divided into three armlengths [see III, i, b].

The number three can therefore be extremely powerful, and can be used in extremely dangerous circumstances to bring about change. It is perhaps for this reason that this number occurs in both the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones, which, as their names suggest, were considered instrumental in overturning what was thought to be a fatal block in my suerte pattern.

The importance of these mesas was emphasised by the black cloth in which they were both wrapped, the libations of pure trago and prayers which called for my salvation. As Santiago directed the libations of these mesas, he explained, "estamos pidiendo nuestra suerte, nuestra vida".

The bundle containing the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones was kept under one of Santiago's arms while in the other he held one of his ritual staffs. The bundle was passed over my body from head to toes in the form of a cross and then returned to the hallway where it was opened to extract the reel of thread from the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones (see III).

These bundles initiated the removal of the other medicine bundles which were placed on my body, and they were the only ones which were kept aside by Santiago and passed over me in the form of a cross. As the names of the mesas suggest, and also the
ritual gestures in assembling and using them in the curación, they were intended to initiate change by "overturning" my suerte and liberating me from fatal and obstructing forces.
Figure 1: Mesa para que salgan las maldiciones
III) MESA PARA QUE SALGAN LAS MALDICIONES

i) Introduction

This mesa was also wrapped in black cloth and placed with the ingredients of the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte [see II] so that the two mesas formed one bundle. They were used together in the curación as I have already described [see II, (iii)]. The mesa para que salgan las maldiciones was later opened to extract the hilo negro [see (ii) b].

ii) Mesa contents

a) Cruz (sp.)

Santiago Fábrica made a delicate cross out of a single palm leaf, approximately 6 cms. in height, and this was placed directly next to the untu figure on the mesa (see figure 1). He explained that the cross symbolised death. This meant that when the mesa was passed over my body in movements describing a cross, it was removing "death" from me and transferring it onto the mesa. In this way, the harmful forces thought to be obstructing my suerte were transposed onto the items contained in the mesa, enabling my suerte to move from a state of tranca, or blockage of vitality, to a state of balance and normality.

b) Hilo negro (sp.)

Three arm lengths of black thread were measured out from a spool and wound onto a separate reel. This was placed to the right of the untu on the mesa (see figure 1). Once the bundle containing this mesa had been passed over my body and removed to the hallway, Santiago Fábrica extracted the black thread from the bundle and came back to where I was lying. The thread was broken
four times; once over my head, once over my chest, once over my knees and, lastly, once over my feet. He then proceeded to break the rest of the thread once over each of the other participants' heads. Santiago Fábrica then knelt and prayed that I should "come to life".

The breaking of threads, or t'ipisqa (Lira 1946 : 62; Cummings 1981 : 33) is a ritual which is performed to counteract negative or undesired states, whether they be as a result of illness, sorcery, curses, or mala suerte. This process of reversal is represented by either the unwinding or breaking of threads which have been spun in an anti-clockwise direction, i.e. to the left. This action is symbolic of release and renewal, and brings about a return to the desired state, i.e. normality.

Beuchler and Beuchler record that threads spun in an anti-clockwise direction are broken over the heads of parents of twins in the belief that this will correct the imbalance in nature which created the twins (1971 : 99-100). As Cummings points out, the movement described by this breaking of threads is closely related to the action of kuti and contra medicines:

for the Quechua mind sees the development of life's events in a rightwards, or clock-wise direction, and if events bring about misfortune they must be symbolically reversed through ritual procedures containing a leftwards or anti-clockwise direction.  

(op.cit. : 37)

When the thread is wound to the left (lloq'e k'aytu) and wrapped around a person, removal or destruction of the threads, by analogy, destroys the illness or negative state affecting the individual, and constitutes a release. Aguiló describes a curing ritual called lloq'eray as follows:
El lloq'eray consiste en envolver todo el cuerpo del enfermo con el "lloq'e k'aytu", del que se desprende el hilo de lana. La operación es ejecutada por el yatiri con su mano izquierda. Luego de un rato en que queda así aprisionado el enfermo, con tijeras el hilo de lana es cortado en trocitos que van amontonándose para ser quemados.

(1983 : 88)

The ritual action of breaking threads is a metaphor for breaking the hold that illness and imbalance may have, and implies that balance and control can be brought to undesired states by disrupting the flow of negative forces to the body. The concept is applicable to physical conditions as well as imbalances associated with suerte. For example, Frisancho Pineda records that threads can be used to cure inflammations of any part of the body. A black thread, spun anti-clockwise and applied with the left hand to the inflamed area is believed to prevent the infection developing by creating a movement against the natural flow of the body (1973 : 41, 106).

Lira describes a ritual which is specifically designed to cure the victim of sorcery and curses. In this case, very fine threads composed of twelve colours are applied to all parts of the body and prayers are spoken. All the rooms of the house are then sprinkled with holy water. This is followed by fumigations of the house with incense. The threads are cut from the body and are later discarded in a river so that the contamination is discarded (1946 : 62).

Lira's account demonstrates that cleansing and purification are an essential part of any ritual activity which involves the removal of negative forces. In the curación, before the threads were broken, the black bundles had been passed over my body to
withdraw the obstructions which were thought to be blocking my suerte. In doing so, these negative forces were then transferred onto the bundle containing the untu figure.

The breaking of threads, which followed this cleansing process, symbolised the dissolution of negative forces, and the clearing of la vía de la suerte. Together these two actions were intended to bring about cambio de la suerte. After the black bundles had been applied and the threads broken, I was motioned to "come to life", and it was suggested that I sat upright and engaged in ordinary conversation to demonstrate a return to normality. Since the obstructions had been transferred onto the untu figure, my suerte was now libre, and I was expected to show this with a demonstration of ordinary behaviour.

c) Untu (q. "llama fat")

Santiago Fábrica took a small portion of untu and moulded it into the shape of a small, human figure about 5 cms. in height. This figure was to depict me and formed the centrepiece of the mesa. Paredes notes that in sorcery rituals llama fat is similarly used to make effigies, but of the intended victim (1963: 77-8). In the context of this mesa, the use of llama fat is significant since it is associated with life-force and is highly prized as such [see Chapter I, III : (ii) c].

Bastien emphasises the significance of blood and fat in food offerings made to the earth and explains that, while blood is associated with life and comes from the heart, fat is associated with energy and comes from the bowels (1978 : 54). Van Kessel also notes that blood is associated with vida, while fat is associated with fuerza (1983 : 166). Paredes notes that llama fat, when used as an offering, should come from the breast of a
sacrificial llama (loc.cit.) i.e., an animal which has been slaughtered to feed and return energy to the earth.

Llama fat, then, is associated with vitality and is used to symbolise this in rituals which nourish and restore vitality to the earth (i.e. the despacho), and strength to a patient. Llama fat, when used to grease amulets and talismans, is thought to help them conserve their magical properties (Frisancho Pineda op.cit. : 79).

The untu figure not only symbolised me as a human subject through its shape, but because of its properties also represented my uncontaminated energy and strength so that when the mesa was activated in ritual, the effigy carried any contamination away from me. In this way, the cleansing of my suerte took place through a transfer onto the symbols contained within the mesa.

iii) Mesa composition and function

The mesa consisted of three separate items including the reel with its three armlengths of black thread. As I have suggested previously [see II : (iii) ], the number three, when used in ritual to counteract imbalance, enables change to take place because it is a number associated with the transition between imbalance and balance. Here the three mesa ingredients worked collectively to bring about a change in suerte by removing the cause of imbalance.

Santiago Fábrica explained that the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones was the most powerful mesa of all since it contained all the black elements associated with maldiciones and the obstructions of my suerte. He explained that the elements contained within the mesa represented cambio de la suerte and justicia. The mesa was instrumental in changing suerte by
transferring the forces obstructing it onto the items contained within.

While both the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones had different contents, they were placed together and were used simultaneously during the curación. These mesas worked together to alter the balance of suerte by dislodging and removing the cause of imbalance, and ensuring the redirection of the maldiciones, or forces causing the obstructions, onto a miniature effigy of the patient. The breaking of black threads over all the participants in the ritual, as well as myself, symbolised the dissolution of negative forces thought to be affecting me, and therefore reinforced the suerte change which had taken place.

iv) Black colour symbolism

The black mesas were the first to be used in the curación and played the most important part in bringing about a change in suerte. The importance of these mesas was highlighted by the intensification of ritual activity accompanying their preparation, and also the black cloth in which they were both wrapped. The two black mesas stood in strong contrast to all the other mesas prepared for the curación which were prepared on white paper.

The colour black, like the number three, has the most potentially negative associations since it is equated with the type of forces associated not only with sorcery (Cummings 1981: 17, Paredes 1963: 22), but also with death.

After death, the Quechua and Aymara believe that the soul departs from the body and begins a slow passage to hanan pacha (q. "upper world") its eventual resting place, where it may act
as an intermediary between humans and deities of the natural world (Casaverde Rojas 1970: 199-211; Nuñez del Prado 1970: 109-113; Tschopik 1951: 213-4). However, since the passage is a slow one, the soul of a person who has recently died is a constant threat to living kinsmen and women, and wanders at large, capable of contaminating, or worse, stealing the souls of young children. Funerary practices are designed to speed the soul on its journey and to protect the living against harmful forms of contamination emanating from souls of the deceased (Tschopik loc.cit.).

The period following physical death is therefore not only a time of mourning, but also a time when human life is most threatened by the dangers which wandering souls may incur, if they are not ritually fed and guided to their destined resting places. The three year period between physical death and the soul's arrival in hanan pacha is viewed as a liminal period and is associated with extreme danger.

Black is particularly associated with this liminal period following death. Cummings notes that relatives of the deceased wear black clothes for a year and sometimes more after a death (op.cit.: 15). He further notes that food for the souls is laid out before the graves on a blanket at Todos Santos (loc.cit.). This food traditionally takes the form of t'anta wawa (q. "bread child"), i.e. bread fashioned in the shape of a baby. One of these had originally been prescribed for the curación, but since these were not available at the time, Santiago Fábrica created a similar figure from the untu [see (ii) c]. Black sheep or llamas may also be sacrificed to souls of the dead as appropriate ritual food (INDICEP 1974: 2-4). Bastien also notes that in the
community of Kaata (prov. Bautista Saavedra) black is used as a symbol of death, decay and night time, and even with specific locations:

the west side of the house where Kaatans defecate, where the ancestor mummy sites are located, where the dead persons travel after burial, and where the sun dies.

(1978: 140)

The danger associated with liminal states can therefore be expressed in ritual through the use of black colour symbolism.

As I have discussed earlier [see II : (iii)], the number three, being poised between balance and imbalance, is also a number associated with liminality and potential danger. In Part One of this thesis, and in connection with the preparation of despacho ingredients [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) b], items which are not paired are referred to as ch'ulla ajayu (q. "uneven soul"). The number three is therefore conceptually linked with the wandering soul, its inherent instability, and the harm it may cause.

Both the number three and the use of black colour symbolism can be used positively in rituals to combat conditions or states which are thought to be the most harmful. By a process of analogy, black ritual items are particularly effective in curing "black" or negative states. The mesa negra is a good example of a standard curing mesa used to cleanse the body, mind and spirit of harmful energy forms. As Aguiló concludes, "se cura con lo negro, para defenderse de lo negro. El negro contraresta al negro" (1983 : 103). Similarly, the number three, when applied to ritual items used to treat imbalanced states, may work to stabilise and balance the patient by counteracting the imbalance. In Lira's account of the lloq'e ritual referred to above [see
(ii) b], the positive effect of the ritual was reinforced by its repetition so that the ritual was performed a total of three times. The tierra mesa used to cure a victim of a lightning strike is also used in triplicate [see I : (ii) b].

This liminality also forms the creative axis between illness and health, and is the area which has most potential power for transformation and change. The role of black colour symbolism and numbers in the curación as a whole is discussed in Chapter 5 [(iii) ; (iv)]. The affinity between black colour symbolism and negative or "black" states is demonstrated however by the role of black mesas in the curación. Collectively, the contents of both mesas worked to restore balance by dismantling, withdrawing, and transferring the maldiciones onto the contents of these mesas.
Figure 2: **Mesa para el cambio de la suerte**
iv) MESA PARA EL CAMBIO DE LA SUERTE

i) Introduction

The mesa para el cambio de la suerte was assembled on white paper, and therefore indicated an emphasis on suerte. Its content and composition were similar to that of a despacho although on a much smaller scale, and the mesa clearly lacked the elaboration of Orureño despachos in content and style. However, similar ingredients were used, and these followed similar rules of arrangement to those of Orureño despachos. The content of the mesa is described before discussing its composition and function.

ii) Mesa contents

a) Claveles rojos y blancos (sp.)

Three red and three white carnations entered the mesa and were placed to the left and right of the t'ika azúcar (see g). This arrangement is depicted in figure 2.

Red and white carnations are often referred to as entering despacho offerings. Bolton and Bolton note the use of four carnations and roses in a despacho in which the flowers were similarly arranged around a central sugar piece (1976: 102). Red and white carnations also entered a despacho offered to the earth after a bundle containing maldiciones had been discovered and fumigated (Lira 1969: 35-6). Gow and Condori record that an offering to Pachamama on 1st January included a cross decorated with carnations, and one of their informants described them as "las flores sagradas de los apus" (1976: 7). Carnations are often used in offerings to earth deities, although they are not used in the Orureño despachos.

Red and white items are commonly used in ritual offerings to
earth deities and are a way in which the Orureño despachos for Pachamama and Tío are clearly differentiated [see Chapter 2, I : (iv) e]. When placed in different offerings, these colours help to differentiate between the types of suerte that these deities govern. I therefore suggest that the juxtaposition of red and white in this mesa represents suerte balance, as in the juxtaposition of complementary forms. This is also reinforced by the equal division of the flowers between left and right, and their placement within the mesa. The total number of carnations (i.e. twelve) also has positive associations with balance and unity [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) c, d].

b) Coca (sp.; Erythroxylon coca)

A total of six coca leaves were placed around the edge of the mesa, in much the same way as coca leaves are placed in the Orureño despachos as a traditional ritual offering [see Chapter I, III : (vi) c]. Coca leaves are often offered in multiples of six (ibid.), and this number frequently occurs in suerte offerings because of its positive associations with balance and unity [see (a) above].

c) Colación rojo y blanco (sp. "red and white collation")

Six red and six white colación were placed in the mesa in separate bands of colour around the t'ika azúcar (see figure 2), and alongside the red and white carnations. The colación are the same as those used in the Orureño despachos [see Chapter I, III : (i) g]. Red and white colación are used in the mesa para la Pachamama, while only white colación is used in the mesa blanca. Santiago Fábica explained that in the mesa para el cambio de la suerte, red colación represented malevolent forces
(i.e. *mala suerte*), while the white *colación* represented purity and positive forces (i.e. *suerte*). In this way, positive forces were represented on the right hand side of the mesa and negative forces on the left hand side. The juxtaposition of red and white ingredients within the mesa therefore represented a balance of forces surrounding the central sugar piece, or *t'i ka azúcar* (see g).

d) *Q'oa* (q.; *Mentha pulegium*)

*Q'oa* is the plant used as a base for the *mesa para la Pachamama* in the Orureño despachos, and is also used in ritual fumigations because of its cleansing properties [see Chapter I, III : (iii) e]. Like other plants used in fumigations, *q'oa* is also thought to ward off malevolent forces (Cummings 1981 : 70 ; Paredes 1963 : 271).

*Q'oa* formed a base for the *mesa para el cambio de la suerte* in much the same way as the *mesa para la Pachamama*. I suggest that *q'oa* was used here for its cleansing and protective properties, and hence a positive and healing influence on *suerte*.

e) *Q'ollqe llinpi* (q. "silver colour"; Mica)

Both *q'ollqe llinpi* and *q'ori llinpi* (q. "gold colour") are highly valued ingredients of the Orureño despachos because of their ability to attract *suerte*, and they are always paired [see Chapter I, III : (iv) b, c]. Here *q'ollqe llinpi* was used on its own, and sprinkled over the entire mesa. Santiago Fábrica explained that this was "para castigos", although the significance of this was not exactly clear. *Castigo* is the term which Santiago Fábrica uses to refer to the power which healers like himself derive from the cosmos, and this power is closely
associated with lightning [see Chapter 3, (i)]. It is possible that q'ollqe llinpi represents this power as a special force and form of protection for the mesa. However, its silvery, light colour also relates it to the white colour of the mesa base, the white carnations and colación, and the white t'ika azúcar at the centre, all of which have positive associations with suerte.

f) Romero (sp. "rosemary"; Rosmarinus Officinalis L.)

Romero, like the q'ollqe llinpi (see above) was sprinkled over the assembled mesa. Like the q'oa (see d), romero is also used in ritual fumigations because of its cleansing properties [see also Chapter I, III : (iii) f]. Santiago Fábrica used romero as a substitute for incense, which was not available at the time of the curación. I suggest that romero was used, like the q'oa, for its cleansing and healing influence on suerte. It is interesting that these plants enclosed the mesa from above and below, and formed a pair within the mesa because of their similar properties.

g) T'ika azúcar (t'ika q. "flower")

I was not able to find out why this square, plain sugar tablet was referred to as a flower. In Oruro, plain square sugar tablets are referred to as azúcar cuadrado and are generally placed in pairs, or offset against a round-shaped tablet, or azúcar redonda [see Chapter I, III : (i) b,c]. Only one t'ika azúcar entered the mesa and was placed at its very centre.

Santiago Fábrica referred to the t'ika azúcar as untu. When placed at the centre of the mesa, the sugar tablet symbolised life-force and echoed the use of untu in the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones [see III : (ii) c]. While in the latter, untu was
used to transpose negative obstructions from my suerte, here the sugar tablet form of untu was associated with renewed suerte and vitality. Its white colour also related it to suerte, since white objects are especially associated with suerte and purity [see (c) above; also Chapter I, II: (iv)].

iii) Mesa composition and function

The mesa para el cambio de la suerte, as its name suggests, indicated an actual change in suerte. This was symbolised within the mesa by the juxtaposition of red and white carnations and colación, in equal numbers, around the central t'ika azúcar representing vitality and suerte. Suerte was further emphasised within the mesa by the arrangement of ingredients on a base of q'oa below, and the romero and q'ollque llinpi which were scattered above.

As I have discussed in Chapter 2, suerte is especially increased through offerings in which the ritual items form a balanced arrangement. In the mesa para el cambio de la suerte, suerte was similarly represented by the balance and juxtaposition of items. While in the Orureño despacho, ingredients are unified by a circular plato, in this mesa symbolic balance was emphasised by the distribution of key symbolic items into two separate fields, to the left and right of a central subject. This arrangement is similar to that observed by Joralemon (1985: 5), Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego (1976: 236), and Sharon (1979: 225); see also Chapter 2, I: (iv)]. As Joralemon notes:

the objects of the left and right sides stand in oppositional relationships to one another, with artefacts of the central field representing mediating third terms ... Thus the general, unmediated opposition of life-taking versus life-giving is "resolved" by symbolic contrasts
that permit mediation".

(loc. cit.)

In the mesa para el cambio de la suerte, the untu which represented my suerte and life-force was seen to be sustained by a balance of forces surrounding it, in which potential harm, symbolised by red colación was mediated by white colación symbolising purity [see (ii) c]. Suerte was further emphasised by the predominance of white colour symbolism within the mesa. This clear balance expresses what Santiago Fábrica meant when he explained that he needed to make la vía de la suerte "libre".

In this mesa, the single sugar tablet at the centre acted as a focus, or axis, for other mesa ingredients which were distributed to the left and right. Again here, we can see a spare part, or third field, (i.e. an uneven number), acting as a pivot between two poles (mala suerte symbolised by red artefacts, and suerte symbolised by white artefacts). The associations and arrangement of ingredients are slightly different to those in the despacho, but the idea of a "symbolic" picture is the same, and in this mesa balance is even more emphasised by the placement of symbols to the left and right of a centre.

Symbolic balance was also created within the mesa by the numerical composition and distribution of ingredients. The coca and carnations both formed totals of six, and the colación formed a total of twelve, i.e. twenty-four altogether. These numbers are especially associated with balance and suerte, since they are all subdivisions or multiples of twelve [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) c, d].

The coca, carnations and colación were the only numbered items within the mesa, apart from the t'ika azúcar, and they were
all carefully positioned. In Chapter 2 [I : (iii) a] I have shown how key symbolic items are numbered and are especially important for creating balance within the despacho. Although the mesa para el cambio de la suerte is much simplified, its ingredients still create a pattern which is meaningful in terms of suerte in that it presents a picture of harmony, balance and purity through the properties, colours and arrangement of its ingredients.

This mesa was placed on my body and passed over me after the black mesas had been used to clear my suerte of harmful obstructions. This mesa, through its composition and use in the curación, played an important role in confirming a positive change in suerte, and reinstating suerte as it was passed over me.
V) CH'OÁ MESA

i) Preparation

The ingredients for this mesa were divided onto two separate pieces of newspaper. The mesa was also referred to as ch'oa blanca. The ingredients of each part of the mesa were the same, although they were distinguished by different colours. Both parts took the names ch'oa mesa or ch'oa blanca, and so were seen as one mesa divided into two.

On one piece of paper were placed twelve grains of yellow maize and three claveles rojos. These were sprinkled over with q'ori llinpi [see Chapter I, III : (iv) b]. On the other piece of paper, twelve grains of white maize were placed with three claveles blancos, and these were sprinkled with q'ollqe llinpi (ibid.). Romero was finally added in equal quantities to both piles and this was deliberately substituted instead of copal or incienso which were not available at the time. The claveles were temporarily put aside from each pile as the contents of each half of the mesa were separately ground and poured into two large jars full of water. The claveles were then placed with their corresponding mesa ingredients in the jars of water.

ii) The term ch'oa, and mesa function

Santiago Fábrica explained that this mesa was intended for cleansing. This was demonstrated when the contents of the jars were emptied in the final stages of the curación, and used to spray all participants, as well as the ceilings and walls of all the rooms in the house where the ritual took place.

The term ch'oa, or ch'uya, means crystalline, i.e. that which is pure and transparent, as opposed to polluted and turbid.
The term therefore describes the mesa's purity and its cleansing properties. Data from other ethnographic sources further highlights the meaning of ch'oa and its function in other ritual contexts.

Flores Ochoa refers to ch'uya as "la ceremonia de clarificación y de purificación" which takes place at Carnival and when libations or alcohol are made over livestock, and representative amulets, or engaychu (1976 : 112, 118). Urbano interprets ch'uya as "la manera de ofrecer licor o trago a la Pachamama o/a los Apu", and in the province of Carabaya (dept. Puno, Peru), the term refers to a mixture of ground, white maize (paragay) mixed together with ground beans diluted in vino dulce (1976 : 134-5).

Tschopik also refers to a liquid mixture, c'uwa, which he witnessed being used as part of the ritual for the sacrifice of a llama at a house dedication ritual. C'uwa is the liquid placed in one of the shells used for libations, while wine is placed in another. Before the sacrifice takes place, both wine and c'uwa are libated in a south-easterly direction while the c'uwa is libated on the llama's back. Tschopik makes no reference to the actual content of the c'uwa liquid mixture.

Ch'uya is also referred to in association with animal fertility rituals. Mérelle and Roy refer to the ch'uyasqa rite designed to ensure an animal's fertility (1971 : 166), and Contreras describes ch'uya as a mixture of chicha (q. "maize beer"), wine, coloured earth or taku, which is used to mark the animals in similar rites (1956 : 85).

The term is also used to refer to the twenty days of
abstention and physical purification which take place before the t'inka ritual, or offering to Pachamama, as described by Valderrama and Escalante in their study of this ceremony in the community of Wirabamba (province of Cotabambas, dept. Apurímac, Peru). They explain the term as follows:

El ch'uyaq significa que toda la familia debe comer sin ninguna clase de condimentos (ají, ajos, cebolla); sobre todo el jefe y oficiante debe privarse absolutamente no sólo de comida y condimentada, sino incluso de la misma sal. Además no debe tocar kerosene ni otros elementos como aldrín, etc.; es más, durante este periodo de ch'uyaq debe abstenerse de relaciones sexuales.

(1976 : 179)

Here the meaning of ch'uwa is extended to include purity of conduct in the form of dietary taboos, and restricted activity (i.e. the consumption of alcohol, and sexual activity).

Liquids referred to as ch'uwa are described by Grebe Vicuña in her account of a curing ceremony, comprar estrella y ánimo performed by the Aymara of Isluga, Chile (1983). Ch'uwa refers to the content of four jars which are prepared on the evening before the ceremony. Two of the jars contain gloria, i.e. pastillas rosadas y/o blancas mixed with water. The other two jars contain a white maize (llumpaja) which is ground up and also diluted in water. These jars of liquid are used for libations at the peak of the ceremony when a sugar tablet depicting the sun is burned with incense at the same time as the first rays of the sun are deflected onto the patient's body using a metal disc [op. cit. : 159-160 ; see also Chapter 2, II : (ii)].

The above data confirms that ch'oa refers to ritual libations using different forms of liquids which have positive associations with purity and cleanliness. The term may also apply to a condition, or period of time, i.e. before a ritual, or
before sunrise, when purity and cleanliness are associated with diet and behaviour. In the curación, the ch'oa mesa was used to cleanse the patient and participants in the ritual. This role was enhanced by the properties of the mesa contents and the distribution of ingredients, as I will now show.

iii) Mesa contents

a) Claveles rojos y blancos (sp.)

Red and white claveles also entered the mesa para el cambio de la suerte [see IV : (ii) a]. In both the mesas in which claveles appear, they contribute to the symbolic balance of the mesa, as part of the whole (e.g. the mesa para el cambio de la suerte), or as two divided halves (e.g. the ch'oa mesa). Symbolic balance was created in the ch'oa mesa by the juxtaposition of red and white flowers and their division between the two mesa halves. Other ingredients were similarly divided according to colour (see b and c). Since the claveles were kept intact and placed in the jars with the other ground-up and diluted ingredients, it is possible that they were intended to act as symbolic markers because of their distinctive colours. It is also possible that the red and white colours are associated with contrasting forces of suerte, like the red and white colación [see IV : (ii) c].

b) Maíz (sp.)

Maize was used as an ingredient both for the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte [see II : (ii) c] and the ch'oa mesa, in which both white and yellow types were carefully distributed between both halves.

There is ethnohistorical evidence that maize was used in Inca times in rituals concerned with cleansing and purification.
Garcilaso de la Vega documented the use of dough balls which consisted of ground maize mixed with the extracted blood of young children in purification rites at the festival of Coya Raymi, celebrated after the September equinox in Cuzco.

A day of fasting would be spent in which only a little crude maize and water would be taken, and at night, before dawn, the balls of prepared maize would be passed over the head, face, chest, shoulders, arms and legs, 'como que se limpiaban con ella, para echar de sus cuerpos todas sus enfermedades' (1968 : 525-6). When the sun had risen, the fiesta culminated with four Inca messengers being sent out of Cuzco in different directions, and as they ran, people would stand at doorways:

\[
y \text{con grandes voces y alaridos de fiesta y recocijo, sacudían la ropa, que en las manos sacaban de su vestir y la que tenían vestida, como cuando sacuden el polvo; luego pasaban las manos por la cabeza y rostro, brazos y piernas, y por todo el cuerpo como cuando se lavan, todo lo cual era echar los males de sus casas para que los mensajeros del sol los desterrasen de la cuidad. Los mensajeros corrían con las lanzas un cuarto de legua fuera de la ciudad, donde hallaban apercibidos otros cuatro Incas, no de la sangre real, sino los de privilegio, los cuales tomando las lanzas, corrían otro cuarto de legua, y así otros hasta alejarse de la ciudad cinco y seis leguas, donde hincaban las lanzas, como poniendo término a los males desterrados para que no volviesen de allí adentro ...}
\]

(loc.cit.)

This extract illustrates not only the traditional use of maize in purification rites, but also the concept behind rituals of this type, i.e. that impurities may be transferred and removed from the physical body and the social group onto other objects. The above extract describes the ritual cleansing of an entire community, at a crucial stage of the agricultural and calendrical cycle when the welfare of the community was most in need of
reinforcement. In the curación, the libations of household and participants with the ch'oa mesa took place at the final stages of the curación before the mesas were removed from the house to where their impurities could no longer be of harm. In the same way, concern was shown for cleansing not only the patient, but also the patients' friends and assistants. This underlines the holistic nature and intention of the curación.

Valderrama and Escalante also document the use of ground maize mixed with water and made into small balls of dough or qheme in their account of the pacha t'inka ritual (1976). Here the maize was not used directly for cleansing purposes, although the water in which the balls were cooked was kept by and referred to as ch'uyaq aqha (q. "pure maize beer"). While the women prepared the qheme, the men gathered grasses with which to sweep out the house where the ritual was to be performed, and cleaned out the ceremonial vessels which were to be used (op.cit.: 181-2). These ritual preparations accompanied and reinforced the period of time referred to as ch'uyaq described in (ii) above. The qheme balls were distributed between twelve white inkuñas (q. "ritual cloths"), laid out on two separate textiles, i.e. six and six. The qheme were later served from these to all participants as ceremonial food (op.cit.: 183).

The two types of maize used in the ch'oa mesa were referred to as kuti and llallagua, but I was unable to establish which colours they referred to. Maize cobs referred to as kuti are those whose grains grow and develop in a direction contrary to normal (Lira 1946 : 85; Valdizán and Maldonado 1922b : 56). Kuti maize is used in healing contexts because of its associations with reversal and overturning (Cummings 1981 : 37; Gifford 1986 : 3).
Kuti maize is therefore associated with cleansing, in the sense of renewal.

_Llallagua_ maize is associated with the mining town of the same name, and refers to the variety of maize known as chillpi which is especially sweet (Lara 1978: 77; Valdizán and Maldonado op. cit.: 108). Informant G told me that chillpi maize is used to make api, a sweet and non-alcoholic beverage which is particularly popular in the altiplano region. Sweet objects are especially associated with suerte [see Chapter I, II: (iii)] so this may explain its presence in this mesa.

Other ethnographic data confirms the use of maize in ritual offerings, although reference is made more to the colour of the maize used rather than to specific types. Casaverde Rojas notes the use of grains of white maize, placed in a despacho in pairs (1970: 232). Aranguren Paz notes that a kernel of white corn was placed with coca and llama fat while invocations were made for community well-being and a good harvest in a ritual performed by pastoralists (dept. Puno, Peru). White maize grains were also present in despachos prepared for lst August (1975: 106).

Urbano mentions the specific colours of maize types used in despachos prepared for Carnival and August; qello sara (q. "yellow maize"); yuraq sara (q. "white maize"); kulli, or yana sara (q. "black maize"), as well as other maize types oqe sara and t’inka sara. The t’inka ritual held at Carnival at Sicuani, Peru for the multiplication of livestock, consisted of the fumigation of different coloured maize types which corresponded to the shades of wool which the offspring would hopefully bear (1976: 123, 130). Valderrama and Escalante, in their account of the pacha t’inka ritual at Wirabamba for which I have already
described the preparations, note the use of three grains of different coloured maize; kulli (q. "black"), uwina aq. "yellow") and paraqay (q. "white") which were placed on twelve ritual plates and sprinkled with white maize (paraqay) before being burned in ritual (1976 : 180).

The above ethnographic evidence suggests that the colour of maize is of particular ritual significance in certain contexts. The colour of maize was an important factor of mesa symbolism. In each divided half of the ch'oa mesa the ingredients were divided according to colour; yellow maize with red claveles and q'ori llinpi, and white maize with white claveles and q'ollqe llinpi. The significance of this is discussed further in (iv) below.

c) Q'ollqe llinpi (q. "silver colour")
   Q'ori llinpi (q. "gold colour")
   Q'ollqe llinpi and q'ori llinpi were similarly juxtaposed in the two halves of the ch'oa mesa. As I have described earlier [see Chapter I, III : (iv) b], these representations of gold and silver refer to complementary forms of wealth in the despacho, and may also symbolise cosmological balance. The exact significance of gold and silver in this mesa is not clear. Red, white, gold and silver are colours which are often used in combination in ritual offerings. In Bolton and Bolton's account of an earth payment ritual, small pieces of gold and silver were used together with carnations and roses and were sprinkled over with white sugar (1976 : 102). Lira notes the use of gold and silver threads, pan de oro and pan de plata, along with red and white carnations in a despacho offered after a sorcery bundle had been discovered (1969 : 37-8).

It is possible that gold and silver refer here to the
cosmos. The sun and moon are believed to operate as a married pair, and as guardians of the health of men and women respectively (Grebe Vicuña 1983: 158). Their value as complementary forms is reinforced by their placement as a pair, and alongside other paired items in the mesa.

d) Romero (sp.; Rosmarinus officinalis L.)

Romero has cleansing properties, and like copal [see Chapter I, III: (iii) d, f] and incense for which it was substituted, is also used in ritual fumigations to ward off malevolent forces [see also IV: (ii) f]. Romero therefore contributed to the cleansing function of the mesa.

iv) The use of colour in the ch'oa mesa

Combinations of red, white, yellow, gold and silver are common colour themes in ritual offerings, whether these be in the form of despachos offered to the earth, or cleansing liquids following a ritual change of suerte.

In the Orureño despachos, the juxtaposition of different colours and properties has a unifying effect on mesa ingredients, as well as linking them to their context and purpose in ritual, that of balancing the exchange with earth deities. In the curación, on a much smaller scale, the juxtaposition of colour was a key feature of mesa organisation. Key symbolic items were arranged in two colour bands contained in two separate halves of the mesa.

Far from disrupting the mesa as a whole, the division of colour reinforced its function when applied in ritual. Before the contents of the ch'oa jars were used to cleanse the patient and other participants, as well as the immediate surroundings, the
jars were positioned to the right and left of the patient and remained there while all the other mesas were applied to the body. In this way, the jars containing the ch'oa mesa served as balancing poles at either side of the patient.

The placement of the ch'oa mesa jars also contrasted with the placement of the other mesas vertically on my body, creating the effect of a cross with the body as a central axis. This pattern of the cross was also echoed by Santiago Fábrika's movements over my body with the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones [see II : (i) ], and the palm cross contained in the latter [see III : (ii) a].

Both the maize and carnations were divided into proportionate quantities between the two mesa halves; i.e. twelve yellow maize kernels and twelve red maize kernels, amounting to twenty-four, with three red and three white carnations on either half, amounting to six. The numbers six and twelve are positive numbers and are especially powerful for creating balance [see Chapter 2, I : (iii) c,d].

Yellow, red and gold on one half of the mesa contrasted with the white and silver ingredients on the other half, i.e. an opposition of colour/lack of colour. This reflects the use of colour symbolism in the Orureño despachos where colour is used to differentiate between different channels of suerte and the deities which govern them [see Chapter 2, I : (iv) e]. In this way, colour enables distinction and separation, and can be used to present complementary halves of a whole. The opposition of colour/lack of colour also echoes the use of red and white colación in the mesa para el cambio de la suerte which also describe a balance of symbolic properties, i.e. malo/bueno [see
IV : (ii) c].

The balance created by the division of the mesa into two symbolic halves reinforces the positive function of the mesa in ritual. The significance of this structure is shown by the placement of the ch'oa mesa jars on either side of the patient during the suerte change (i.e. like stabilising poles), and the completion of the ritual using the jars' contents in the extensive ritual cleansing which followed.
i) Introduction

After the mesas which were to be used in the curación had been assembled, Santiago Fábrica finally put to one side a small paper package. This contained brightly coloured powders referred to as cebarios. I was instructed to keep this package until the following day when I was to drink the contents in a hot infusion. In the meantime, I was told to place a small sum of money next to the package, and it was suggested that the sum should be equivalent to that which I would spend the next day on food. It was agreed that a sum equivalent to the cost of two small bread buns would be sufficient. No specific reason was given as to why money should be placed with the cebarios. However, money was also placed with coca leaves in the preliminary stages of the coca divination where it was intended as a gesture of ritual payment [ see Appendix 2 : (ii)]. It is possible that here, money was also intended as a form of ritual payment, or as a sort of deposit until the powders were used.

Santiago Fábrica also told me that I was to remain totally secluded the following day. I was not to step foot outside, and on no account was I to talk to strangers. By staying inside, I would remain isolated from the potentially malevolent forces of the outside world, to which I would be vulnerable in the hours immediately following the curación. The cebarios were to strengthen and protect me during this time.

ii) Symbolic meaning and function of the cebarios

The cebarios, or siwayru as they are also commonly called, is the name given to twelve rainbow coloured powders which are
sold on traditional medicine stalls throughout the altiplano. They are normally sold in minute quantities and a pinch of each is placed in a screw of paper. The cebarios are taken in mate, i.e. as a hot infusion, for the treatment of manchariaq, (sp. susto) or soul-loss. This use is also documented by Aguiló (1983 : 174); Cummings (1981 : 26); Frisancho Pineda (1973 : 88-89); Lira (1946 : 83-84); Oblitas Poblete (1971 : 95-96) and Valdizán and Maldonado (1922 : 14).

As far back as the 16th century, powders of different colours referred to as siwayru have been used in indigenous ritual. Polo de Ondegardo documented the use of different coloured powders referred to as sihuayro in "diversas supersticiones" (1916 : 199). It is, however, the colour of the powders themselves rather than their substance which is of curative and ritual value. Lira refers to siwayru powders which are dark red in colour and which are the residue found along the water line of certain lakes, as a result of the lake having menstruated (q. yawarinwan onkkosiaaska). While this powder can be taken in mate to cure susto, it can also prevent susto if a little of the powder is rubbed on the forehead (loc. cit.).

The twelve coloured powders sold on traditional medicine stalls receive their bright and distinct colours, however, from chemical dyes mixed with the base of various substances such as plombajina (sp. "copper oxide"), almidón de arroz teñido (sp. "dyed rice starch") etc. (informant A; Aguiló op. cit. : 87; Frisancho Pineda loc. cit.). These bright colours are directly associated with the rainbow and are used to treat the robbery of a person's ajayu (q. "soul") by the spirit of the rainbow, or
kkuichi, as a manifestation of manchariaga (Oblitas Poblete loc.cit.). The k'uychi is a strongly malevolent spirit and is believed to originate from pools associated with serpents, metals, and places classified as sajra (q. "malevolent"; Cereceda 1987: 213; Muñoz Bernand 1986: 142). Aguilo links this belief with the etiology of an illness referred to as k'uychi ongoy (q. "rainbow sickness") which is explained by his informants as follows:

Cuando se toma agua estancada, oleosa, que refracta la luz en colores como los del Arco Iris, se contagia uno de esta enfermedad. En general, por beber aguas podridas o infectadas, aguas "en lugares apartados o solitarios".

"Viendo el K'uychi o Arco Iris entra el agua en el estómago y éste ya queda hinchado". No hay que mirar al Arco Iris. Otros dicen que las mujeres aparecen como embarazadas todo el tiempo, por mirar el k'uychi. El Arco Iris viene donde hay 'pujuyu' (= manantial) o vertientes, y allí hay gusanos, "k'uykas", etc. ...

Como puede observarse por las expresiones de los mismos campesinos, hay una doble causa; una física, el beber aguas putridas y estancadas, y otro de tipo mágico, que relaciona la enfermedad con el fenómeno del Arco Iris y los colores, reflejados, tanto en el horizonte, como en las mismas aguas. La enfermedad, a decir de los mismos campesinos, produce pérdida del apetito, adelgazamiento, palidez y puede producir la muerte.

(op.cit. : 163)

Muñoz Bernand points out that rainbow sickness can be fatal unless treated by a curandero. The rainbow is particularly associated with gestation, and wounds that will not heal, and men run the risk of becoming crippled if the sickness befalls them (op.cit. : 142-3). He notes that in Ecuador (prov. del Cañar) two types of rainbow are recognised; white and red, or multi-coloured. The multi-coloured rainbow is thought to be male and therefore more dangerous to women because of its ability to
sexually penetrate them, and the white rainbow is thought to be female and more harmful to men (loc.cit.).

The rainbow is therefore clearly associated with danger, impurity (stagnant pools or 'menstruating' lakes), negative qualities of light associated with isolated, dangerous places, and murky concentrated pools held within the earth. But the rainbow also acts as a bridge between worlds, as refracted light cast through the sky:

... originándolo en los pozos profundos o lagunas, comunicados a menudo "con el centro de la tierra", el arco iris tiende un puente curvo entre las profundidades del mundo y el cielo.

(Cereceda op.cit. : 214)

Furthermore, the refracted light of the rainbow is not the same as pure solar light; rather it is shunned as semi-diabolic and is similar in quality

a esos resplandores (illa) del relámpago y del rayo, de los metales y las piedras preciosas al interior de las minas.

(Cereceda op.cit. : 216)

So why are powders which are associated with such a powerful source of malevolence used to cure and protect against the source of the harm, or even the rainbow itself? How do powders whose colours are so directly associated with negative qualities of light become curative powders?

Lira indicates that sihuayro powders are believed to act as threads which secure and bind the soul, and prevent it from either escaping the body or from robbery (loc.cit.). Santiago Fábrica instructed me to take the cebarios during the period of convalescence following the curación to protect my soul from predatory outsiders. I was told that if I spoke to strangers, or went outside, my suerte would be automatically reversed. The
cebarios were used, then, during a period of danger and vital transition between sickness and normal health. In the same way that looking at a rainbow, or trespassing near its source is considered to be inauspicious, I was to avoid contact with the outside world, and furthermore avoid treading outside until after mid-day, when the sun's power is at its highest. Money placed next to the package of cebarios was perhaps intended to reinforce the protective strength of the cebarios during this crucial time. In this way, the taboos enforced upon my movements were similar to those associated with the rainbow, and yet the cebarios would strengthen and protect both my suerte and soul during this transition period.

Quite apart from the question of the cebarios' connection with the rainbow, the question of numbers is easier to resolve, since the number twelve is a number which is potent with positive associations [see also Chapter 2,1 : (iii) c]. Aguiló describes a ritual performed by a yatiri to cure mancharisqa in which twelve siwayrus were used in conjunction with twelve q'owas, twelve pieces of llama fat and twelve strands of coloured wool (loc. cit.). The positive association of twelve is emphasised here when applied to other ritual ingredients used in the same cure. Casaverde Rojas also documents the use of chunka iskayniyoq siwayro (q. "twelve" siwayro) which were added to a despacho to provide a defence against malevolent spirits, and which were again accompanied by other ritual items (1970 : 235). As I have discussed in the context of the Orureño despacho and other mesas used in the curación, mesa ingredients, when arranged in subdivisions, or units of twelve, play an important role in the symbolic presentation of suerte.
In this context, the cebarios were to be used during the transition between sickness (mala suerte) and normal health (suerte); between imbalance and balance; between alienation from the environment and reintegration with it. The ritual had passed from midnight through to dawn during which my suerte had been unblocked and balanced. It now included a crucial phase between dawn and noon when I was to consolidate and strengthen the balance of suerte. This phase related to the period between dawn and noon, the time of strengthening of solar light to which I was not to be exposed whilst I recuperated, i.e. while I consolidated the suerte change which had taken place. The symbolic properties of the cebarios were to be activated during a time in which solar light and positive energy were on the increase. Why?

Cereceda found a similar question emerged in her study of the role of kisa, or the graded rainbow coloured threads which separate solid blocks of contrasting colour (i.e. allka a. "opposed light and shade") in Isluga textiles (1987). She found the answer in the gradation of colour embodied in the rainbow itself. The colours of the rainbow are strong and clearly distinguishable, but they also have the capacity for fusion;

Diríamos que el arcoiris es un modelo perfecto; crea la más completa unión entre cosas muy diferentes (tan distintas como un tono de otro tono) permitiendo sin embargo que cada uno conserve plenamente su identidad; seguimos percibiendo el rojo, el azul, etc. Y es, al mismo tiempo, el modelo perfecto de una transformación: toda una estructura de paso entre los rojos oscuros, de un extremo, y los violetas, del otro.

(Cereceda op.cit. : 213)

The different colours of the cebarios are stored separately on traditional medicine stalls, and are only placed together when
assembled as a curative preparation. Great care is taken to place the powders alongside each other, so that the colours only merge slightly with one another as the edges of the paper are screwed into a twist.

So why is the rainbow, with all its negative associations with ambiguous places and semi-diabolic forces, symbolised through colour, and used at the most crucial stage of the curación?

It seems valid to suggest that the cebarios, with their capacity for both independence and fusion, were intended to act as a bridge between the phases of lunar and solar light as emphasised in the structure of the curación, and to consolidate the suerte change which was symbolised in the sequence of mesas used as a transition between darkness and light. Certainly the cebarios were designed to act as a protective bridge between emerging from illness (i.e. cambio de la suerte) and a state of total normality and balance (suerte). The association with the rainbow here, with its capacity for colour fusion and gradation, and its soaring movement out of the earth into the sky, is both positive and evocative.

The cebarios reflect the rainbow in its form, power and visual impact, and in this way evoke the power and energy of the rainbow when applied in ritual. Muñoz Bernand observes that red and generally bright clothes are especially worn as a means of preventing rainbow sickness (loc. cit.). The cebarios strengthen the patient's soul not only by binding it together, but also by strengthening the patient in the transition between illness and health.

Cereceda provides further useful ethnographic data which
confirms the importance of the colour gradation associated with the rainbow in curing rituals. She describes a curing ritual referred to as *curación por el arco iris* performed by a yatiri in the Chipaya region of Bolivia in which concentric circles of coloured wool were progressively placed together throughout the night on a square of black cloth representing the illness, while invocations and libations of alcohol were made:

"Primero un blanco para avisar, lo que se quiere". Después, un azul, muy cerca aún de lo oscuro, un tímido paso hacia la luz, que regresa nuevamente a un anillo negro - "para no olvidarlo", (a la enfermedad)" para que no se enoje" - . Va avanzando así con las horas, hacia el centro, donde debe quedar siempre un círculo qhamara. Este espacio central que hace las veces de la luz y la salud, quedará cercado por los anillos, a la llegada del día. Pero, antes, al alba, se ha llegado a algún tono desaturado como ese celeste que pintó el "medico" u "otro como él" (como murmuraba mientras buscaba entre mis lápices el matiz apropiado, sin encontrarlo). A los primeros arreboles un círculo rojo, y al primer rayo del sol el amarillo.

(op. cit. : 204-205)

In the curación, the cebarios were used in a similar way to symbolise the passage from night into day and illness to health, and to strengthen this passage when taken as a medicine. Just as "black" medicines can be used to transform negative states [see I : (v) ], so may rainbow colours be used to evoke the qualities of the rainbow as a vital bridge between sickness and health. The powders contain what is powerful about the rainbow, and like the "black" medicines, this is captured through colour. Their power is also reinforced by the number of powders used, i.e. twelve.

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CHAPTER 5

RITUAL PATTERN: HOW SYMBOLS WORK

IN SUERTE
i) Introduction

The curación was designed to clear my suerte of harmful obstructions, as these had been indicated by the trancas which had appeared in the coca divination ceremony [see Chapter 3: (ii)]. These obstructions were cleared in the curación using symbolic objects contained in different mesas (see Chapter 4). The preparation, placement and activation of these mesas in a series of ceremonial stages and ritual gestures brought about a change in suerte, i.e. transforming mala suerte, indicated by obstructions, curses and the proximity of death, into suerte and renewed life.

Lira describes this type of healing ceremony as follows:

el cambio de la suerte consiste en revertir el estado de cosas, la mala suerte en buena suerte. Es el mejoramiento de una persona en todos los planos de su existencia, moral, espiritual, material, física, familiar, económica y socialmente.

(1969 : 38)

As Lira points out, the ritual methods used to bring about a change in suerte may differ according to the context in which the ritual is performed, and according to the techniques of the ritual specialist who conducts the ceremony (loc.cit.). Despite differences in style and content, the main purpose of such rituals seems to be the transformation of suerte through the manipulation of symbolic artefacts arranged in particular ways and applied in a particular pattern. Together these work to bring about an analogous change of state in the patient. The pattern of suerte symbols and artefacts used in such rituals is therefore conceptually linked to the inner state of the individual, and
when activated in ritual has the power to induce change.

In this chapter I will discuss various features of mesa symbolism, and the ways in which these mesas were applied in the curación to bring about a symbolic change in suerte.

ii) Event structure and ritual pattern in the curación

a) Event structure

The curación consisted of five distinct ritual stages which can be summarised as follows, and which are described in detail in Appendix 3. The ceremony began before midnight with the donning of ceremonial dress by Santiago Fábrica and his assistant, and was followed by the ch'alla (q. "libation") for Santiago's abogados, or spirit assistants. These were called forth in turn to assist with the preparation of ritual ingredients. Libations of diluted alcohol were made to each abogado in turn by each participant, and coca and alcohol were also distributed.

The second stage of the ceremony involved the selection and preparation of ingredients for the individual mesas. This began soon after midnight, and the libations of alcohol and distribution of coca continued as the mesas were prepared. Once the mesas had been assembled, separate ch'allas were performed for the rabbit which would eventually carry the medicines away, and also for Santiago Fábrica's two bastones, and black meteorite balas. These separate libations were made with trago blanco, i.e. pure, undiluted alcohol. Coca leaves were consulted to certify permission from Santiago's abogados to proceed.

The third stage of the curación was performed in a separate hallway, and in total darkness. Windows were blanketed so that no light could penetrate the room. Using one of his bastones,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>RITUAL ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>midnight</td>
<td>ch'allla for abogados</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>midnight → 2 a.m.</td>
<td>preparation of mesas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 a.m. → 4 a.m.</td>
<td>consultation with abogados</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 a.m. → sunrise</td>
<td>application of mesas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sunrise → noon</td>
<td>cebarios</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table F: Stages of ritual activity in the curación
Santiago called forth his abogados and a total of three spirits were brought forward for questioning by the abogados. Their complaints were heard and it was established that I had failed to acknowledge local deities in my travels and research work, and certain spirits were offended and jealous. In this way the obstructions to my suerte were explained - these spirits were literally "blocking" my path. The consultation with the abogados took place between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m.

The fourth stage of the ceremony involved a return to the room where the mesas had been prepared, and these were next applied to my body, together with the woodpecker and the rabbit. The mesas were removed from my body in a series of gestures which I shall discuss in more detail below [see (b)]. The medicines were removed in turn to the hallway and disposed of in a bag as if contaminated. This stage culminated with the cleansing of all participants with the contents of the ch'oa mesa (see Chapter 4, V) and this took place between 4 a.m. and sunrise.

After sunrise the contaminated mesas were kept aside for release by Santiago in an uninhabited area, along with the rabbit, in the belief that the animal would carry the impurities to where they could no longer harm anyone. From sunrise until noon I was to remain indoors and take the cebarios (see Chapter 4, VI) to consolidate the suerte change which had taken place.

The various stages of the curación were performed between midnight and noon, i.e. over a period of twelve hours. Santiago Fabrica was both eager to begin the curación as near to midnight as possible, and for it to be completed before sunrise. He explained that the medicines were more powerful during the hours after midnight and early morning. He was also concerned that we
should have determined a desirable location for discarding the medicines by the time the sun rose. The first half of the ceremony covered the darkest period between midnight and sunrise, while the second half covered the daylight period until noon.

The stages of the curación therefore formed a sequence of activities between midnight and noon, following the natural passage of night into day (see table F). While the curación was clearly divided into different stages of ritual activity, these were interrelated by a gradual intensification of ritual gestures and activities which culminated in the consultation between Santiago Fábrica and his abogados, in the darkness of the hallway. This was the turning point of the ceremony, as I shall now demonstrate.

b) Ritual pattern

The build-up began with the ch'alla for Santiago’s abogados in the first stage of the ceremony. The abogados consisted of a variety of saints and deities, as well as the spirits of local geographical landmarks around Santiago’s native village. The abogados were called forth in ascending order of importance, and the ch'alla concluded with a call for Santiago's special assistant, the spirit of the condor rock behind his house at Condorikina (see plate 6), and lastly for Señor Bonbiri, the patron saint of healers and diviners.

During the preparation of the mesas, libations were initially made with diluted trago, but this changed to trago blanco as soon as the mesas prepared in black cloth were assembled [see Chapter 4, II : (i)]. Trago blanco was also libated over the mesas as an assembled group, as well as the rabbit, and Santiago's bastones and balas. The consultation with the coca leaves marked the entry into the most intensive stage of
the ritual.

While up to this point, the ceremony had been conducted with assisted lighting, participants were now ordered to extinguish all sources of light and to move to the hallway which was especially darkened with blankets and cloths over the windows. Libations began a final time for Santiago's bastones and balas, and this time libations were made both rapidly and copiously, particularly for Santiago himself. As the last candle was extinguished, attention was entirely focussed on Santiago. There was a sharp switch from the visible to the audible, as only the manipulation of Santiago's baston could be heard, and the distorted murmurs and whines of the abogados who "spoke" through him.

The passage of the ritual was therefore marked by the gradual intensification of libations, in concentration, amount and regularity, the sudden shift not only in location, but also from a lit room to total darkness, and the increasing focus on Santiago and his spirit entourage. All ritual activity and gestures led up to this consultation between Santiago and his abogados, which coincided with the last hours of darkness before the return of daylight.

After the consultation, we returned to the lit room where the mesas had been prepared, and to the increase of daylight outside. Ritual activity was now focussed on the patient, and I was told to lie still while the mesas and woodpecker were placed on my head and body. A spool of red and white thread was also placed on Felicity's head, and she now adopted the role of my assistant, and was told to formally request Santiago to bring about my "revival".
The change in *suerte* state was brought about by the application and removal of the two black *mesas*, the *mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte* and the *mesa para que salgan las maldiciones*, and the breaking of black thread over patient and participants (see Chapter 4, II and III). The return to *suerte* was consolidated by the application and removal of the *mesa para el cambio de la suerte* (see Chapter 4, IV).

The placement of the *ch'oa mesa* jars on either side of me, and the rabbit in my hands, initiated the cleansing stage of the ceremony. The spool of red and white thread was removed from Felicity's head and all participants spat out the wads of chewed coca which they had accumulated throughout the ceremony. I was told to spit on both the rabbit and the woodpecker three times before they were withdrawn from my body and removed to the hallway.

The red and white thread was unwound while Santiago repeated invocations to his *abogados*, and the threads were then broken a total of twelve times over the patient and all participants. At this point I was told to lift myself up and move freely. This change in state was consolidated by the further cleansing of all participants and the immediate surroundings with the contents of the *ch'oa mesa*.

Just as the *ch'alla* for Santiago's *abogados* had led into the central part of the ceremony, the period between sunrise and noon formed an important bridge between the activities of the *curación* and normal life, and I was instructed to drink the *cebarios* as a means of both protection and reinforcement during this time (see Chapter 4, VI).

The ritual operations involved in the application of prepared *mesas* showed a reversal of activities which had taken
place previously. While the period between midnight and the consultation with Santiago's abogados had been concerned with the preparation, organisation and assembling of the mesas, and libations for their empowerment, the period following the consultation was concerned with the distribution, removal, dissolution (i.e. the opening of bundles, the breaking of threads) and disposal of mesas and artefacts. Furthermore, the former sharing and constant ingestion of both alcohol and coca contrasted now with the absence of alcohol consumption by participants, the spitting out of coca, as well as spitting on the animals, and the general cleansing of patient, participants and surroundings with the contents of the ch'oa mesa. The pattern of accompanying ritual gestures therefore followed the general pattern of ritual activities and the change in state which they described.

c) Natural pattern

The timing of ritual activities also followed a natural pattern, i.e. the transition between night and day. In this sequence, mala suerte and suerte imbalance were associated with the period of maximum darkness during which Santiago determined the causes of obstructions to my suerte. The return to suerte was associated with increasing light, during which my suerte pattern was symbolically cleared and cleansed.

Mayorga, Palacios and Samaniego, in their account of a despacho ritual (1976) similarly establish a relationship between ritual activity and time structure. In this ritual the period until midnight involved the preparation of the offering and the calling up of local deities, and this stage was marked by generally relaxed interaction amongst participants. During the
period between midnight and sunrise the offering was burned in seclusion by the ritual specialist and this corresponded to a period which they describe as "máxima sacralización" (op. cit. : 235-6) during which strict behavioural rules were observed. After sunrise the atmosphere relaxed again until the ritual specialist checked the ashes of the offering and concluded the ritual by scattering them. Both the period before midnight and after sunrise are described as "una especie de descanso en el camino ascendente de la sacralización" (loc. cit.). Ritual activity was thus also organised around the interaction of sun and moon, and the passage from night into day. Bastien also describes how the community of Kaata closely associate the passage of the sun over the mountain on which they live with the cycle of life and death:

the movement towards death is also associated with the head of the body or place where the sun dies, and the movement towards life with the legs of the body where the sun rises.

(1978 : 53)

The curación followed the natural pattern of night turning into day, so that the turning point of the ceremony, i.e. the period of darkness before dawn, which was emphasised by the blocking out of all sources of light, lent a natural axis to the structure of events. It was in this period of total darkness that Santiago, with the help of his abogados, established the cause of imbalance, and we were only allowed to return to the light of the main room once he was satisfied with the results of his enquiry.

This consultation was essential not only to the structure of the ceremony, but also for its deeper meaning and purpose. The prepared mesas could now be applied to change my suerte in a much more specific context, as a result of the communications which had taken place in the dark. The blocks in my suerte pattern
could only be removed once the causes had been identified.

The curación therefore formed a meaningful sequence of events and associated activities, and the steps in bringing about a change in suerte corresponded to the various stages of transition between darkness and sunrise. In this sequence, suerte imbalance was associated with darkness, and suerte balance with light and renewal. The ceremony therefore took its basic structure and meaning from a universal law of change.

I would suggest that this following of natural pattern enhances the meaning of such ceremonies, and, as is emphasised by Santiago Fábrica's consultation with the spirit world, provides a sense of connection with the sacred and the unknown which is both transcending and empowering. The curación acquired a natural pattern and momentum to its structure and various activities by following a universal law of change. This is graphically expressed in Hexagram 24 of the I Ching as follows:

After a time comes the turning point. The powerful light that has been banished returns. There is movement, but it is not brought about by force ... The movement is natural, arising spontaneously. For this reason the transformation of the old is discarded and the new is introduced. Both measures accord with time: therefore no harm results.

(1983: 97)

iii) The role of colour symbolism in the curación

In Part One of my thesis I have shown how different types of despachos correspond to different types of suerte and are primarily distinguished by their colour content and symbolism [see Chapter I, II]. Colour was similarly used in the curación to distinguish between the functions of the different mesas as these related to the various stages of suerte change.

As I have discussed in Chapter 4 [see II : (i)], the two
mesas containing the items designed to withdraw the obstructions from my suerte were distinguished by the black cloth in which they were wrapped. Together they contained symbols and artefacts associated with the transfer and transformation of negative states.

The black mesas were the first mesas to be libated with trago blanco during the preparation of medicines, and the libations were accompanied by intensive prayer for my life and my suerte. They were also the first mesas to be activated once Santiago had consulted with his abogados and had established the causes of obstruction to my suerte.

The black cloth in which these two mesas were wrapped was therefore associated with the agents of imbalance and negativity which had been identified in the "dark" phase and turning point of the ritual. Darkness and black cloth were therefore an appropriate means of access to these forces, and also for bringing about their removal. Again, black colour symbolism not only relates to the most harmful and dangerous agents of imbalance, but is also the most powerful means of rectifying the transforming the states caused by them [see also Chapter 4, I : (i) ; III : (iv)].

While the cover of darkness had enabled Santiago Fábrica access to his spirit abogados and the forces causing my suerte imbalance, the black cloth of the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte, and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones created the right context for the content of these mesas to work, and bring about a symbolic change.

As I have discussed in Chapter 4 [see III :(iv)], black is also associated with death and the transition of the soul. It is
extremely powerful because of the instability with which it is associated, particularly when manipulated in sorcery. Black can therefore also be used as a symbolic medium to express a transition between states, and in the curación was used to create the appropriate context for the removal of negative forces onto the untu figure contained in the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones. The breaking of black threads also symbolised the disruption of the trancas which had been blocking my suerte.

The mesa negra bundle [see Chapter 4, I : (iv)] further consolidated the action of the two black mesas as a form of ritual cleansing, and contained many ingredients which are associated with the removal of negative and invasive forces [ibid. : (iii)]. The contents of this mesa were arranged on white paper, and the bundle was placed on my body, whereas the two black mesas were held by Santiago under his arm, and only passed over me. In this way, the mesa negra bundle reinforced the action of the two "black" mesas while these were being manipulated. The mesa negra, although designed to heal negative or "black" states, also has positive associations with suerte, because of its cleansing and restoring function (ibid). In the curación, its ingredients were prepared on white paper, i.e. the colour associated with suerte. The white paper emphasised a return to suerte following the removal of the "black" mesas, and was also reinforced by the rapidly increasing daylight outside.

The mesa para el cambio de la suerte (see Chapter 4, IV) was used to reinforce the change from mala suerte to suerte, and this was symbolised within the mesa by the juxtaposition of red and white carnations and colación in equal numbers around a central sugar piece (t'ika azúcar) which represented my suerte. The
return to suerte balance was therefore emphasised through the juxtaposition of colours, even numbers, and the arrangement of ingredients on white paper.

Although this mesa was not opened at any time after it had been assembled and wrapped up, particular care was taken with the correct placement and arrangement of ingredients. This is similar to the preoccupation and arrangement of ingredients in the Orureño despacho, even though the final offering is burned. In this case, the mesa was placed on my body and removed to the hallway along with the other mesas. The internal pattern of this mesa was therefore important, and its picture of symbolic balance was intended to have a similar influence on my suerte as it was passed over me. Suerte was symbolically expressed within the mesa by the balanced juxtaposition of colours (i.e. red/white; malo/bueno) around a sugar tablet representing my suerte.

This colour theme was reiterated in the composition of the ch'oa mesa (see Chapter 4, V), and the division of red and white ingredients between two jars of liquid. This liquid was used to cleanse not only the patient, but all the participants as well as the parts of the house where the ritual had taken place. The cleansing of the patient was therefore extended to include the entire group. This was followed by the breaking of red and white threads a total of twelve times over the heads of all participants, and echoed the breaking of black threads after the removal of the "black" mesas. After the red and white threads were broken I was asked to demonstrate a return to life. The circle was almost complete.

Following this part of the ritual I was to take the cebarios (see Chapter 4, VI) as a medicinal "bridge" between the curación and my return to normal life. The bright colours of the powders
are associated with the rainbow not only for its power and form, but also for the subtle merging and transition of colours which it displays. These powders were to be taken during the long span between sunrise and noon when I was to remain secluded from the outside world.

While rainbows sometimes describe a soaring arc in the sky, they can also complete a half circle, seeming to re-enter the ground. Urton notes that rainbows are conceived of as giant serpents which rise out of underground springs and bury one of their heads in a distant spring (1981: 83). In Quechua and Aymara belief, springs form the underground channels and waterways which carry the souls of the dead to the mountain tops (uma pacha) from which they can arise to the land of the living (Bastien 1978: 47). The rainbow is therefore a perfect symbol for reconnection and re-entry into the world, and by analogy is consistent with the passage of the curación towards completion and renewal. The cebarios also completed the second half of the cycle between sunrise and noon. The number of cebarios, i.e. twelve, is one which is used to symbolise completion [see Chapter 2, I: (iii) c] and its role in mesa organisation is discussed in more detail below [see (iv), d].

In the curación, the transition from mala suerte to suerte took place through a change from mesas prepared on black cloth to mesas prepared on white paper. While black related to darkness, death, negative forces, obstructions, mala suerte and imbalance, the white mesas related to returning light, life, purity, suerte and balance, and this change was reinforced by the juxtaposition of red and white ingredients around a sugar piece in the mesa para el cambio de la suerte, and on a larger scale, in the
division of the ch'oa mesa into two jars on either side of the patient. The colour symbolism of the individual mesas therefore reinforced the change of state which the sequence of ritual activities described.

iv) **The role of numbers in the curación**

a) **Introduction**

Numbers were important to the organisation of mesa ingredients as can be seen from the analysis of mesa contents in Chapter 4. As in the despacho, mesa ingredients were either counted and placed in specific amounts [e.g. the contents of the mesa para el cambio de la suerte; see Chapter 4, IV : (ii)] or were not specifically counted [e.g. the contents of the mesa negra bundle; see I : (iii)]. Counted ingredients entered either as even numbers [e.g. the contents of the mesa para el cambio de la suerte and cebarios; see IV : (ii); VI : (ii)] or as uneven numbers [e.g. the three items of the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones; see III : (ii)]. The mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte contained combinations of both even and uneven numbers. In this section I will discuss how numbers influenced mesa function.

In Part One of my thesis I have shown how even numbers, and especially pairs, are an important ordering principle in despacho composition [see Chapter 2 : I (iii) b], and how even numbers are important symbols which express balance and stability in terms of suerte. When applied to despacho ingredients, even numbers create a pattern of balance within the offering which is enhanced by the juxtaposition of contrasting qualities and properties, and this pattern is believed to have a positive influence on suerte once the offering is activated in ritual. In the curación, numbers
were used in similar ways to express different states of suerte as these related to the various stages of the ritual and its enactment of suerte change.

b) **Numbers and arrangement of mesa ingredients**

Mesas which were associated with suerte balance contained carefully counted ingredients, which tended to be organised in specific arrangements. In the mesa para el cambio de la suerte, for example, mesa ingredients were equally divided and arranged around a central sugar tablet representing suerte [see Chapter 4, IV : (iii)]. In the ch'oa mesa, ingredients were also equally divided between two jars of liquid placed on either side of the patient. The arrangement of both mesas was emphasised through the juxtaposition of different colours.

In contrast, the mesas associated with suerte imbalance and the removal of maldiciones and obstructions to my suerte, were less distinct in their composition and arrangement. For example, the contents of the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte were carefully counted, but were not arranged in a particular pattern. This mesa also contained a mixture of even and uneven numbers; apart from the three contras negras, all other ingredients were placed as groups of six or twelve [see Chapter 4, II : (ii)]. The contents of this mesa were placed with the cross, llama fat effigy and reel of black thread of the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones, so that these two mesas were merged together.

The mesa negra bundle also lacked a specific arrangement, and the twelve different types of plants were mixed together with no apparent order. Although an even number of plant types was used, this was offset by the addition of a single dog tooth, in
much the same way as the three contras negras contrasted with the even number of all other ingredients in the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte. As I have discussed in Chapter 4 [see I: (v)], the significance of the mesa negra bundle lay in the collective strength of the plants' symbolic properties rather than in any particular organisation or arrangement of its ingredients.

It can be seen that while there was an emphasis on distinct numerical composition and arrangement in the mesas associated with suerte balance, the mesas associated with suerte imbalance were characterised by indistinct compositions, i.e. compositions of even and uneven numbers, lacking any visual order or specific arrangement.

Suerte balance was symbolised by the distribution and positioning of ingredients in clearly divided halves, and using visually contrasting colours. The mesas associated with suerte imbalance contained uneven numbers of ingredients which prevented numerical balance; the single dog-tooth in the mesa negra bundle, the three contras negras in the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte, and the cross, effigy and reel of black threads in the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones. Furthermore, mesa ingredients were placed together with no emphasis on arrangement, so that even and uneven quantities merged together. The merging of the two black mesas can be seen in strong contrast to the clear division of the ch'oa mesa into two distinct halves. The mesas associated with mala suerte and the removal of obstructions were also characterised by their lack of obvious colour; their dark, subdued, and generally indistinct tones.
c) **Uneven numbers**

Uneven numbers were particularly used in the mesas associated with mala suerte and the removal of obstructing forces in my suerte. As I have already discussed in Chapter 4 [see III: (iii)], uneven numbers are used to symbolise imbalance because they cannot form pairs. This liminality is considered to be an ambiguous and potentially harmful source of power, but which may also be used to counteract negative or harmful states, including sorcery.

As I have mentioned in (b) above, the single dog-tooth, the three contras negras, and the three items of the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones precluded any sense of numerical balance within these mesas. However, the mesa para cambiar la muerte y llevar la muerte, which, as its names suggests, was vital for reverting suerte, also contained ingredients with even numbers. Since suerte change implies a transition between a state of imbalance and a state of balance, it is perhaps appropriate that the mesa designed to effect a movement from one to the other should contain both even and uneven numbers, i.e. the types of numbers associated with both states. It is also appropriate that the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones should consist of an uneven number of items, because of its vital role in removing the causes of imbalance with its contents. Aguiló also acknowledges the power of three as an uneven number:

> a pesar de ser el 3 un número impar y por tanto de alguna manera, de mala suerte o "sajra", sirve para curar las enfermedades más temidas por los campesinos.

(1983:100)

The number three also surfaced in the ritual gestures which accompanied the suerte change. Before any of the mesas were
removed from my body, Santiago ordered me to blow on each package three times before it was removed to the hallway. I was also instructed to spit three times on both the woodpecker and the rabbit to fully transfer any remaining impurities onto these animals. The three lengths of black thread were removed from the heart of the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones and were broken a total of seven times over my body and the other participants. Seven is a number which is exclusively associated with the manipulation of special threads which are spun anti-clockwise, and which are used as a powerful cure for "reversing" illness, and for inducing it in sorcery (see Aguilo loc. cit.).

Uneven numbers were therefore also associated with the ritual gestures which accompanied the suerte change, as well as the content of mesas which were used to bring it about. Uneven numbers are thought to have a flexible and dynamic strength, and when applied to ritual ingredients are able to "tip the balance" either way, towards positive or negative. I would suggest that it is because of this inherent power that uneven numbers especially featured in the mesas used to bring about a change in suerte. Santiago Fábrica also referred to these mesas as the most powerful of all. This was also indicated by the prayers for my life which accompanied the libations with trago blanco for these mesas, and the black cloth in which both the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones were wrapped.

d) Even numbers

Even numbers, and especially the number twelve, featured in the mesas associated with a return to suerte balance. For example, the mesa para el cambio de la suerte contained twelve
colación, twelve coca leaves, and six carnations divided around the t'ika azúcar to create a balanced picture. Balance was also created by the juxtaposition of q'ollqe llinpi/q'ori llinpi and q'oa/romero, as well as the juxtaposition of red and white colours [see Chapter 4, I: (iii)].

The ch'oa mesa consisted of twenty-four maize grains and six claveles distributed between two jars of liquid, and this division was reinforced by the further distribution of equal quantities of romero and q'ollqe llinpi between the two jars [see Chapter 4, V: (iv)]. The cebarios also consisted of a total of twelve rainbow coloured powders.

In the Orureño despacho, twelve is a number which symbolises balance and unity, and when applied to key symbolic items, lends these qualities to the offering as a whole [see Chapter 2, I: (iii) c, d]. Twelve is therefore a stabilising and balancing influence on suerte, and expresses the state of equilibrium and harmony associated with it. It is not surprising, then, that the number twelve, as well as its multiples and subdivisions, should appear in mesas designed to restore suerte. In these mesas, the number twelve organised mesa ingredients into symbolically balanced patterns, and therefore helped to restore a sense of positive harmony and clarity following the suerte change.

Twelve plants also entered the mesa negra bundle which was used to reinforce the suerte change with its cleansing properties. Red and white threads were also broken a total of twelve times over the patient, participants and room in which the curación had taken place following the removal of all the mesas. Twelve cebarios were used to complete the positive effects of the curación as a whole, which itself lasted a total of twelve hours,
so completing a natural cycle between midnight and noon.

Even numbers, and especially twelve and its subdivisions, are especially associated with suerte. They were used in the curación not only to create symbolic balance through the composition and arrangement of mesa ingredients, but also to express the totality and completion of the ritual gestures and activities involved, thereby reinforcing a positive change in suerte.

e) Numbers and mesa function

Numbers were an important influence on mesa composition and function. Uneven numbers, which have the power to create change because of their inherent lack of balance, were particularly used in mesas designed to overturn and remove obstructions, or trancas, in my suerte pattern. The role of uneven numbers in these mesas was also reinforced by the use of black colour symbolism, since black is especially associated with death, negative forces, imbalanced states and transition, and created the appropriate context for access to the agents of imbalance.

Even numbers which have the power to create balance and stability were particularly used in mesas whose content was designed to restore suerte balance, and in ritual gestures which expressed the completion of suerte change. Symbolic balance was also reinforced by the use of contrasting colour symbolism, i.e. red and white threads, carnations, colación etc., representing a balance of forces.

v) Conclusion

By looking at the structure and timing of the various stages of activity in the curación, and the colours and numbers
associated with each stage, we can see a pattern emerging which helps us to understand how symbols work in suerte to describe changes in state.

The different stages of the ceremony were structured around Santiago Fábrica's consultation with his abogados in the period of maximum darkness. This formed the turning point of the ceremony, and was marked by a gradual intensification of ritual activity leading up to this phase, a change in location, and an emphasis on darkness within the room. Mesas with predominantly black colour symbolism, and containing uneven numbers, were the last to be libated before the consultation, and the first to be applied afterwards. These mesas contained symbols and artefacts which enabled the symbolic transfer of negative forces onto a miniature effigy of the patient made from llama fat. In this way, the channels, or vías, of my suerte were symbolically cleared, enabling a return to a state of balance.

After the consultation with the abogados, the ceremony was conducted in increasing daylight, and this was mirrored by the change to mesas prepared on white paper. These also contained even numbers and contrasting colour patterns which emphasised a return to balance and harmony. While the dark stage of the ritual was associated with negative obstructions, interference, and contamination, the light stage of the ceremony was associated with balance, clarity, cleansing and purification.

The content, colouring, and composition of mesa ingredients worked together so that each mesa consisted of its own identity and pattern, and its own function in relation to the stages necessary for suerte change. When applied on the patient and removed as part of a ritual sequence, the patterns contained in
the mesas, as well as their symbolic properties, were activated, and in so doing thought to bring about analogous changes of state within the patient. Furthermore, the sequence of mesas and their colour symbolism mirrored the overall pattern of the curación as a movement between darkness and light.

Suerte change was therefore brought about by the manipulation of symbols organised in different patterns, each of which expressed qualities associated with mala suerte and suerte as ideological poles. Mesas prepared in black cloth contained symbols and artefacts associated with death, negative forces, and imbalance, whereas mesas prepared on white paper contained symbols and patterns associated with balance, harmony, life and vitality.

The sequence of mesas reminded me of a book containing leaves depicting a pair of dancing figures in different positions, so that when the leaves of the book are flipped through as a sequence, an impression is given that the figures are actually dancing. Just as minute adjustments to the flow of movements are necessary for this effect, so too emphasis was placed on the correct symbolic composition and the effect of each mesa as a sequence. It can be seen that the mesas associated with suerte balance contained more visual contrast and attention to arrangement than the mesas associated with imbalance, giving an impression of not only returning life and vitality, but also clarity.

As I have described in Chapter 3, suerte is understood as a norm, and as a state of balance and harmony between the individual and the external world. This is described in the suerte symbolism of the coca divination as the channels, or vías,
of suerte being libre. When trancas appear in the suerte pattern, the channels become blocked and contaminated by the presence of external, negative forces, and the flow of suerte around the individual becomes obstructed, thereby effecting the quality of the individual's life, both materially and spiritually. Consequently this gives rise to mala suerte and imbalance. Change in suerte is therefore dependent upon the removal of these obstructions so that positive energy may flow freely in the channels, or vías of suerte, thus sustaining and nourishing the individual, and so that balance and harmony is restored.

This process was described in the curación by a combination of symbolic patterns and gestures which described unblocking, cleansing, balancing and completion. The symbolic content and organisation of each individual mesa played an important role in describing the various stages of transition between mala suerte and suerte. They also assisted the process of change through their different symbolic properties and associations. The sense of sequence, and movement towards change, was reinforced by the overall structure of the ceremony and its component stages, and the natural transition between night and day, darkness and light which it followed.
CONCLUSION

In Part One of this thesis I have shown how the content of the despacho, and its arrangement as a pattern and ordered whole, is a vital means of communication with influential forces in nature and the cosmos. The choice of symbols and their placement in the despacho forms a symbolic language which describes what is meaningful about suerte and what is desirable in the cosmos. The resulting picture reflects the order and stability necessary for suerte to come about.

I have also suggested that the process of using symbols to create a picture of wholeness is a positive form of projection which is not only thought to resonate in the cosmos, but also has therapeutic value in that powerful images are being brought to consciousness, and positive states of harmony and well-being are being visualised.

The communicative power of the despacho lies in the symbolic arrangement of its contents. Key symbolic items are especially counted and positioned within the despacho so that a direct link is made between content and form. The use of even numbers, and especially pairs, creates the balance and proportion which is thought necessary for maintaining suerte. Symbolic balance is also created within the offering by the juxtaposition of contrasting properties (e.g. sweet / bitter; gold / silver) and forms (e.g. round / square).

Key images referred to as misterios mean that different types of suerte may be identified, and these play a vital role in
specifying the context and intention of the offering as these relate to the individual's circumstances and wishes. The misterios are also instrumental in conveying the healing intention of the offering, since images are chosen which best describe the influences and forms of reinforcements needed to maintain suerte and keep it whole for the individual. The number twelve, which is associated with unity and wholeness, is used to order key symbolic items such as the misterios, so that their power is reinforced.

The imagery and colour symbolism of the different despacho types enable differentiation between varying forms of suerte and the deities which govern them, so that a need for communication with either Pachamama or Tío is specified.

The abundant imagery and forms presented within the despacho are brought together by the metaphor of tierra mikhuy. Since all despacho ingredients represent food for the earth, the offering has symbolic unity. This unity is reinforced structurally by the plato of llama wool on which the ingredients are placed, and is echoed by other symbolic items such as the knives and forks in the chiuchi mesa, and the root trinchadora, 'para que se trinchen o se cumplan los deseos'. In this way all items within the offering are integrated, both structurally and symbolically, in a way that unifies the intention of the offering and intensifies its meaning.

Features of composition, arrangement and presentation are therefore interrelated to form an ordered and unified whole, (i.e. la mesa completa) which is meaningful in terms of the holistic nature of suerte and how it is thought to arise.

While on the one hand the despacho works to cultivate
material prosperity, e.g. in the mines or in commercial ventures, the symbolic picture created within the despacho describes an ideal state, concerned with qualities of balance, harmony and proportion. Suerte may only come about as a result of a holistic basis to the relationship between man and his living world. The despacho ensures that a reciprocal nourishing flow is established between man and the cosmos and reflects the human endeavour necessary to ensure that the natural rhythms of exchange between man and nature are followed and fulfilled.

Not only is the despacho a form of payment to the earth as a source of material and spiritual life support, it is also a form of communication designed to reach Pachamama and Tío who are thought to consume the offering as it burns. The ritual affirmation of balance and well-being is in itself empowering, but even more so since it is believed to reach key channels to sources of energy in the earth. Since the gods are also hungry and need to eat, the offering of the despacho at peak times of the earth's productive cycle implies Andean man's shared responsibility with his gods in maintaining environmental balance and harmony in the cosmos as a whole.

The symbolic language of the despacho, as well as describing what is important about suerte also, I believe, opens up an area of awareness that lies at the disposal of its imagery. The despacho embraces the potential for life's harvest and strives to contribute to its source. The despacho ritual is a meaningful experience which constantly presses man's needs and potential towards consciousness, while at the same time contributing to a deeply creative process. The symbolic language of the despacho is a rich medium for communication with forces at work in the cosmos.
In Part Two of this thesis I have shown how the content and symbolic arrangement of six mesas were used in a curing ceremony to bring about a transition from mala suerte (i.e. a state of imbalance and conflict) to suerte (i.e. a state of balance and harmony). The use of mesas in this ceremony shows how symbolic language may also be manipulated in ritual to bring about changes in suerte, and to rectify imbalances which arise from disturbances in man's relationship with the cosmos.

In Chapter 3 I have shown how a person's suerte may be evaluated and diagnosed in coca divination. Here suerte is interpreted as unobstructed flow in vías or channels which are indicated by leaves well spaced from each other and which form a clear, ordered pattern. Mala suerte is identified by disruptions or blockages in this spatial map and is indicated by leaves crossing each other and piling up, cluttering this picture and pointing to disorder and conflict.

Suerte is thought to be restored by symbolically clearing the suerte channels by eliminating the obstructions which impede the flow of suerte in them. Once the blockages are removed, suerte is thought to flow freely, so a sense of order and harmony is restored. In the case of this particular curing ceremony the agents of imbalance were identified by a ritual specialist with the aid of spirit "lawyers" in a ritual trial which took place at the peak of the ritual ceremony.

Blockages and conflicts which impede the course of an individual's life can therefore be cleared by rituals which reverse the process. Healing consists of unknotting and smoothing out tangles that have arisen through man's dealings with the forces of nature and the cosmos. Suerte therefore not only gives rise to prosperity and
well-being when things are going well, but is a stable norm which Andean man has to strive to maintain.

In the ceremony analysed in this thesis, the healing of suerte took place through a sequence of symbolic patterns. These were applied as a series of six mesas which were placed on the patient and later removed. The symbolic properties and composition of each mesa's contents described a stage in the unravelling process.

Whereas mesas wrapped in black cloth contained odd numbers of ingredients and objects associated with negative forces, mala suerte, obstructions, death, imbalance, impurity and transformation, mesas prepared on white paper contained contrasting colours, paired ingredients, even numbers and objects associated with life, vitality, purity, and a balance of forces. The contents of these mesas were also arranged in patterns which represented balance and stability. The gradual removal of these mesas was accompanied by gestures which described unblocking, cleansing, balance and completion, thus reinforcing the healing process.

The transition from mesas associated with darkness and imbalance, to mesas containing patterns representing stability and order was further reinforced by their application on the patient just before sunrise, as the night gave way to daylight, and also as part of a broader sequence of ritual events taking place between midnight and noon.

Suerte therefore means far more than material prosperity although the elaborate displays of Orureño despachos and their paraphernalia in the traditional medicine markets indicates a considerable community investment in ritual offerings of this type. Suerte is entirely linked to forces which govern the course of human life and is a potential way of being, arising from the close
relationship between man and nature. **Suerte**, similar to the Taoist view, demands that Andean man maintains a steady equilibrium with the forces that influence and sustain him. Well-being and prosperity only come from complying with nature's cycles and patterns, while illness, deprivation and misfortune arise when there is a departure from nature's way. The careful structuring of the curing ceremony following the transition from night to day indicates the importance of following natural patterns.

The symbolic language of the despacho and the mesas used in the curing ceremony is a rich form of communication which enables a natural pattern of harmony to re-establish itself when any form of disruption occurs in the cosmos. While the despacho is largely a preventative measure against such an occurrence, the imbalance caused by such conflicts and which manifest as mala suerte in an individual's life can be rectified using symbolic language which describes the shifts in pattern necessary for change. This symbolic language, as I have shown in Part One of the thesis, enables thoughts and wishes to be expressed as well as specific states.

The symbolic language used to describe **suerte** also shows us how Andean healing is concerned with fulfilling life's creative potential and bringing the individual towards completion. This is achieved by symbolically reforming and unifying aspects of life which have become deficient, disassociated, imbalanced or in conflict. Since **suerte** is closely associated with the gods of nature and forces which support life, the use of symbolic language in the despacho and in the healing of individuals is a form of positive interchange which is thought to have positive consequences in the cosmos, creating access to greater potential and unity. I believe that access to a language for wholeness is deeply
beneficial for those who feel depleted and in need, and that the ritual use of symbolic language has a healing power which is meaningful in the contexts and patterns of life which it describes.
APPENDIX 1: APPROXIMATE COST OF VISIT TO THE VÍBORA SHRINE
AT CHIRIPUJYO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>MIN. (sb.)</th>
<th>MAX. (sb.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return bus fare to Chiripujyo</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Despacho</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>5100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trago</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x cigarettes</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cost of visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>3360</strong></td>
<td><strong>7460</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Excluding church costs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incense</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candles</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total church costs</strong></td>
<td><strong>700</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total cost of visit**

(Excluding church costs)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3360 + 700</strong></td>
<td><strong>4060</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Excluding church costs)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>7460 + 700</strong></td>
<td><strong>8160</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1984 US$ = sb. 2000**
APPENDIX 2: THE COCA DIVINATION CEREMONY

i) Introduction

Appendices 2 and 3 describe my experiences with a Bolivian yatiri (a. "one who knows") called Santiago Fábrica from the village of Condorikiña, approximately 10 kms. south east of Huanuni (Dept. Oruro). The first time I met him he performed a coca divination for me, and this was subsequently followed by a curing ceremony which took place in La Paz two months later.

Both meetings took place on the basis of personal consultations. My main reason for meeting Santiago Fábrica was for purposes of an interview, to find out more about the arrangements of ritual offerings such as the despacho, and the techniques employed by a ritual specialist in preparing them. When I first arrived at the village with Andreas Achacolla, my translator, I learnt that Santiago was still not back from a trip to Llallagua. However, I was invited through to the main house when he returned home much later, at approximately 11 p.m. I took gifts of coca and trago with me.

Santiago Fábrica was seated and waiting. He rose from his perch on the end of a narrow bed and squeezed himself round a small table to greet me. He took both my hands and beckoned to me to sit by him at the table where there was candle light. The rest of the room was dark apart from a small circle of light given off by a kerosene lantern on the wall, which wavered over the forms of sleeping figures, bundled under blankets on the bed.

Santiago Fábrica is a small wiry man, of middle age. His piercing eyes make him look younger when he smiles or raises
his eyebrows in concentration. He has a still presence and
thoughtful expression, and his appearance was made rather
eccentric by a pointed leather hat with a wide brim which cast
most of his face in shadow.

After an initial conversation, Santiago Fabrica asked me
what I wished to consult the coca leaves for. I was interested to
see how this would be performed so I asked him to consult them
for my suerte, which he agreed to do. We served some trago. I had
brought along a small wooden libation bowl which Santiago
Fabrica took a great liking to, and he decided we should serve
trago from this. He asked his wife, Fleurelia, to dilute the
trago first, and then began to take some coca from a small inkuñá
(q. "small carrying cloth").

ii) The coca divination

Santiago began to arrange the leaves on the table before
him. Also on the table lay a talega, a small pocket sized bag,
which contained two silver bastones with intricate working on
their handles. There were also two perfectly rounded black balas,
meteorite stones, approximately 5 cms. in diameter, and these
were placed near the candle.

Coca leaves are slightly silvery and lighter in colour on
one side. I was told that if they fell with their silvery side
facing upwards, this indicated mala suerte, whereas if the leaves
fell with their green side upwards this indicated suerte. He also
explained that if the leaves fell separately this was a good
sign, but if they all piled up, or if certain leaves crossed each
other, this was a sign of problems.

I was asked to place either two coins or banknotes on the
table with the coca. The value of the coin was unimportant, but
Figure 1: Arrangement of artefacts used on ritual mesa in the coca divination ceremony.
Santiago suggested I placed banknotes instead of coins since they were more like the leaves themselves. This was to prevent the coca from becoming "celoso", i.e. the money was a form of ritual homage to the leaves. Santiago put the coca I had given him in to his inkuña and instructed me to blow on the folded cloth three times before he re-opened it to select particular leaves for the reading. He then crossed one of the balas over the inkuña in the form of a cross, and then blew on the inkuña twice himself.

Santiago next placed the talega containing the two bastones on the inkuña. He then made the sign of the cross with his hand over the inkuña and kissed it. Trago was taken firstly by Santiago, then by myself. The two banknotes were then folded and placed to the right and left at the top of the table, which now became a ritual mesa (see figure 1). The talega and bastones were then removed together with the two black balas to a separate side table.

Santiago took his time to select the leaves. He chose two distinctly large leaves and made two small nicks in either side of each leaf. These were to represent me. He then chose a smaller leaf to which he did the same, and this was to represent my suerte. Twelve leaves were counted out in all, and included a shrivelled leaf and one that was bent double. The rest were put away in the inkuña.

Santiago crossed the cloth with his hand before raising his hand and gently releasing the leaves from his grasp. They spiralled down lightly, falling this way and that. As the leaves fell, Santiago muttered "suerte, suerte, suerte". His hand was steady and his gaze extremely concentrated as he watched the leaves fall. He considered the pattern the leaves had made for
some time before commenting.

One of the leaves representing me pointed to the suerte leaf but crossed it at the base. He told me that I wished to "agarrar suerte" but that there was something in the way. This was interpreted from the way the leaves had fallen. The other leaf which represented me was piled up with the others. Santiago explained that my suerte was generally quite clear, but something was still in the way. He suggested that I had jealous colleagues or people in my own country who were cursing me. He pointed out the two areas where the leaves crossed and suggested that this involved two people with "envidia".

Santiago threw the leaves five times and the same pattern emerged. He continued to be concerned by the maldiciones and envidia which were represented in the leaves. He said that it would delay my work although I had good plans and opportunities ahead of me. He seemed confused about the identity of the people causing maldiciones but suggested they were fellow country men or women who were linked to me in some way. It should be added that Santiago had no prior knowledge of my background or circumstances, and his comments were offered with no prompting by me.

Santiago threw the leaves again, this time for viaje. Some of the leaves were picked out and put to one side so that the leaves pertinent to this reading were left. Santiago told me that I had been on two long journeys recently, one by myself, and another with four people. The journey I had undertaken alone had gone well, but the one with four people had not. This did not make sense to me - I had been on so many trips during my fieldwork that none stood out as a particular success or failure,
let alone because of the company I was, or was not with. Santiago also commented that the suerte for viaje seemed to be very good, and for all of my time in Bolivia. He still seemed concerned about the influence of a group of people, but otherwise seemed quite surprised that my suerte was so relatively clear.

I asked Santiago if he could predict future events as well as the present and immediate future, and he replied that he could, and began to cast the leaves again. They fell separately, indicating that all would be well, as the suerte leaf had fallen near to a leaf representing me. He commented that my journey back would be safe and the reunion with my family quite normal.

Santiago threw the leaves again, and this time, the two leaves representing me were crossed, and pointed at the shrivelled leaf which represented "death". One of my "subject" leaves was further crossed by a leaf representing "family", and the sides of my other "subject" leaf were flanked by two smaller leaves lying parallel. Santiago explained that this reading referred to the next ten years, during which he foresaw "una desgracia grande". He explained that it implied death for me or one of my family, and that there were two children involved, one of whom was also marked by the "death" leaf. Santiago asked me if I had children, and if I had any in my own country. My answers seemed to confuse him. He consulted the leaves to clarify the situation.

The following reading seemed to confirm that a future crisis lay in store for me. This time the "death" leaf was clearly associated with myself and one other family member, and also included a child. Since the leaf representing "viaje" lay quite near, Santiago suggested that it involved an accident. I felt the
most logical response was to ask what he felt could be done to alter the circumstances he had predicted. He replied, "hay salvación, pero tenemos que curarle señorita, primero para ahora, después para limpiar la via".

He explained that the path between the coca leaves is that which links the leaves together and is referred to as la via. If the leaves fall separately, this path is considered libre. Large gaps between the leaves therefore indicate that "la via de la suerte está limpia". If the pathway is obstructed, the obstacles causing the obstruction need to be removed. Santiago referred to this process as "cleaning the pathways". Santiago explained that I would need to assist a two night curing ceremony. One night would involve clearing my suerte pathways and the other night would be to bring about my "salvación". He specified that the following ingredients would be required:

a) mesa negra (x 1 complete with foetus)
b) llallagua (a type of maize, x 3 dozen)
c) kuti (a type of maize, x 3 dozen)
d) colación
e) t'ika azúcar (plain sugar tablet x 1)
f) q'oa
g) claveles rojos/claveles blancos
h) hilo rojo/hilo blanco
i) tanta wawa de Todos Santos (x 1)
j) hilo negro
k) trapo negro (belonging to someone other than myself)
l) dientes de zorro, gato, perro (x 3)
m) yaka yaka (q "woodpecker", live x 3)
n) conejo del campo (live x 1)
o) q'ollqe llinpi/q'ori llinpi

p) Coca and alcohol (quantity at my discretion)

Further trago was served, and we began to discuss the practicalities of arranging the ceremony. I was intrigued by the list of items Santiago had prescribed, and was very eager to see how they would be used, particularly since a context had been raised for which I had a natural reason to participate. I agreed to going ahead with the ceremony, but first asked Andreas to convey to Santiago, in Aymara, that I did not wish any maldiciones to be either returned, or inflicted on other people on my behalf. At this, Santiago turned round and struggled vehemently in Spanish to make the following statement:

"Yo sé como, pero no me gusta. No me conviene. ¿De que me va a servir si yo hago estas cosas? Por eso no prefiero."

We went on to discuss how the list of items could be acquired. Andreas offered to arrange for the capture of the birds and rabbit, and also offered to obtain the other medicines from a stall-owner he knew personally in Huanuni. This proved to be very helpful, as later enquiries I made about these items to regular informants in Oruro aroused suspicion, and I was told that only "los que saben curar" were allowed to use and handle such ingredients.

Once a date had been arranged, and further details discussed, further trago was served and Santiago invited me to chew coca with him. He treated me with warmth and formality, and seemed to be pleased with the company. After a quiet pause during which coca was distributed and solemnly chewed, Santiago and Andreas began to discuss village matters. Since this developed into a heated discussion, I formally took my leave, thanked Santiago, and made my way back to a nearby house where sleeping arrangements had been made.
APPENDIX 3: THE CURING CEREMONY

i) The second coca divination ceremony

Santiago Fábrica arrived at our flat at 7 p.m., accompanied by his wife Fleurelia, and Andreas. It should be pointed out that two months had passed since I had met Santiago in Condorikiña, and the curación had been postponed twice since this time due to his prolonged absences from home. I had not been hopeful that there would be time to go through with the ceremony before I left Bolivia. In my last week, Andreas called me in La paz to confirm that Santiago had agreed to come through to perform the ceremony in La Paz, and that they would arrive the following evening.

In the meantime, Andreas had managed to obtain most of the items required for the curación, and had even managed to trap both a rabbit and a woodpecker. While the rabbit had thrived in captivity, the bird had died soon after being caught, and had been stuffed by Andreas. Santiago had finally agreed that the one bird would be sufficient, instead of the three previously asked for.

After a shared meal, Santiago began to prepare for the ceremony, and firstly wished to perform a second coca divination. The procedure was very much the same as the first time [see Appendix 2: (ii)], except that this time, libations of trago were made to the left and right hand side of the mesa for Santiago's abogado. The abogado, he explained, was his spirit counterpart who assists him in divination and ritual ceremonies, especially when Santiago is officiating away from his native village.

Again I was asked to blow on the coca leaves before the
divination began. Santiago explained that this would make the reading clearer. Santiago crossed the *inkuña* containing the coca and then kissed it before selecting the leaves which were to be used.

Santiago firstly read the leaves for my recent past, but found nothing particular to comment on. At one point he asked if I had any difficulty walking, and I replied that I did not. When Santiago consulted the leaves about future events, he again found that my "subject" leaves were surrounded by leaves indicating *mala suerte* and *maldiciones*. He intimated that they were attributable to someone nearby, because of the close proximity of the leaves. He said that everything would be later clarified when he consulted with his *abogados*. The *curación* was to last for one night only, and Santiago seemed to think that this would be sufficient to free me of the *maldiciones*. Neither of us had the time available anyway to extend the ceremony over a longer period. Soon before midnight, Santiago and Andreas put on finely woven *mantas*, which marked the beginning of more formal proceedings. This time I was accompanied by my field companion, Felicity Nock. Santiago had especially requested that other "socios" should be present. Felicity and I sat opposite Santiago, Fleurelia and Andreas, who again assisted with translation and the various preparations which followed.

ii) Ch'alla for Santiago's *abogados*

We supplied Santiago with generous quantities of coca and *trago* from which he had abstained during the coca divination ceremony. At the centre of the *mesa* around which we were gathered lay the *taleqa* containing the two *bastones* which had been present at the *mesa* of the first coca divination. The *bastones* were
wrapped in white cloth, and remained concealed until later on in
the proceedings. A bowl of coca was placed to the left of the
mesa, and a chuspa (q. "small bag for containing coca") placed to
the right next to the supply of trago.

Santiago took some trago and sprinkled it over the talega.
This libation was made for Santa Bárbara and Santo Domingo who
Santiago referred to as his "milagros". Santa Bárbara is the
female counterpart of St. James. According to European legend she
was killed by her pagan father when she refused to renounce her
faith. In retribution her father was struck down and killed by a
lightning bolt. Until the 18th century and recently in the Andes,
church bells were rung in the belief that they would dissipate
thunderstorms. Her feast day (December 4th) falls at the start of
the maximum thunderstorm activity in the central Andes (Gade 1983:
770-788). Her association with thunder and Santiago means that
she is also identified as an ally to shamans and healers (see
Chapter 3, I).

Coca was distributed to Fleurelia, Felicity and myself from
the chuspa (Andreas abstained from both coca and alcohol). The
chuspa was subsequently replenished from the bowl of coca on the
left of the mesa. Santiago and Fleurelia kept their supplies of
coca in a chuspa and small inkuña which they alternately
exchanged between themselves throughout the ceremony each time
coca was distributed.

The mesa was next libated, and coca distributed, for
Santiago's spirit assistant. Santiago identified this as the
spirit of the condor rock at Condorikiña, which is a vast outcrop
of rock like a large fin on the hill behind Santiago's house (see
plate 6). When I had first visited the village, Santiago's son
had explained to me, "el condor dormía antes, pero ya no. Ya está despierto". Santiago had also explained that he would call upon the spirit of the rock to assist him, but that he did not derive his power from the rock. The mesa was then libated for the Virgin of Copocabana, whose sanctuary is situated also on a hill above the lakeside at Copocabana. In this way, male and female assistants were paired and called up separately.

Santiago was eager to keep within the scheduled timing for the curación. It was still before midnight and this reassured him. The main part of the curación would take place from midnight onwards until sunrise, during the early hours of the morning when he said the medicines would be most powerful. He asked where the medicines might be disposed of in La Paz, and if there was a clear open space where no one would risk stumbling across the medicines. He stipulated that after the ceremony the medicines should be discarded in the direction of the rising sun. Santiago decided it would be too risky to discard the medicines in La Paz, and that it would be better to release the medicines along with the rabbit on their return journey between Oruro and Huanuni.

The chuspa was again replenished, and more coca was distributed to everyone. Santiago next called upon the local hill spirits located around Condorikina which he called up by name, "Cala Awaru, Cala Sayagala, Chinkurani Cumbre Awaru ... (cala a. "rock" ; Awaru a. "serpent"). Santiago made a further libation for the condor rock in this round, to further enlisted help in preparing the medicines.

Santiago next included the rabbit and woodpecker in the ch'alla. The rabbit was kept in a basket to one side of the mesa, and the bird placed on top of a large bundle containing all the
ritual medicines. Next to these Santiago placed the red and white carnations, and the black cloth which we had provided.

Santiago picked up the bird by its talons and demonstrated how the medicines would be hung around the bird's neck. He then passed the bird over Andreas' body making the sign of the cross, and pressed the beak to his mouth, screaming "yargh! yargh! yargh!". Andreas was instructed to blow on the bird. Santiago then explained that the bird would normally be released in the campo carrying the maldiciones with it. In this case, he explained that the bird would be used to remove the maldiciones, but the rabbit would be used as the carrier. When I asked why a woodpecker is chosen for this task, Santiago explained that the bird had a big beak and made a strong noise. He told us that the feathers of this bird are kept as amulets to protect the carrier from maldiciones. The bird is presumably thought to give this protection, and is therefore considered a suitable carrier of items used to extract any contamination from a cursed victim.

Santiago lastly libated the mesa for Señor Santiago de Bombori, the patron saint of healers and diviners. He is closely associated with the power of meteorological forces from which shamanistic power is thought to be derived. The identification of the Inca God of thunder, Illapa, with Santiago began early in the colonial period, and the association was reinforced by the noise of cannon, firearms and thundering hooves which the Spanish brought with them. As Gade points out:

\[
\text{syncretism of the lightning cult was favoured by the fact that in the medieval Spanish tradition, Santiago, son of Thunder, was an aggressive deity with twinborn relationships whose July feast day corresponded to an Inca one. (1979 : 785)}
\]
The feast day of Santiago is especially celebrated at the shrine of Señor Santiago de Bombori, or Tatabombori, which takes place at Macha in the Department of Potosi on July 25th. Shamans and diviners gather at the shrine to acknowledge the source of their curing powers and to heal those who come to be cured (see also Gade op. cit. : 780-1). Santiago Fábica explained that of all the saints, Señor Bombori was the most "milagroso", and that the libation had been performed so that "todo sea conforme con los remedios".

Santiago also explained that he was personally protected by his spirit assistants, or abogados, for whom this sequence of libations had been performed. While Señor Bombori was his patron saint, the condor rock at Condorikiña was most closely allied to Santiago as his personal assistant, guide and protector. Santiago told us that he regularly offered the condor rock a plato blanco (mesa blanca?), and on special occasions he would sacrifice a white sheep or llama, and the blood of the animal would be offered at the base of the rock. The offering had to be "sin sal - comida blanca no más, el cerro nunca come sal". These ceremonies were vital to Santiago for his work. He explained that if he did not make offerings to the rock, "puede caer desgracia, se come como una victíma".

iii) Preparation of the mesas

The bowl of coca was put to one side, and a bundle containing the purchased items which Santiago had prescribed was placed on the table. When opened the bundle contained various packages: a packet containing two different types of maize (kuti and llallagua), another package containing the plant q'oa, untu (q. "llama fat") and carne de zorro, and another bundle
containing the jaws of a cat, dog and fox. Some of these items had been brought along by Santiago and had not featured on the list of prescribed items which were now also placed on the table. We had all the ingredients necessary apart from a tanta wawa (q. "bread baby"; given as ritual food for the souls of the dead at Todos Santos) and incense which Santiago later required.

On a piece of white paper Santiago began to select items from the mesa negra; ch'aski marquerita, churcu, estrella de mar, kata, kuti waynutu, millu, quina quina, retama, sajcha, tojillo, waji, wayruro. These were not placed in any particular arrangement. Santiago extracted one tooth from the dog jaw and placed it amongst these selected ingredients. The package was then folded and put to one side.

Santiago next split the black cloth we had provided into two squares. Initially Santiago had advised that it should not be my own cloth, but since Andreas had not brought any along Felicity and I were asked to find a substitute. Santiago first began to select items for the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte. In this bundle were placed three contras negras, six teeth of dark maize, six ch'aski marquerita, and two teeth each of a dog, cat and fox, which were extracted from the bundle of jaws which Santiago had brought with him. Twelve coca seeds were then carefully extracted from the supply of coca and placed with the other items. They were not arranged in a particular way, and once the mesa was complete, Santiago folded it and tied it into a bundle.

Santiago explained that the numbers six and twelve were límites and the usual and maximum number of ingredients used for a mesa. Anything less than six he described as mala raya. When
counting aloud he had said "cinco no es remedio, falta pues, seis ...
completo es pues". I asked him which numbers were used in sorcery and he replied, "tres, cinco, siete puede ser".

On another piece of white paper Santiago began to spread out a small amount of q'oa as a bed. This mesa was assembled in much the same way as a small despacho. At the centre of the q'oa he placed a plain, square sugar tablet which he referred to as t'ika azúcar (q./sp."flower sugar"). Six coca leaves were next chosen and placed on either side of the tablet in equal bands. Santiago then selected six red and six white balls of colación which were also divided according to colour on either side of the sugar tablet. Initially Santiago placed only six, but then after some thought made the number up to twelve. The contents of this mesa were then sprinkled with q'ollqe llinpi, which he explained was "para castigos", and romero which he substituted instead of incense. He referred to this bundle as mesa para el cambio de la suerte, and explained that the red colación represented "malo", and the white colación, "bueno".

Santiago next began to prepare a mesa on the other square of black cloth. He took out the piece of llama fat, and moulded it into the shape of a miniature human figure, about 5 cms. in height. He placed the figure to the left of the bundle, and to the right of the figure placed a miniature cross, approximately 6 cms. high, which he delicately folded from a palm leaf. He then measured out three armlengths of black thread from a spool, and wound these on to a separate reel which he placed next to the cross and the figure. The other "black" bundle, the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte, was placed next to these three items, and everything was folded up together to make one
compact bundle. Santiago referred to this as the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones.

Up until this point we had been libating each mesa as it had been prepared with diluted trago. Santiago now placed the black bundle containing the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones at the centre of the mesa and asked us all to libate it in turn with trago blanco, i.e. pure undiluted trago. I questioned this sudden change and Santiago explained, "porque estamos pidiendo nuestra vida". I was told to drink some trago and to repeat the following prayer as I libated the mesas, "para salvarme de las maldiciones, de los malos ánimos, para la suerte, en nombre de la Gwennie, me salva ...". Felicity was instructed to do the same, and Fleurelia and Santiago also libated the mesas, with similar prayers on my behalf. We all were given more coca, "para nuestra vida, para nuestra suerte". We had all been chewing coca continuously throughout the ch'alla for Santiago's abogados and the preparation of the mesas.

Santiago explained that these mesas were particularly powerful since they contained "todas cosas negras" which are associated with maldiciones. The cross represented death, and the untu figure was meant to depict me. Together these elements represented cambio and justicia. It was through these mesas that my suerte would be altered. Like the other mesas, this was put to one side.

Santiago now asked for more white paper, and we supplied newspaper which he thought would be adequate. He divided the paper into two, and on the first piece of paper placed twelve yellow teeth of maize and three red carnations. This was
sprinkled with q'ori llinpi. On the second piece of paper he placed twelve white maize teeth, three white carnations and q'ollqe llinpi. Santiago commented that usually copal and incense would be added, but since we had neither, he would use romero instead. The carnations were temporarily set aside from both piles and the contents of each pile then ground up separately. I was asked to fetch two large jars of water. The ground contents of each pile were then added to these jars, together with their respective coloured carnations. Santiago referred to both piles as belonging to the same mesa, which he called ch'oa blanca, or ch'oa mesa. He explained that the mesa was for "cleansing". The mesa was thus divided between two jars, one containing white maize and white carnations, and the other containing red maize and red carnations.

Santiago lastly produced a packet of cebarios. Cebarios are a mixture of twelve different rainbow-coloured powders which are obtainable from traditional medicine stalls. They are generally taken as an infusion for soul-loss. Santiago told me that I had to drink the cebarios the following day, before noon. I was also told to place a small sum of money, equivalent to what I would spend the next day on food, next to the cebarios until I drank them. I therefore placed one hundred pesos by the package, for which I would have bought a small piece of bread. The amount of money did not really matter. Santiago also gave me strict instructions not to go out into the street until after noon, at the very earliest. Also, on no account was I talk to any strangers. He said that there might be an attempt to cast more maldiciones on me and that I would not be aware of the source. If this happened, then all the work of the curación would be undone.
The following day was intended as a recovery period in isolation from forces at large to which my soul would be vulnerable. The cebarios were intended to strengthen and protect me. We were also to ask for help from Pachamama, so that she would assist with the curación, and protect me afterwards. Santiago then wound some red and white thread onto a separate reel, and this was placed by the packet of cebarios. The preparation of mesas was now complete.

We were next instructed to libate the rabbit and the woodpecker, which were brought up onto the table so that we could all make our libations. The rabbit was not disturbed and libations were made around the basket in which it was kept. Santiago prayed that the rabbit would successfully carry away the maldades and take them far into the campo where they would not cause harm.

All the mesas were now placed together at the centre of the table, and were wrapped up in newspaper. The surplus medicines which had not been used were tidied away. Further coca was distributed to all present. Santiago now revealed the bastones which had been wrapped in white cloth and kept in his taleqa up until this point. One of the bastones was very old and worn and had silver discs hanging from the end. It reminded me of a jester's rattle, and it made a harsh tinkling sound when the discs were even slightly moved. The other was plain with less intricate working on the handles. Santiago laid them both out very carefully, and placed them on the mesa with one of the black meteorite balas, and a small amount of copal which he had discovered. He also placed the money which had been contributed during the coca divination next to these items. Fleurelia and Santiago swopped their inkuña and chuspa a further time and took
some more coca from the bowl.

Santiago libated the package containing the prepared mesas, the bastones and balas with trago blanco. He explained that he was asking permission from the abogados to begin. Both Felicity and myself were asked to drop a single coca leaf on the mesa. Both the leaves fell the same side up, and Santiago took this as a favourable sign that all was well to proceed.

It was now well after 2 a.m. The preparation of the mesas had been a slow process, and infinite care had been taken by Santiago to assemble each mesa correctly, and the libations had been thorough and deliberate each time. The next stage of the ceremony was to take place in the hallway of the house. Santiago instructed us to leave the room where we had gathered, to close the door and turn off the lights. We took only a lit candle through to the hallway. Santiago was displeased with the amount of light penetrating in the hallway, and requested that any window shedding light into the area should be covered with blankets so that the hall would be totally dark. Santiago was about to consult with the abogados, and for this reason total darkness was necessary.

iv) Consultation with Santiago's abogados

Once all the windows had been covered with cloth so that no light could penetrate, we all seated ourselves in a semicircle on the floor. Santiago sat slightly apart from us to the left. There was a general air of expectancy and hush, and it was evident that quiet was necessary. Santiago became more formal and remote. We still had a candle lit at the centre of the group, and with the help of this Santiago laid out the bastones and balas before him.
Copious amounts of *trago* were served out and libated by everyone in turn, not least by Santiago, who suddenly began to drink a great deal, and very rapidly. The *trago* was passed around several times. Andreas whispered to me in great excitement that the *abogados* would arrive banging on the roof and walls! The candle was eventually blown out, and total darkness descended. It was so dark, I could barely distinguish the human forms beside me.

Santiago had evidently picked up the *baston* with the silver discs, as a faint tinkling could be heard. It suddenly became louder and more urgent sounding, and reached little waves of crescendo. From the way the sound of the discs reverberated, I could sense that Santiago was shaking the stick in the air above his head. His breathing suddenly became very heavy and loud, and the shaking sound of discs became acute, almost frenzied.

Santiago began to speak in words that I could not distinguish — his voice sounded very peculiar and distorted, like a warped record. As soon as he spoke, Andreas and Fleurelia began shouting questions at him in an extremely aggressive fashion, stamping their feet on the floor. Another type of "voice" came in, higher, whining and pleading. From the way Andreas and Fleurelia responded, it was not welcome, but they continued shouting their questions. Strange, distorted tones came from Santiago, and I could not tell which language anything was spoken in. It seemed to be speech that Andreas and Fleurelia could make sense of, as they were interrogating the "voices" very carefully. The "trial" reached an intensely dramatic pitch, as the questioning was accompanied by the increasing din of the shaking discs which Santiago was creating with his *bastón*. This was
evidently being flailed in the air, and I could vaguely
distinguish the shape of his body swaying to and fro as my eyes
adjusted to the dark. The noise and shouting continued for some
minutes and suddenly there was a cry as the bastón unexpectedly
landed with a terrific thud and crash, sounding like shattered
glass, somewhere to the left of us. Santiago gasped and slumped
forward. The candle was thankfully lit so that we could assess
what was going on.

Santiago was still slumped forward, and appeared in a deep
stupor. His body appeared very heavy and his breathing was still
laboured. He did not speak for some time, and when he did, this
was to address Andreas and Fleurelia in Aymara. It sounded as
if they then filled him in on what had been said. Further rounds
of trago were poured, and when Santiago was ready, the candle was
blown out again.

Exactly the same happened again, and further "voices" could
be heard coming through Santiago, a mixture of low, distorted
whining, interspersed with other pleading sounds. Andreas and
Fleurelia continued their questioning in Aymara, stamping their
feet, and shouting. The rattle shaking again became more intense,
reaching a pitch when the stick was hurled through the air at a
tangent. I knew to duck this time, and I was worried in case the
stick smashed a window. Santiago seemed to have little voluntary
control over the stick, but somehow it managed to miss both windows
and bodies. Afterwards the atmosphere was tense and suspended.
Santiago again surfaced slightly and asked Andreas and Fleurelia
questions in a sickly, exhausted voice.

A last "consultation" took place, and a similar pattern
emerged; an increasing pitch in the rattle of discs, the
beginning of distorted "voices", and further questioning by Andreas and Fleurelia. On this occasion, Santiago began to utter whimpering cries, as the rattle seemed to strike at him, as if he were thrashing himself. More distorted voices could be heard - they sounded confused and angry, and Santiago gasped and cried as if pain was being inflicted. Fleurelia and Andreas had increasing difficulty in making any contact. This time, the stick was hurled to one side extremely violently, and Santiago let out an anguished cry, which was followed by a nervous laugh from Andreas.

When the candle was finally lit, Andreas and Fleurelia physically relaxed and it seemed that normal interaction could again take place. Santiago appeared almost drugged, and it was clear that his state was partly due to the amount of alcohol he had ingested over the last two hours. He appeared very exhausted and drained, as if he had awoken from a deep sleep. He shook his clothing and rubbed himself.

Andreas was very excited and asked him what it had all been about. He explained that Santiago had contacted his abogados and they had brought forward several spirits for questioning, and there had been some resistance. These included an old man in La Paz who complained that I had not respected local deities and Pachamama in my work, and was very angry with me. Two other spirits had come forward and various place names were mentioned where I had travelled to (not all of them were correct), and again I had caused anger and resentment for failing to propitiate local deities in my travels. Apparently there were three particularly angry spirits who were blocking my suerte as a form of castigo. In the final consultation, Santiago had apparently
been severely reprimanded by his abogados for not attending to this business earlier, and the abogados had turned on him and given him a stiff beating.

It was considered very positive that all this had been found out, and Santiago seemed completely satisfied with the consultation. I was personally relieved that it was over and that they had found out what they wanted. It had been an extremely unpredictable, and exhausting couple of hours, and it had been a strain trying to assess what was going on in total darkness.

It was now 4 a.m. Once Santiago had discussed what he needed with Andreas and Fleurelia, we were instructed to return to the room where the mesas had been prepared. As we lifted the blankets off the windows, we could see that the day was beginning to dawn. This registered alarm in Santiago, as he needed to work fast to complete the curación ceremony before the sun fully rose.

v) Application of the mesas

It was now rapidly becoming light outside. We returned to the room where we had left the mesas, and I was instructed to find something to wear on my head and to sit upright on a mattress in the corner of the room. I tied an old headscarf over my head and Santiago then began to place some of the mesas on my body. He kept the black bundle containing the mesa para cambiar la suerte y llevar la muerte and the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones to one side. One package was bundled under the headscarf I was wearing, and placed at the centre of my forehead. Another was placed under my sweater on my stomach, and another placed on my feet. The woodpecker was then balanced on top of my head, and I was covered with a blanket. The mesas had been placed very quickly, and it was not possible to distinguish at this
stage which mesas had been placed where.

Santiago was by now quite drunk, and Fleurelia had to assist him in directing the ritual. Felicity was told to sit next to me, and a maize cob was then placed on her head, around which red and white thread was wound. Fleurelia told her to ask Santiago to "revive" me, several times, and this seemed to be a formal request which enabled proceedings to begin.

Santiago came and stood before me with the plain bastón (i.e. without discs) under one arm, and the bundle containing the two black mesas under the other. He passed the bundle over my body in sweeping movements from head to toes and across my chest, making the sign of the cross. He then went out to the hallway and opened the bundle to extract the reel of black threads from the mesa para que salgan las maldiciones. Santiago then came back to where I was sitting. The thread was broken four times over my body; firstly over my head, then my chest, knees and feet. He then broke the rest of the thread once over the heads of Felicity, Fleurelia and Andreas. Santiago then knelt before me and prayed that I should "come to life".

Santiago then placed the two jars containing the ch'oa mesa on either side of me. He next took the rabbit from its basket and tried to tie a band of thread around its neck with which to secure the mesas. The animal struggled so hard, and Santiago's balance was so unsteady, that this attempt was abandoned. The rabbit was thrust into my hands and I was told to hold on to it firmly. Andreas was instructed to stand in the hallway with an open bag to receive the mesas once they were removed.

Santiago came and removed the package from my forehead and passed it back and forth over my face. I was told to blow three
times on the package, and I could see that this was the mesa negra bundle. The mesa para el cambio de la suerte was next removed from my stomach and passed over me in the same way. Again I blew on the package three times before it was removed to the bag in the hallway. A third package was removed from my feet which I did not recognise. Santiago then removed the maize cob from Felicity's head, and I was instructed to blow on this once also before it was taken out of the room. At this point, all the packages that had been placed on my body were now disposed of. We were then instructed to spit out the wad of coca which we had been chewing throughout the ceremony. These were collected in a piece of newspaper which was then discarded along with the other mesas in the bag in the hallway.

Santiago then spat on his hands and grabbed the rabbit from me. Trago was libated on the rabbit's nose and mouth and he rubbed the animal vigorously all over me. He quickly ordered me to blow three times on the animal and to spit three times on its mouth. Felicity was asked to do the same before the rabbit was returned to its basket. It was kept there for the rest of the ceremony, until taken for release in the campo.

Santiago then returned to where I was sitting and picked up the woodpecker by its talons. In a loud and shrill voice Santiago cried, "yargh! yargh! yargh!", and waved the bird energetically over my face, and then over my body before passing it back to my mouth for me to blow and spit on its beak three times. The bird was then removed to the hallway.

Santiago now began to unwind the red and white thread from the maize cob which had been removed from Felicity's head. As he did so, Santiago recited the names of his abogados, in the same
way that they had been called up in the ch'alla of the mesas [see (ii)]. This thread was now broken over my head, chest, stomach, knees and feet (i.e. five times), and then in the same places over Felicity's body (i.e. a further five times). The threads were broken once more in the centre of the room, and once in the kitchen. In this way the threads were broken a total of twelve times.

Fleurelia then came and sat beside me, and took my hands in hers. Felicity was now told to kneel by me and say, "mi compañera está muerta, mi compañera está muerta, ¿dónde está mi compañera?" I was then told to get up and say anything I liked, to show that I had "come back to life". When I did this I was embraced by Fleurelia, and she rocked back and forth clasping my hands, and asked me how I was feeling.

Santiago then took the jar containing half of the ch'oa mesa with the yellow maize and red carnations. Each one of us was individually sprayed with the liquid before Santiago splashed the jar's contents over the ceiling, doors and walls of the room. He sprinkled part of the liquid in the other rooms of the flat before throwing the remnants of the jar out of one of the windows in the direction of the sunrise. He scattered the last few drops on himself. The same procedure was repeated with the second jar containing the white maize and white carnations. Again, each of us in turn was liberally sprayed with the liquid, and enough was left so that Santiago and Andreas could spray each other in turn in the hallway. This was done in great jest.

This ritual cleansing terminated the ceremony. All the mesas and the artefacts which had been placed on me were now removed to the hallway, apart from the packet containing the cebarios which
were left for me to take later. The other "medicines" were thus removed from the main living area so that a clear distinction was made between living room and hallway. I wondered if this would correspond to the house and patio in a traditional house.

Santiago and Fleurelia were now both in high spirits, and more trago was served. It was now fully daylight outside, and the sun was beginning to rise. Santiago asked for some music, and we spent a further hour dancing with Santiago and Fleurelia. They showed no signs of tiring, and more trago was consumed by them. After we had fully celebrated with them for a while, Felicity and I withdrew to rest for a few hours, while Santiago and Fleurelia continued dancing and drinking into the first hours of the morning.
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