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"LA GENTE DECENTE:" A STUDY IN KINSHIP, PROPERTY AND CLASS IN AN ARGENTINE OLIGARCHY

Volume I

By

Walter Allen Hoops

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ABSTRACT

"LA GENTE DECENTE:" A STUDY IN
KINSHIP, PROPERTY AND CLASS IN AN ARGENTINE OLIGARCHY

by
Walter Allen Hoops

This study explores the nature of power, class and kinship in a regional oligarchy in Northwest Argentina. The methodological orientation of the study was both historical and ethnographic. Salta's oligarchy consisted of a tightly knit cluster of families which exercised local hegemony during much of the province's history. Its economic base was primarily agricultural, based on the control of huge tracts of land and on pre-capitalist forms of production. The historical roots of this power elite lay in the Spanish colonial system, which generated a system of inter-regional integration upon which a colonialist class structure was built. The removal of the colonialist state during the revolution of 1810, and the reenforcement of localist tendencies within the provincial class structure, provided the essential conditions for the emergence of an oligarchy. As Salta's oligarchy attained a local monopoly on power, it burst into destructive internecine conflict, owing in part to its inability to define its class character, and to the void of state power left by the departure of the colonial state and the breakdown of national unity. The consolidation of regional oligarchies within Argentina during the second half of the 19th century, and the institutionalization of a

national political structure, provided the conditions for the consolidation of regional oligarchies and for the protection of their regionally based power. Nevertheless, it also provided the conditions for the penetration of capitalism in the agrarian economies of the interior, and for the transformation of the oligarchy into an agrarian bourgeoisie. By the early part of this century the internal dynamics of Salta's oligarchy had been transformed entirely; nevertheless, the presence and social impression of the oligarchy on the local class structure remained, as the emergent capitalist class appropriated the oligarchy's system of social relations and its symbolic resources, and integrated them into its own structure of reproduction.

The dissertation explores the internal dynamics of the oligarchy, particularly focussing on kinship, landownership and the relations of the oligarchy to the state. It argues that kinship, while serving as a powerful consolidating force, is inadequate as an idiom for expressing and consolidating class identity. Consequently it argues that inherent contradictions arose historically between principles of kinship which formed the core of oligarchic identity, and the exigencies of class which gave members of the oligarchy their underlying economic base.

To Patricia, whose project this is as much as mine

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Tucked away in the northwest corner of Argentina, bounded by mountain chains with their deep river valleys on the west, and by the vast Chaco plain to the east, lies Salta, a bastion of traditionalism, a society which waxes proud of its colonial heritage, its revolutionary war heroes, its long illustrious history. Its small but rapidly growing capital city, with its colonial style architecture, the many monuments to its prosapia, its narrow streets running between old balconied buildings and along palmed parks, points back in time, seeming to squeeze out the future and to bring the past into the present. Creeping from the outskirts inward toward the heart, modernity is slowly changing the ancient texture of this beautiful city, where a local song says that every street ends in a mountain. But change takes place as a struggle, modernity pitted against the preservation of the unchanging qualities which are so deeply rooted in its society. Even in the midst of explosive growth and change, tradition molds those changes as new buildings, new architecture attempts to evoke the roots of the past.

It is Salta's handful of old illustrious families which best express the fusion of traditionalism and power in Salteno society, the force behind the preservation of the old. In the past these inhabitants formed the center of social, political and economic life in the city, as well as in the hinterland.

The history of these families, and the lives of their most illustrious members, were Salta's history. Consciously they have represented themselves as society's past, the collective expression of society's past. Indeed, the descendants of this group today still view themselves as the true heirs of Salta's glorious past, connected as they are genealogically to the makers of that collective past. The appropriation of society's history has made them, sine qua non, representatives of Salteno society. They are la sociedad, the society.

But their domination went beyond the appropriation of time; they also appropriated the primary economic and political resources of Salta's society as well. The layout of the city itself gave evidence of their appropriation of society itself. Until the middle of this century their export-import general stores dominated downtown commerce, stocking everything from fine furniture and cloths from Europe to hides and agricultural products from their estancias in the interior of the province. In effect, they became the mediators between the bounded organic world of the province and the wider, dynamic capitalist world beyond the reach of most of its inhabitants. They, and they alone, interpreted the nature of that relationship. Their exclusive aristocratic clubs graced the edges of the central plaza, where concerts, poetry readings, art displays gave the city a reputation for high culture. Metaphorically, the oligarchy were appropriators of Salta's universal culture as well. They called themselves cultured, although culture simply meant

interpreting outside "high cultural" influences in the local context. But their culture was Salta's culture. Plato's philosopher kings was ever the image on which they built their own self-image. On the plaza, cordoned off to keep common people out, young women of high society strolled under the watchful gazes of their fathers, uncles, and grandfathers sitting in the cafes lining the plaza, and in the sights of aspiring young men of the same high rank. While members of Salteno society, proud of the deep roots in traditional society, they were a separate, distinct, strata. Access to the inner circles, open to the outsider only by establishing kinship ties, was carefully guarded. The paradox was that this access was both (potentially) "universally" accessible, since the structure of their kinship was the same as that of society in general, and at the same time extremely restricted. This backwater aristocracy had a life of leisure, high culture, heroics and historical glories.

The social world of the city revolved around this small elite group. Nevertheless, other inhabitants also populated the city during the greatest epochs of oligarchic glory. Black slaves worked in the internal confines of the oligarchic households, as domestic servants. They ran errands across the city, representing the presence of their owners not only in the urban spaces but within human corporeality itself. Artisans, silversmiths, leather workers, street cleaners, stablers, gauchos for hire, and even members of the "low life", prostitutes and gamblers, also occupied the space of

the town. Others participants in the collective world of the oligarchy arrived as times changed, challenging always, but also reinforcing, the dominance of the oligarchic families. Spanish, Italian, Lebanese or Jewish immigrant set up their downtown commercial outlets and their bazaars. The Porteño businessmen and bankers, and former peasants from the interior of the province settled in Salta. But life in the city revolved around and was lived for the celebrated members of the familias patricias or gente de bien. It was they who molded its character, who defined its life, and provided its culture. They made it an island of civilization in an isolated, uncompassionate territory.[1]

The rural areas have felt the dominance of these families to an even greater extent. Most of the key resources, land, cattle, trade, and labor, were under the control of these families. Their extensive estancias were the markers on the social mapping of the territory. The palatial houses, or salas, represented the key population centers in the landscape. Their private armies policed their regnal holdings, and the province itself. Battles fought in these territories were not battles of the inhabitants, but rather disputes between the families.

Atilio Cornejo, a well-known local historian and a member of one of the most prestigious of Salta's families, has stated that a history of a people could be encapsulated in the lives of its great men. And true to form, Salta's history has been written as the story of its great men, and a few recognized

women, prestigious members of its principle families, not uncommonly told by other members of those same families. They figure as conquistadors, warriors fighting savage battles with indians, courageous leaders in the fight for independence against Spain, and morally motivated battlers in the morally ambiguous civil wars. Their names dominate the history of Salta's political landscape as well: they were governors and legislators, judges and lawyers, educators and legislators. Their influence extended nationally as well, and their names are included among Argentina's presidents, vice-presidents, ministers and legislators. Above all, Salta's principle families are proud of their heritage; they demonstrate it in the ample knowledge of their past and their traditions.

This study is about an oligarchy in Northwest Argentina. The study is, of necessity, historical, for the oligarchy is a specific type of power group, with characteristic internal organizational features, appearing at a specific period of time in Salta, and whose dominance arose out of particular political economic and social conditions in the Salteno context and in the world economy. The focus is on the development of an oligarchy, the historical nature of its dominance within a particular peripheral class structure, and class and cultural aspects of its social constitution within a historical context. The oligarchy has existed in much of Salta's history as its primary power group, controlling most of the region's resources and wealth, since the late 18th century until the middle of the present century. Its economic

base traditionally has resided primarily in the control of land. Despite its rural and agricultural base, the oligarchy's base of activity and living space has often been centered in the city. The study will focus on the formation of the oligarchy, the consolidation of oligarchic power in the latter half of the 19th century, and the oligarchy's gradual demise in the 20th century, as the capitalist world economy penetrated into the core of its social relations, transforming them.

Who were Salta's oligarchy? The oligarquia, a term that seems rigid and politically oriented to American ears, is a household term in most Latin American countries. It has been characterized in the literature on the underdevelopment of Latin America as a traditional dominant class whose economic base is an inefficient pre-capitalistic agricultural system based on large landholdings or latifundias, persistent and closed as a corporate group, a monopolizer of political power, often conflicting with emerging new groups who have a modernizing vision. This and other characterizations has led to a long-term debate on the role of the oligarquia with the development of Latin American countries. The debate, however, has tended to ignore the internal organization of the oligarchy, and has also ignored the question of social continuity: how is it that oligarchies have persisted for long periods of time? What internal features allow the reproduction of the relations of domination which characterize them?

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Salta's oligarquia is its family character. The oligarquia Saltena was not a single unit, an undivided class, but rather a cluster of interrelated families bound closely together by kinship ties extending back generations into the past. So closely are they bound together that Atilio Cornejo was able to write a genealogy of his family, one of the most important, and call it the genealogy of Salta. Families extended through time and over generations form the well known linages or lineages of Salta, which provide their members possession of social relations not only in the present, but with the past as well. Salta's lineages are one of the principle interests of this thesis, for it is they who lie at heart of the oligarchy's appropriation of time and space, and therefore of its power.

The study, by its very nature, must deal with questions regarding the formation of classes as social entities. Giddens (1976) has stated that the central task of sociology in modern capitalism is to trace the transformation from class position to class formation. This is the central question of this thesis. It begins with the basic question: was Salta's oligarchy a class? If so, did the oligarchy represent the persistence of a specific type of mode of production? The issue of how a class forms itself, how it becomes a social entity with collective interests, how it expresses solidarity culturally and socially is a question that has received only limited attention in the literature on classes. The specific

nature of class formation in peripheral societies, particularly in regard to dominant classes, is even less studied. In its analysis, this study will attempt to demonstrate that the oligarchy was never simply unidimensionally a "class" (as defined in a marxist mode of analysis); i.e. it did not represent a dominant group within a given mode of production, but rather constituted a power group within which class interests and the drive for hegemony were expressed through cultural and structural means, particularly through kinship. In the thesis I will explore the nature of the internal organization of the oligarchy, of modes of power, and of the kinship system as well as the economic base, which provided the structure of oligarchy domination.

Second, I would like to focus on the centrality of kinship in the construction of the oligarchy as a social entity. In discussing kinship I suggest that the kinship organization of the oligarchy is more than simply a means to an end, a structure that has been used for a function. The kinship system is not only a system which provides individuals with a means to extend their social networks and influence. Nor is the kinship system a structure which exists outside of time, in a domain unaffected by action. Rather, the kinship system is a social construction, constructed dynamically by the actors that participate in it. As Giddens (1981) notes, actors do create and construct their social world, but they only do so under the constraints of already existing

structural condition. The kinship system of the oligarchy is fundamentally a means of incorporating time and space into a power domain. It is a means of domination and of internal organization through the control of time and space. Likewise, land represents not only an important resource, a physical object important in the accumulation process, but also a particular construction of social space which played a role in the reproduction of class relations. We want to explore this in relation to the domination of the oligarchy over other classes and over the state apparatus.

Time is of primary concern in this study. It is not only a medium used by the oligarchy to "objectify" and universalize the past, but it was also appropriated by the oligarchy to bring history into their very social constitution. Utilizing the perspective of "objective history", of the outsiders perspective looking in on events that led to the oligarchy's rise and demise, is not sufficient in understanding the oligarchy, although it is essential to the process. This has often been understood as "empiricist history", or history from the materialist perspective. However, as any self-defining social group, the oligarchy exists over time as power-based group in part because it has incorporated into its very being a concept of time, which gives it being over time. This concept of time is part of the fabric of activity and being within the group, and is basic to the group's reproduction. Time thus conceptualized is an essential component in all of the basic elements of social life. It is central to the

kinship system. To understand this aspect of the social group, the study will focus on genealogies and kinship structure which have a central part in the oligarchy's organization, and which serve to incorporate time into the social makeup of the oligarchy.

The social character of the oligarchy

The oligarquia is a household word in much of Latin America. Its uses in the vernacular are broad and varied, raising the question, is it an analytical category? Often it is used to refer to a small core of families who hold the power and economic wealth in a given region. At other times it is used more specifically to refer to encrusted agricultural families whose domination of land is almost mythical, and whose relationship to other classes is paternalistic. However, in the Latin American social science and historical literature it refers more specifically to a historical period in the pre-democratic formation of a class structure in which the entire power structure of a nation or region was controlled by small regionally-based clusters of interrelated families. One key ingredient in this form of domination was that these families literally occupied the entire state apparatus. They also tended to dominate economic activities in their areas, which they controlled through monopolization of land and through self-serving state policies. Oligarchies tended to be conservative, or to mix a conservative social ethic with a semi-liberal economic

policy. They expressed the ideals of a civic-minded society, in which cultured and well-formed individuals would govern for the other less qualified members of society. A number of individuals belonging to the oligarchy were caudillos, local leaders drawing upon the relationships of patronage established through localized political control and through control over peasants, often expressed in populistic terms.

In most areas of Latin America regional oligarchies no longer exist as identifiable political economic entities. The period of oligarchic hegemony in various regional economies of Latin America has ended, although the circumstances and dates of the demise of the oligarchic period in various countries occurred at different times. In Mexico oligarchic dominance was ended during the Mexican revolution. In El Salvador the oligarchy continues to act as a political force, although on stricter definitional criteria there is a debate whether the country's 14 families still constitute an oligarchy (see Barry 1987). In Argentina the oligarchy lost its control of the state in 1915, although various regional oligarchies continued to exercise control in the interior provinces into the third decade of the century. The demise of Argentina's oligarchy is directly related to the penetration of capitalism into local regions, and the alienation of state power from oligarchic control. Nevertheless, the oligarchy tends to continue as a social vestige in many countries, and is the focus of constant attack by many populist or leftist-leaning political parties. The

Peronista party in Argentina, for example, has made the oligarchy and oligarchic tendencies in other parties the focus of attack. The oligarchy continues to seems conspiratorial to many.

Salta's oligarchy did exist in history as an identifiable, although amorphous, social group. It was made up of a number of family groups extended through time, often referred to as linages. Families themselves were (and continue to be) closely knit, frequently incorporating three generations. Nuclear or extended families living in autonomous households were perhaps the most visible of oligarchic components. Siblings often formed groups or associations, joining in joint economic ventures. A number of famous cases illustrates this. Five brothers from the illustrious Michel Torino family formed a major wine production venture during the early part of this century. Five brothers from another major Salteno family, the Patron Costas, formed the province's most important sugar enterprise, San Martin del Tabacal. In both cases the alliance permitted considerable economic clout both within the province and at the national level. Cooperation in such cases depends for the most part on the economic viability for the joint ventures.

Larger family groups also were visible and acted as social groups. Many things bound these families together. It was not uncommon for nieces, nephews, grandchildren often live with aunt, uncle and grandparent for schooling or other purposes. Extended family members were often present with the

immediate family for summers and holidays at their estancias or summer homes. It fact, such activity were not only encouraged, but almost a rule. Unmarried adults, particularly female, often lived with parents or with a sibling and their family. The exception were clergy members, who generally lived outside of their family households. Extended families met frequently as groups on various social occasions. Vacations were often spent together; cousins particularly, in their school years, spend their summers together. Traditional vacation spots included San Lorenzo, today only 10 minutes from Salta by automobile from the city, an old resort. Other spots included Cerrillos, Rio Blanco located at the mouth of the Quebrada de Toro, and Chicoana, all relatively close to the provincial capital. These towns had little entertainment other than what was offered by each household. The traditional activities included horseback riding in the countryside, picnics, and evenings get togethers for entertainment and dancing, music and other "cultural" activities. The poorer members of the extended family were taken care of; they are invited at the host family's expense. Often out of town guests were also invited to spend time with the families at the vacation spot. The wealthier families also spent time at the famous resorts in Cordoba, the province of Buenos Aires, and at Punta del Este, or even in Europe.

Beyond the extended family the amorphous character of the elite becomes more evident. In some cases identifiable larger groups based on "lineage" membership did meet on special

occasions, but this was often the exception rather than the rule. Thus, the living members of a linage rarely formed visible corporate groups. Association among members of the oligarchy took place, rather, through a variety of means, although kinship almost universally underlay that association. Groups and associations were formed through clubs, which include the sporting and "pseudo-sporting" clubs (they were traditionally card playing clubs, although now clubs are formed around tennis, horse racing, polo and golf, and swimming), political parties, which ultimately include members of other classes, neighbors or neighborhood groups, and rural and business associations. The most prominent and traditional of the "blue blood" clubs has, since late last century, been the Club 20 de Febrero, named after the date of the Battle of Salta, in which the Spaniards were defeated by national hero Manuel Belgrano. This club is open all year, and sponsors "cultural events" of many types, but its most notorious activity is the one dance per year, the only point in the yearly cycle in which Salta's elite as a group is clearly visible and celebrated.

Different groups of families came together for life crisis rituals as well. The baptism of children ordinarily included only the closer members of the family. Padrinos were normally chosen from among family members. The practice of the "coming out" of young women is still celebrated, although more discreetly than in the past. At the age of 18, young women of prominent families are introduced at the yearly 20th

of February balls by their parents. They are, in essence, displayed for all the members of Salta's prominent families, proclaiming the daughter's eligibility and the family's prominence to the other members of the elite, and to the "world" through press reports about the beauty, grace and fashionableness of each young woman. Weddings also brought together larger segments of the oligarchy. Marriage is an important device for displaying status and prestige, and the more prominent the identities of the families participating in the wedding, the larger and more prominent the turnout of guests. Certain symbols, such as the church in which a couple are married, the number and prestige of those who attend the ceremonies, and the club in which the wedding ball takes place, display the importance of the family and the couple.

Funerals, perhaps, are the most important rituals which serve to bring the members of the oligarchy together. Here the person's individual status is most clearly associated with the family's continuing prestige, and is most clearly displayed. Display depends largely on the prominence of the person in the community, on the family background and family "connections" of the person. Various symbols display the degree of importance of the individual and his (and to a lesser extent, her) status in the elite group. There is a virtual ranking of churches in which the ceremony is performed: the central altar of the cathedral is the most prestigious of all of the churches, and funerals are performed there only for the most important personages. Other churches

are also ranked. The priest chosen to officiate also marks status ranking within the oligarchy; again, the bishop only performs rites for members of the highest families. Salta presently has two cemeteries; the oldest is La Cruz, and it is here where persons "de cepa" are buried. During the burial, for the most prestigious men, speeches are read by the prominent members of the community regarding the deceased. The most important members are also led by fortines of gauchos, one of the symbols of greatest "arraigo" to the land. Thus, historically funerals have displayed the constitution of the oligarchy more clearly than perhaps any other social event.

Salta's oligarchy formed part of an extremely polarized class structure, not unlike class structures in other traditional areas in Latin America. The majority of Salta's population has traditionally been rural, poor, often tied to the land through traditional forms of labor contracts. Prior to the middle of the 20th century, Salta's capital was small and had few immigrants. Its poorer sectors functioned as a service population for the urban elites, members of the oligarchy. At the other end of the spectrum was a class whose members controlled and monopolized enormous extensions of land. Land was the primary resource for the creation of wealth, but only if it had labor. Thus a majority of landowners had peasant or <u>gaucho</u> sharecroppers on their lands. Lands tended to become highly concentrated in the hands of fewer people during periods of flourishing economic

activity. Land had a variety of uses and created wealth in different manners. Its greatest wealth originally was in relation to the Potosi mines.

What specifically led to the emergence of the oligarchy? Historically the emergence of an oligarchy was related to events which occurred in the context of a world economy. Salta was initially explored and "conquered" by Spain due to its proximity and relevance to the economic activities of the Potosi mines. In the late 18th century a power group began emerging whose economic base was connected to the Potosi mining economy and the mediterranean position of Salta. The group combined a number of allied economic interests: landowners from the Litoral, Cordoba and Salta, and mine owners and merchants from the Altiplano mines of the Upper Peru, and merchants which trafficked between these areas. The extraordinary wealth produced by the mines spread out to the development of surrounding areas. The elite which emerged in Salta sought both a political and cultural identity, a criollo and colonial expression of class. The period of heightened economic importance in Salta was accompanied by efforts to consolidate class interests in the region. Such efforts were hampered by Spain, whose Bourbon reforms placed the colonial bureaucracy more firmly in the hands of Spanish servants of the crown. Furthermore, portions of Spain's nobility immigrated en masse to the American continent during this time, lowering the cultural validity of criollo lineages. Thus, a cultural element of state control was also involved

in this process which left the criollos out. The war against Spain beginning in second decade of the 19th century thus had both an economic political tone, as well as a cultural one.

The victory of the patriotic faction in Salta served to establish the validity of the American heritage and the establishment of the hegemony of the criollo families. The victory provided the basis for a cultural hegemony within the oligarchy, leaving the way for the formation of a coherent structure of class domination combining political autonomy and economic hegemony. But triumph simultaneous signaled, in a manner of speaking, defeat, strength an inherent manifestation of weakness. Consolidation ultimately failed due to the peripheral nature of the oligarchy, and its relationship to the world economy produced internal conflict, frustrating attempts at creating a class-based hegemonic power arrangement. The closing of the borders with Bolivia, and the total isolation of Salta from the mining economy left the province in a profound economic depression. Buenos Aires gradually extended its dominance over the entire national area, and producing a split occurred in various provincial oligarchies between those who were willing to become dependent appendages of the Porteno economy (and benefit from the Porteno export economy), and those that opted for isolationist/protectionist internal hegemony. Politically the conflict was expressed in the battles between unitarians and federalists, and between liberals and conservatives. Economically they were expressed in battles between

traditional hacendados, merchants, and outside economic influences. Consequently the oligarchy was fraught with internecine fratricidal struggles which destroyed numerous families politically and socially through the 1880's.

The oligarchy was eventually able to attain a hesitant and fragile unity, and establish peace internally. It was truly "oligarchic peace," the peace of hegemony that came from allowing the state to assume a new role mediating between conflicting factions within the same class. In essence, this peace was the result of the subordination of some interests within the oligarchy, and the raising to a level of dominance of others. The interests of the class as a whole took precedence over individual interests. But not all gained equally. Likewise, peace came with the consolidation of Buenos Aires' exporting oligarchy and the conforming dependence of regional oligarchies on it. The "mixed economy" of regions in the interior of the country were somewhat like survival economies, with the expansion of certain sectors and retractions and disappearances of others. Regional oligarchies were increasingly related through kinship to each other and to the Porteno oligarchy. This buffered to a degree the impacts of changes in the world economy on the regional economies. At the regional level conflict was resolved through institutional means and a cultural unity. Culture allowed the "peaceful" domination of one class tendency over another within the oligarchy itself, providing a coherent way of expressing class hegemony. This was the apex of oligarchy

domination and consolidation, and has often been referred to as the "oligarchic period." (see Ramos 1981) Nevertheless, consolidation continued to be inherently fragmented and conflictual, and class consolidation problematic.

The forces of unity contained the seeds of destruction. Unity of regional oligarchies allowed the extension and penetration of national state institutions, and at this national level gradually the state was alienated from the control of regional oligarchies. The state began to have a life of its own, as it crossed localized and regional interests, as political parties began appearing and popular expression began finding its voice. The state shifted its emphasis from mediating between internal and regional interests within the oligarchy to mediating between classes across regional boundaries. Signs of this were at first subtle; they included the nationalizing of the city of Buenos Aires, the wars on the frontiers against Indian groups, and the Saenz Pena suffrage laws. The changes were perhaps so gradual that the oligarchy was not aware of the attack on its power. By 1915, however, the oligarchy had effectively lost control of the state at the national level, and fifteen years later the process of dismantling oligarchic power in the province had become irreversible.

State penetration was accompanied, of course, by the penetration of capitalism into the area, a primarily external mode of production which destroyed the system of dominance of the oligarchy. Capitalism destroyed the cultural factors

underlying the reproduction of oligarchic dominance, establishing instead a system based directly on class interests. The penetration of capitalism destroyed the oligarchy primarily in two ways: through the commoditization of land and labor, transforming the relations and forces of production in the countryside, and secondly, capitalism appropriated the state, transforming it. Under the new capitalist emphasis, the role that the state assumed was primarily as a mediator between classes. The state apparatus was wrested from the oligarchy through external means: national intervention, the formation of national-level political parties, and the institutionalization of civic, legislative and executive structures and laws. The oligarchy as a social group continued to be visible, however, and has not disappeared entirely, although it has lost its hegemonic base. This is due in part to the strength of the cultural apparatus surrounding the oligarchy, and to the key location of many of its members even after the penetration of capitalism.

A few observations can be derived from this summary regarding the character of the oligarchy. First, it could be said that the oligarchy never achieved the status of a homogeneous dominant class. At best, at the height of its power it formed a fragmented and internally torn dominant group, unable to attain any semblance of an internally coherent class interest. The primary reason for this was that the oligarchy never formed a truly hegemonic and autonomous class; its constitution was inherently contradictory. It was

always dependent upon, and subject to, a world economic system. The paradox was that it built itself upon the basis of local autonomy and hegemony, but as its striving for autonomy increased its dependence. As a class it was characteristic of the incomplete class formations described by Giddens (1981), unable to mature because it was inherently a peripheral segment of the world economy. It was a fragmented peripheral class formation, vulnerable to changes and developments of the world system. Relations between classes were immature as well, often expressed through class alliances along vertical rather than horizontal intra-class lines. Thus, class factors were not in themselves sufficient to explain the nature of oligarchic domination in the region.

Second, kinship came to play a fundamental role in the construction of oligarchic identity. This study will explore the nature of that kinship system. But it must be stated from the outset that kinship itself was insufficient to act on its own as the consolidating force which might unite the oligarchy into a coherent dominant group, and thus kinship must be explored in its relationship to other factors of class dominance. The kinship system of the oligarchy, after all, is not unique to the oligarchy, but rather, its basic (at least structural) elements were shared with other sectors of society. Structurally Latin American kinship seemed to emphasizes the individual and at most the family over the corporate descent group. Ownership of property or wealth was always individual. Networks tended to bind individuals

together, and marriage was not considered to bind descent groups or corporate groups together. The practice of kinship among the oligarchy differed from the rest of the population in a number of important respects, however. It did contain "descent groups", although loosely defined, and marriage was perceived as binding two families or lineages together.[2] The kin-based group served as the basic mechanism for defining the group which dominates the class structure. The study suggests that kinship differs in its practice among the oligarchy (as opposed to other classes) due to the interpenetration of the domain of class formation into the kinship structure, and that likewise the opposite occurs in the class structure of the oligarchy. Kinship from this perspective allows not only control of the class structure, but also the internal ordering of the oligarchy itself as well. Kinship can function in this capacity due to the fact that it appropriates and binds time and space, while at the same time providing a map for social action. Kinship relations thus affected the character of control over land as well.

La Gente Decente

The title, "La Gente Decente" (the socially decent people, those with dignity, acceptable, proper, courteous, modest, gracious, nice) was not intended to be catchy, but rather points to a number of fundamental characteristics of the oligarchy which describe them. The term "gente decente", I should first explain, is not my invention, but is in fact

widely used not only in Salta but in many parts of Latin America to refer to the oligarchy. The term is full of subtle and hidden meanings (is it the opposite of indecent people?), and as a complex symbol has been used both pejoratively and honorifically. Peronists and leftists in Argentina, such as Caro Figueroa (1976) who wrote a book on Salta's elite called the "History of the Decent People," and Ramos (1981), use the term as a critique of the oligarchy and the hegemony they exercised. From the critical vantage point it is a contradiction in terms: decent and at the same time undemocratic or demagogic, caste-like. For Caro Figueroa there was (and is) nothing decent about this caste. Juaretche and Ramos, the first a social critic, the second a historian, use the term from this vantage point.

On the other hand, it is very clear to me that the descendants of Salta's oligarchy clearly see themselves as a "gente decente", and that this definition is crucial to their self-knowledge and self-conceptualization. What they mean by this is that they are the "cultured class", the educated, societies holders of moral and ethical values, the truly compassionate, the holders and embodiments of Salta's highest traditions. They are, by definition, society's appropriators of "decency".

Specifically, the term, according to the historian Bernardo Frias (1981), a member of this caste, refers to a noble class without titles; or the way he puts it more succinctly, as "aristocracy of merit". It refers to the

social division which occurred during the colonial period between Spanish noble family members which arrived in America, as opposed to those families which had no aristocratic backgrounds, but which had attained positions of power, wealth and influence. Many requested titles, only to be denied by the Spanish crown. This criollo elite eventually established their cultural dominance within the elites in Salta when the Spanish control of the province was destroyed. There are several things to note about this term: first, it does represent the triumph of Criollo lineages over the Spanish aristocratic lineages. The same idiom is used to defined the Criollo lineages, but without the roots in Spain. The rooting of class dominance within the kinship domain is thus clearly stated. Second, the term doesn't refer to a "class", but rather a cultural characteristic. The oligarchy denied their class character, couching their social identity instead in the idiom of kinship. In fact, in the term you also have the contradictory messages of identity with, and yet separation from, dominated classes: they are <u>gente</u>, people, or the people (the populous). Furthermore, they attained their status through merit, definitely not the racial caste divisions of Spanish aristocracy. Thus, dominance is not expressed in class terms, but rather is seen as a product of higher culture, higher education, tradition. The oligarchy are protectors of social decency. Finally, decency refers in some manner to lineages, and the appropriation of the past through those lineages. It is the appropriation of the past

that permits the oligarchy to exercises its power.

The Class Character of the Oligarchy

This thesis is concerned with the social expression of class as a social formation. Class has not been a focus of much importance in anthropology (see Smith 1984a). Historically, the field's interest has focussed primarily on non class-divided societies, or on societies where social stratification could be explained culturally. In traditional societies such as chiefdoms, primitive kingdoms, and caste societies, where differences of economic levels persist, inequalities have normally been attributed to cultural factors (see Sahlins 1972). Even studies of peasants and the rural and urban poor have primarily focussed on how national and regional structures penetrated into and defined the nature of the community or local social group, not in the formation and social expression of social classes.

A more focussed interest in class structures was sparked by marxist anthropologists, particularly the French marxists, such as Godelier, Meillasoux, and Terray. Originally they focussed on issues identifying class divisions and relations of production and reproduction in primitive societies. Out of this tradition arose concepts such as the "lineage mode of production" (Terray 1972), and the nature of sexual division of labor and exploitation (Meillasoux 1972). The focus on classes in non-primitive societies, particularly in peasant societies, also emerged out of this tradition in works such

as those of Gudeman (1976), and Kahn (1978), focussing on the issue of whether peasants are a class or a mode of production. The primary problem of all of the structural marxists was the total elimination of the centrality of cultural factors in structuration of social life, as superstructural elements are conceptualized as being subordinate to the economic infrastructure.

As Smith notes, the study of classes, and the construction of a concept of class, was primarily left to other fields, such as political science, history and philosophy, and analytical frameworks within those traditions were only later appropriated by anthropologists (Smith 1984a). This raises two questions: first, why haven't anthropologists focussed attention on class structures, and second, is a theory of class necessary in the analysis of society, at least "non-primitive" society? The second answer is easiest to answer, for it is obvious that class factors influence the construction of social groups and social activity within all sectors of the world capitalist system. To believe that human societies, both indigenous and non-indigenous, can be studied ethnographically without incorporating an understanding of their class position within in the context of the state or larger power structure within which they live is to fail to deal with one of the most fundamental elements molding the character of society today.[3] With regard to the first question, several reasons can be found historically within anthropology for the absence of

social analyses of class. In part, it can be explained by a conceptual weakness in the history of ethnographic analysis, which focusses primarily on the internal organizational features of traditional societies, and on these societies as organic self-contained entities. The colonialist tendencies within the field become evident in this regard. Theoretically, the concept of class has been a problem because of the observational emphasis in ethnographic analysis. Classes have always constituted a problem theoretically because classes cannot be conceptualized outside of class relations, and these are often not easily visible to the ethnographic observer. Attempts to study class relations within the context of work and productive activities have been an attempt to overcome this problem. Another theoretical obstruction that has also hindered the development of an anthropology of classes has been the overemphasis, in my opinion, on a rigid structural definition of classes, as class positions. This theoretical bent has tended to look at classes as structural qualities or positions which the ethnographer "extracts" from his or her observational data; classes aren't entities which exist and can be observed. This theoretical impasse has received a partial response from the theoretical contributions in the areas of agency and structuration made by Giddens (1979) and Bourdieu (1976). Finally, methodological problems which are related to the problems mentioned above, have plagued the development of an anthropological approach to the study of classes. In part,

the difficulties of defining and identifying classes have made it difficult to study classes, because traditional participant observational methods are difficult to apply. But at a more fundamental level, the use of participant observation in the study of dominant classes is particularly difficult, because of the social constitutions of such groups, and also because of the difficulties in attaining sufficient intimacy with such a group. Such methodological problems will be discussed more fully below. In summary, then, anthropology finds itself in a paradoxical situations, for it finds that a fundamental element in the constitutive processes of modern societies cannot be dealt with adequately by the field, thus jeopardizing its position as a valid field of cross-cultural social analysis.

The oligarchy is know best in the two fundamental elements of its constitution: as a landowning class, and as a ruling group. The debate surrounding the class nature of the oligarchy has focussed on the latifundia, the primary form of ownership of the means of production by the oligarchy. Analysis of the hacienda as a pre-capitalist, capitalist or other form of production ultimately is seen as defining the class position of its owning class. Several key issues arising from this problem create a complex debate. One is in regard to the relationship of the hacienda to the world economy. A second is in regard to the form of exploitation of labor, and the consequent accumulation of capital that occurs on the hacienda. And finally there is the issue of the

nature of the penetration of capitalism in agriculture in the context of dependent development. A great deal has been written on each of these points; we will focus on some of the debates and major themes in the following subsection.

The second aspect of the oligarchy is its constitution as a power group, a "ruling class" or elite (Mills 1956). While the debate in this arena usually takes place in terms of the oligarchy as a "class", theoretically there is very little effort to define its class nature, and thus this perspective tends to have little overlap with the above one. The issue here is not really position within a given class structure, nor a discussion of how aspects of class formation define the constitution of the "class", but rather, the issue is power, and more specifically, the social and political organization of power. The primary issues in this area of concern are, primarily, the nature of institutional domination and the relationship of informal rules of social organization to institutional power, the nature of the state, and structural features of group organization which permit the reproduction of relations of power. Little effort is made in this discourse to connect the nature of hegemonic power to the class base of the oligarchy. It is precisely this juncture that gives the oligarchy its unique character, for it combines elements both of a class structure within the context of a peripheral system to world capitalism, and elements of power or domination. The essence of an analysis of the oligarchy must, therefore, define the relationship between power and

legitimation, and class structure. This is the fundamental aim of this dissertation.

The exploration of this relationship within the landed regional oligarchy encompasses an exploration of several fundamental themes. It must, first of all, and following Wright's (1985) suggestions, distinguish between exploitation and domination. Exploitation occurs at the site of production and is built into the production process itself. It is the essence of class structures. Domination, in contrast, is related to the nature of power of a group. Power is built upon control over critical resources, and involves always a definition of and control over key aspects of time and space. Power is essentially defined culturally or socially, and yet is related in a dialectical fashion to class structure. In this dissertation we see the oligarchy as consisting of a social constitution which mediates the relationship between a peripheral class structure and a system of power.

a. <u>The oligarchy as a landowning class</u>

Most analyses of social classes in Latin America begin with and revolve around the issues of development and dependency. Theories of development and underdevelopment originated in advanced capitalist countries such as the U.S. and Europe to explain the nature of the "backwardness" of third world countries, and, through a positivistic model, to implement an applied social solution (O'Brien 1975:7).[4] The ideology or paradigm of development located the lack of

development of these nations in the dual nature of their economies and societies; one side rooted in traditionalist and feudalistic origins, the other, a modern industrialized and urbanized sector, in tune with advanced capitalism. The polarization of the reified dual sectors was considered to be both economic and social; thus not only economic developmentalists (e.g. Rostow 1960) viewed third world societies through this paradigm; social scientists, and specifically anthropologists, did as well (e.g. Foster 1962).

Seen from the modernization paradigm, both sectors of dual societies contain class divisions. The modern sector includes modern industrialists and entrepreneurs (bourgeoisie), workers (proletarians), and more important, a middle class. This scheme suggests that a breakdown in the polarization of stratification accompanies the process of capitalist development.[5] The traditional sector, in contrast, represents the essence of polarization. The classes in this sector were seen to be inherently rural and agricultural; they included peasants and rural workers, on the one hand, and traditional latifundistas, the monopolizers of land, on the other. Both classes have been the subject of attack in the application of modernization theory, either in efforts at the institutionalization of land reforms, the implementation of commercial agricultural projects such as the Green Revolution, or the current focus on small farmers.[6] In these efforts, the peasants are to be educated in the rational use of land and resources through the introduction of technology and

resources.

The oligarchy as a class was not itself the subject of study from this perspective. Rather, as a concept, the latifundista, along with the units of land he owned, was reified. The oligarchy was seen to maintain its position through the monopolization of land, not through rational entrepreneurial behavior. Land, passed down from one generation to the next, was an automatic source of wealth and power, without any external need for support or development.[7] Latifundistas were seen to live off the labor of peasants bound to the land through a variety of labor captivating mechanisms (Bauer 1979); the landowner himself rarely put any labor into the production process. Due to this labor arrangement, and what is perceived to be a system inherited without change from the colonial period, and before that, from Spain, the system has been characterized as feudal.

For the modernizationist, the oligarchy in Latin America represents the essence of traditional rural life. And yet, it is also recognized that the landed elite often reside in cities as absentee landlords, living off the fruits of a type of feudal exploitation. They formed a rural component of urban life, living in the urban environment, but disconnected from it. Their social life is based on traditionalism, the opposite of the model of the capitalistic entrepreneur. It was a logical step to the view defining traditionalism as inherently in contradiction with capitalist development.[8] A total disarticulation exists, it was stated, not only between

classes, but between economic sectors. The struggle between the two sectors would lead ultimately to the destruction of the traditional, and with it, of its dominant class, the oligarchy.

The dependency paradigm arose in an effort to define more clearly the role of class structure in the development process of nations within a capitalist world system.[9] With the perspective of dependency theorists it would be useful to analyze the image of the rural elite oligarchy. Several questions are immediately raised by the dependency paradigm, the first involving the feudal character of the oligarchy.

Dependency theorists argue that there is no evidence that in fact the oligarchy represents a feudal mode of production. Early dependency approaches, particularly represented by Frank (1967), disdained the feudal classification of the latifundista. Frank stated that from the conquest onward the latifundia in Latin America has been a capitalist economic enterprise functioning within a capitalist world system. Its peculiar form is related to its dependent status within the world system. For this reason, one finds a dual economic system within the world system, but this time the interconnectedness or articulation of the sectors are emphasized. The backward or underdeveloped regions (satellite regions) are underdeveloped because of the patterns of exploitation which they suffer at the hands of the metropolis.

Nevertheless, the position presented by Frank poses some problems, since it isn't clear that the mode of production to

which the Latin American landed oligarchy belong is capitalistic. Later dependency and world systems approaches question this scheme.[10] LaClau (1971) and O'Brien (1975) note that in Frank's scheme, modes of production are defined by the participation of a mode of production within market relations, not in terms of relations of production. Later dependency and world systems analysts provide alternative explanations. Wallerstein (1981), for example, states that the oligarchy is a bourgeoisie, but that the underlying classes which it exploits are pre-capitalist. The position ultimately needs to be answered at the level of the relations of production at the point of production. Consequently, later dependency approaches placed a great deal more attention on the hacienda itself as a site of production, building on Wolf and Mintz's (1957) classic study of the hacienda and plantation economies, and on early historical studies of the hacienda, particularly the study by Chevalier (1963) of the latifundio in Oaxaca, Mexico.

What is the nature of class formation in the periphery? The question is related in part, in the case of the oligarchy, to the role landownership, and production arrangements on the land, play in the formation of an oligarchy. Are oligarchies the social expression of traditional landownership patterns? The answer to this question requires an analysis of the traditional hacienda. While not using a class analysis, Mintz and Wolf provide a typology of agricultural systems in Latin America which were extended more inclusively to the analysis

of classes by later authors. Their primary distinction is between haciendas and plantations. The plantation is

> "an agricultural estate, operated by dominant owners (usually organized into a corporation) and a dependent labor force, organized to supply a large-scale market by means of abundant capital, in which the factors of production are employed primarily to further capital accumulation without reference to the status needs of the owners." (Wolf and Mintz 1957:380)

In essence, it represented capitalist agriculture in that it focussed its production on the international market. In contrast, the hacienda is

> "an agricultural estate, operated by a dominant landowner and a dependent labor force, organized to supply a small-scale market by means of scarce capital, in which the factors of production are employed not only for capital accumulation but also to support the status aspirations of the owner." (Wolf and Mintz 1957:380)

Despite the differences in labor recruitment and organization, land use and market-oriented behavior, the authors make clear that both systems are products of the expansion of the world market following the 16th century. Despite the fact that both are products of the same causal elements, at least on a macro level, what is implied in the model is that the landowning groups belong to two different, possibly antagonistic classes, one interpreted as prestige and status oriented, having a non-profit-making mentality, the other a profit and market oriented class (Duncan and Rutledge 1977:7)

The typology has served as a good starting point for discussions of the hacienda, but is strategically weak on

several points. Duncan and Rutledge (1977) note, first of all, that this is a static model; it therefore ignores the complexity of agricultural systems in Latin America, especially if viewed from a dynamic processual viewpoint. They also note that the "interests" distinction between their classes probably has little justification historically.

Historical studies, beginning with Chevalier (1963), note that the traditional hacienda is an economic organization which acts in response to a variety of historical constraints. Brading (1978) notes that haciendas in Central Mexico take on different forms historically, both in terms of labor arrangements and production strategies, in response to expansionist and regressionary tendencies in the local and world market. As the mining industry failed, the hacienda turned in on itself, moving "backward" in its tenancy and labor arrangements. Other studies have pointed out that in most of Latin America the "classical hacienda" is best represented during the middle and end of the 19th century (Keith 1977). Other studies, notably Rutledge's (1977) on haciendas and plantations in northwest Argentina, record the interrelatedness of plantations and haciendas. Haciendas often serve as sources of labor for plantations.[11] What is implied is that the hacienda cannot be categorized as a mode of production solely on the basis of the interests of its landowning class nor on its labor arrangements and production process; rather, its articulation with other sectors of the economy must also be considered. Ultimately this points to

the fallacy of basing class position solely on the site of production.

Not a great deal of work has been made to identify the class position of the oligarchy based on other criteria. In a much quoted article, Zeitlin and Ratcliff (1979) attempt to break the commonly held myth that hacienda owners have an inherent conflict with industrial capitalists. Their study demonstrates the close network linkages between members of both groups in Chile. The fact that such linkages exist, however, fails to resolve two key problems in defining the class character of the oligarchy: first, what mode of production the traditional landowning elite represents, and second, what class position the oligarchy belongs to. Linkages do not disprove that industrialists and the oligarchy belong to different classes, and have different class interests. It simply means that if they do belong to different classes, the linkages represent class alliances. Several historians have taken this view (see Balmori and Oppenheimer 1979). In Argentine historiography, there is ample evidence that during certain periods in the 19th century and early 20th century, import-substitute industrial interests have clashed with the interests of export-oriented agriculture, although that conflict may not be generically a "structural" one. There is also the question of which landed interests are dominant at any given period of time.

b. <u>The oligarchy as an elite</u>

As a social group the oligarchy has been studied, although not extensively, within the tradition of elite theory. I have chosen not to use the term "elite" in discussing the oligarchy for a number of reasons. The first is that elite studies are much too broadly defined; it has been used to describe a great variety of groups located in power positions. One has only to examine the articles in the Seymour Lipset and Solari (1967) work on Latin American elites to note the range of groups being studied as elites. Its broadness as a concept is useful in describing power relations within state systems; however, that broadness is also its weakness, for it fails to define empirically or theoretically what an elite group is. It describes power relations in complex societies, and the role of power groups; consequently the definition is relational, so that it fails to make a statement about any kind of social group. The relational analysis is weakened even further by the fact that in most cases the relational aspects supplant the role of class analysis, which must be the basis of relational theory.

A second weakness, closely related to the first point, is that due to the relational emphasis, the analysis within the framework of elite theory fails to define group boundaries or the mode of group reproduction. This is an ethnographic criticism; it isn't clear whether the elite group is a group or not. For it to be a group, it must have an internal logic in its composition. When intrarelations are analyzed, as in the case of network analysis, they are often examined from the

functionalistic perspective (see Giddens 1979). This means that the structures of social relations are defined by their functions, and have no internal "meaning" of their own. From this perspective, kinship ties serve as means to power; they have no merit on their own. Also group composition and organization is the normative structure of power and dominance; rules of group organization have no cultural significance or internal modes of identity.

The third reason is that elite theory in almost all its forms belongs to a different and sometimes conflicting theoretical tradition to class analysis. Elite theory is concerned with positional analysis, as Hansen and Parrish (1983) note. It is concerned, in other words, primarily in networks of relationships and organizational features that allow elite groups to develope and maintain political power. The means to power are not only through dominance of economic resources, particularly in the realm of the market, but also dominance over cultural resources as well (Hansen and Parrish 1983). Essentially, "class" dominance is understood to occur by means of the control over resources and state institutions through informal structures such as kinship and clientage. Class analysis, in contrast, locates class domination in the work place, in the ownership of the means of production. How are these classes related to the state? Giddens (1981) notes that in Marxist thought the state has been seen as a passive front for bourgeoisie domination; it is a pluralistic sham which allows bourgeoisie domination to occur under the guise of

individual liberties. Its primary function, Giddens notes, is to separate the political realm from the economic/contractual realm; the state reigns supreme in the former, guaranteeing personal freedoms, but does not touch the latter, where contractual labor arrangements reign supreme. The essence in this concept of the class power is that the state mediates and hides a primary contradiction in the structure of class relationships in capitalist society.

Parameters of this study

This study approaches the problem of the oligarchy from a somewhat different perspective. While it is interested in the questions raised above, its emphasis will be to look at the social constitution of Salta's traditional oligarchy from a historical perspective. The primary question it raises is how class is incorporated into the social formation of the oligarchy. The premise of this question is that class position and class constitution must be expressed culturally within a class-based society; in other words, that cultural factors play a fundamental role in the reproduction of relations of power within class divided societies.[12] What I hope to demonstrate is that inherent contradictions arose between principles of kinship which form the oligarchy, and the exigencies of class which give members of the oligarchy their underlying economic base. I will explore this contradiction as it is expressed in the reproduction of the relations of domination in Salta. I hypothesize that the

contradiction ultimately leads to the oligarchy's demise in Salta, as capitalism weakens and ultimately destroys the social bases on which the oligarchy was built.

The first section of the dissertation will focus on how space is constructed and bound up in the construction of oligarchic domination. It will look at the relationship of ecological and geo-economic factors to patterns of regional development and regional dominance within the province. It becomes evident in the exploration of these factors that Salta's oligarchy was deeply influenced, in its orientation and self-identity, by the political ecological conditions from which it emerged. Indeed, it becomes evident that Salta's oligarchy sealed its hegemony by isolating the province from outside economic forces and processes; the degree to which this occurred was only made possible due to the geographical position of the oligarchy combined with the arbitrary political boundary-making processes which made Salta a virtual hinterland. Isolationism was contradictory, however, as Salta's economic and class formations were primarily results of the peripheral position they occupied within the larger world economic order. The contradiction ultimately was expressed in the internal formation of the oligarchy itself, creating the conditions for the weakening and demise of oligarchic power. This theme will be explored throughout the thesis.

The second part of the thesis concerns the history of oligarchic domination in the province. In the third chapter

I will explore the historical conditions in Salta's colonial period which give rise to the formation of the oligarchy. The emphasis in this chapter is that while the oligarchy is a type of class formation which exists within the context of the larger capitalist world system, its character and internal constitution are products of specific historical conditions which provide the form of domination which it exercises within the province with a unique character. Chapter 4 will then explore the class formation of the oligarchy, the construction of its social organization, the internal modes of conflict within the corporate group, and the effects of the eventual penetration of capitalism on the social organization of the oligarchy. In other words, this chapter will analyze the nature of oligarchic domination within Salteno society from a historical perspective.

The last two chapters will explore specific issues regarding the dynamics and the formation of the oligarchy. Chapter 5 will look at the relationship between class and kinship. The question is fundamental, for the oligarchy constitutes both a class position within a peripheral society, a position which never attains full maturity (class-based hegemony), and a social group constructed on the basis of kinship. The consequence of this foundation is a class which lives in conflict with itself at all levels. Chapter 6 will explore more specifically the issue of land. The most important "allocative resource", using Gidden's (1981) terminology, which traditionally has provided the oligarchy

with the class basis of its power has been land. The nature of that control was always contradictory, however, as land was both a commodity, and viewed as a non-commoditized family-based patrimony. The struggle to decommoditize land, never effectively realized, and to maintain control over this contradictory resource in a peripheral capitalist system, created the conditions for both unity and conflict within oligarchic families. I will explore the social identity of land and how it relates to oligarchic power. It might be noted that ultimately the capitalist relations impose themselves on the character of land; the final transformation of land into a commodity creates the conditions for the demise of the oligarchy as an oligarchy, and the emergence of a local agrarian bourgeoisie class.

Methodological Issues

This dissertation represents one of surprisingly few attempts by anthropologists to "study up". Over twenty years ago Laura Nader (1969), among others, called for anthropologists to dedicate their efforts not only to traditional ethnographic approaches, but to studying power groups, decision makers, and other dominant groups within various societies. The effort for such studies was needed not only because without it the ethnographic record in the modern colonialism-tainted world must be necessarily distorted, placing emphasis on the dispossessed within the larger class context, but also because of the critical role anthropologists

were to play in analyzing dependency, relations of power, and dispossession. Indeed, since that time anthropology has taken an increasingly critical perspective, not only with regard to the world system, class relations within that system, and relations between center and periphery, but also in regard to the role anthropology has played in this system (see, for example, Marcus and Fisher 1986). Nevertheless, except in a few cases, the study by anthropologists of power relations within the modern capitalist system remain for the most part dedicated to political economic or historical materialist positions. These approaches are necessary and important, but a gap remains in regard to the human, cultural side, of these power groups: what the internal constitution of these groups is, how they are reproduced, and how their internal composition is structured by the relations of power on which they are built. Most social analyses of power groups, particularly in Latin America, have been done not by anthropologists but by other disciplines, particularly economists and historians. The few exceptions are spread much too thinly across an area of study which is broad both sociologically and historically. Lomnitz (1981), for example, has studied a bourgeoisie family in Mexico with extraordinary insights. Gilbert (1979) has studied the genealogies of various families in Lima, although his work has been limited and inconclusive. Strickon (1965) called long ago for the study of elite landowners, estancia owners, in Argentina, incorporating an analysis of land and kinship, but his appeal

has fallen on deaf ears. Others, like Hansen and Parrish (1983) in Spain, and Cohen (1974, 1981) in West Africa, have taken various approaches to studying elites.

There may be a number of reasons for the lack of success of these approaches. One which I confronted was the overwhelmingly broad number of issues which have to be confronted when entering investigation on the subject. The field, so new and unexplored, overflows with even the most fundamental questions. The issues point to the inadequacies of anthropological theoretical and descriptive frameworks when applied to elites, so that often conceptualizations have to be reinvented or borrowed from other fields. Methodological considerations are also problematic, as Nader clearly stated in her ground breaking paper. Traditional ethnographic approaches, both in their conceptualization and in their application, can be applied to the study of elites only with difficulty. Traditional elite groups (as opposed to elitist positions within corporate and institutional structures) can only be understood from a deeply historical context; the historical context is important not only in reconstructing the material and structural bases of power, but also because history and the appropriation of time is a fundamental element in the definition and construction of power relations.[13] Thus, history must be treated as text, and as ideology in the study of these groups. Intimate glances at elite life, both in the present and in the past, are likewise difficult to attain, thus limiting ethnographic opportunity. Furthermore,

elites usually define themselves in relation to other groups; they are, by definition, defined in opposition to other groups over which they are dominant. Their self-conceptualization, and their cultural makeup, is irremediably bound up in their role as a power group. Put more simply, they would not exist if they weren't a power group. Yet their makeup is not limited to this characteristic. Methodologically, this becomes an enormous problem, for it isn't clear that elites, or more specifically, dominant classes, can be studied in isolation from the groups over which they are dominant; i.e. can they be studied as social groups on their own? I faced the problem throughout my study: whose definition of the oligarchy is more accurate, the oligarchy's insider view of itself, or the peasant sharecropper's, whose family has lived on the land of the oligarchic family for generations? How exactly is the oligarchic image of itself constructed? The issues point to the paradoxical nature of studying elites. The issues also suggest that ethnographic methodologies are more deeply molded by power relations than we might wish to admit. Thus, anthropological methodologies perhaps need redefinition in regard to elites.

I must admit that I struggled with these issues throughout my study. Ethnographic aspects of the study were perhaps the most difficult carry out. The oligarchy did not live in a community, nor were they easily defined, since they lived spread out throughout the city of Salta. The oligarchy was, in fact, a very amorphous group, making it difficult to

define its boundaries and its membership. Families were in most cases very private, secluded within their family roles from the eyes of other classes. Most ethnographic elements of the research took the form of interviews, rather than unstructured observation. There was, furthermore, little basis for generalizing from the particular situations which I observed and participated in. Furthermore, places of social interaction for members of the oligarchy were often beyond my reach, such as private clubs, resorts, and vacation homes. Even in interviews, the probing kinds of questions this study required and the sensitive nature of the study made the ethnographic aspect extremely uncomfortable.

The focus of the study dictated a primarily historical approach. The social formation which is the actual object of the study, the oligarchy, is today virtually non-existent, despite the fact that certain elements and characteristics of the group continue in present-day Salta. For this reason, much of the focus of the research was on historical sources, particularly original archival materials. Much of my research involved the consultation of historical and archival materials from private collections and from various public archives and government agencies. Wills, trial documents, records of legally sanctioned transactions, and a variety of other documents provided a great deal of economic, kinship, and other information relevant to the study. The history of properties were studied in the land registry office, as well as at the provincial archives. These documents constituted

not only historical information, but were cultural texts as well, providing insight into the ideological history of oligarchic families. Many published documents from various periods of Salta's history also provided valuable information; often written by members of the oligarchy, they too constituted valuable sources providing insight into the ideology of the oligarchy during different periods in Salta's history.

The historical focus allowed me to skirt, to an extent, some of the ethnographic issues, but raised a number of other issues. As an anthropologist I had not been trained to do archival research, and I found myself floundering not only to know where to locate material, but to know which material was of significance and relevant. The ethnographically trained eye finds it very difficult indeed to squeeze out of bounded, formalized legal documents ethnographic detail, and I found myself pouring over minute details of the documentation with no need to, simply because I feared that I would lose some detail that later I would find relevant. These documents served as texts, however, not only as historical recordings, and thus were of particular value in the process of analysis. Unfortunately, the kinds of documents available were also limited. The documents were refreshing, since they provided very untinted insights into the lives of members of the oligarchy, but they were also overwhelming in detail. Another problem confronted in the research process related to the archives themselves. Documents were often difficult to

locate, due to poor organization and indexing, and in many cases were missing altogether. I was told that the archives had been raided through the years by interested family members who wanted to claim documents relating to their family histories. Despite these problems, the use of archival material proved to be an eye opener, particularly valuable for studying dominant groups. Much of the information would not have been otherwise available to me. I often found that documentation could serve as a means of entering into conversation with descendants of the oligarchy; they are deeply interested in local history, particularly family history, and presentation of and discussion of relevant documents often provided openings to ask further sensitive questions.

Finally, perhaps the greatest difficulty was attempting to provide a ethnographic perspective on a historical problem. In a historical study, detail and intimate knowledge are limited, attained through one or two particular kinds of text. The analysis of texts, even legal formalized documents, becomes crucial for understanding underlying patterns and processes within the social life of those being studied. But time itself then becomes an obstacle in the study, since time is always incorporated into the social construction of identity of a group like the oligarchy. The tension between the "empiricist historical" reconstruction of that social life and the incorporation of the past into the social construction of identity at each point in time made the nature of the study

difficult to handle conceptually, as well as to write up. I attempted to minimize the difficulty by not fully addressing it, feeling that my knowledge of the group had not reached an adequate level to do so. Thus, it must be left to future efforts.

Endnotes to Chapter I

1.During the most prosperous of Salta's periods, the end of the 18th century, travelers such as Concolocorvo spoke of the civilizing island that Salta was. Inhabitants were described as illustrious and proper mannered, approximating the regnal ambience of Lima. The young women were all beautiful and virtuous. Trade flourished to a scale akin to important centers in Europe. The connection between the oligarchy and civilization is an interesting one, and suggestive of an opposition between oligarchy/populace = civilization/barbarism.

2.This is the primary question raised by Strickon (1965), which has yet to be comprehensively addressed.

3.Taussig (1987) notes this point in regard to Peruvian indigenous groups. In his study he demonstrates that the colonization process, and the incorporation of indian groups into a class structure, had profound and severe consequences not only for their social organization, but also with the conceptualization of their own self-identity. Thus, even those groups which had not been fully incorporated into the class system were transformed by their contact with the class system.

4.See Rostow 1961. For the latter, see Lambert 1970.

5.The role of the middle class is important with regard to the analysis of the state as well. In many theoretical approaches, the development of he state goes hand in hand with the rise of the middle class. For this reason, development theoreticians of the 1960's and 1970's talked about political development and modernization. For example, see Ratinoff and Scott, in Lipset and Solari (1966).

6.For an anthropological perspective to this approach, see Foster (1961).

7.The focus of this study, among other things, was to test this theory. It was found that in Salta the generational succession of land was much more complex than presented in the reification of latifundia systems made by social historians in the area. The data on Salta shows very few properties which actually passed down through inheritance to more than three generations, and land was often sold or divided in the second generation. This will be explored more fully in chapter 6.

8.For a discussion of this perspective, see Zeitlin and Ratcliff (1976). It is precisely this aspect of the developmentalist model that they are trying to disprove by noting the linkages between landowners and capitalist industrialists.

9.The dependency paradigm arose in an effort to define more clearly the role of class structures in the development process of nations within a capitalist world system. Unlike modernization theory, dependency theory was developed primarily by social scientists in the third world. Its primary point of attack was the developmentalist theory of the disarticulation of dual sectors of the economy; they attempted to demonstrate that there is a direct causal link between modern and traditional sectors, and modern and underdeveloped nations (O'Brien 1977).

10.Dependency theory is distinguished from world systems theory primarily in its treatment of the nation-state. A frequent criticism of dependency theory is that it begins with the nation as a unit of analysis. The nation ultimately suffers exploitation at the hands of imperialism, and there is a conceptual unity of nationalism and class struggle. World systems, on the other hand, has made a clear distinction between a world class structure and the nation-state. At the heart of this analysis is the complex relationship between nationalism (a type of reification of the state) and class struggle. For a discussion of this point, see Wallerstein (1981). It should be noted that the position that this thesis takes is that of world systems, and precisely so because national boundaries are expressions of time and spacial binding within the modern state (Giddens 1981).

11.In the same region of Argentina, Whiteford (1981) and Gatti (1976) record similar relationships between haciendas and plantations. Traditional tenancy arrangements on the haciendas permit the owners to exploit peasants living on their properties in the harvests of plantation crops such as sugar and tobacco.

12. Perhaps one point not emphasized in political economic approaches is that classes must also express themselves socially. In other words, class societies are also cultural entities. This point is often lost in anthropological discussions, and is one of the dividing points between symbolic/culturalogical analyses, and political economy approaches. It must be recognized that this is a weakness particularly in political economy, since the emphasis on class conflict and dialectics often underplays the existence of cultural unity. What is clear, however, is that class domination cannot occur without a degree of cultural unity, or put differently, class exploitation doesn't occur without the classes sharing common cultural bases. This helps to

explain the nature of cultural transformation which occurs in the colonial process, as Foster (1966) and others have noticed. The question this raises in regard to the oligarchy is how common cultural themes which unify opposite classes in the structure of class domination serve also as distinguishing marks of the dominant classes. Here precisely is where we locate the pivotal importance of genealogical structures in the oligarchy's domination, for kinship characteristics of the oligarchy serve both to identify it with subordinate classes, and to distinguish it from those classes, including, in fact, the exclusion of those classes from participating in it. This dialectical characteristic of oligarchic kinship structure has a number of social consequences. First, it makes possible both the recruitment and the expulsion of members of the oligarchy from the population as a whole. As we will note in the following chapters, recruited members become integrated culturally into the oligarchy, not only in terms of class domination, but also in other cultural and kinship behavior. Second, oligarchic kinship and other cultural traits persist in families long after members no longer hold dominant positions within society; these traits do not conflict with cultural traits in general. Andrew Whiteford's (196) description of impoverished oligarchies is one of the best tests of this fact. Third, cultural unity of society allows the sharing of certain cultural traits between dominant and subordinates, and form the basis of relationships between classes. One of the examples most thoroughly documented are patron-client relationships, which depend on common cross-class cultural understandings. Religious beliefs, and other ideological constructs also are signs of this sharing. Finally, cultural sharing also serves as the basis for group and class separateness; the very basis of cultural unity most clearly defines and delimits the boundaries of group exclusiveness of the dominant classes.

13.Perhaps no one has discussed this more effectively than Hobsbawm (1985), in his book on tradition. But the appropriation of time as a means to appropriating power are also discussed by Bourdieu (1977) and by Giddens (1981). Their is no doubt, as I will note later, that the construction of family genealogies among the oligarchy in Argentina is an effort toward appropriation of time, not only oligarchic time, but universal time as well.

Chapter II

THE ECOLOGY OF DOMINATION

Introduction

The province of Salta is nestled in the northwest corner of Argentina, forming an upside down arc that presses against both Bolivia to the north, and Chile to the west. It is a large province, covering 155,368 square kilometers. Its vast expanse spreads out over an array of ecologically diverse terrain, including mountains, deserts, plains, well watered valleys, tropical and subtropical forests. Its temperature averages have a great range, from very cold temperatures in the Puna, where it freezes up to 300 days a year, to the very hot and humid climate of the Chaco and the northern frontier, where coffee is planted in areas where it doesn't freeze at all. Rainfall, in the same manner, is as variable. The province's flora and fauna are similarly diverse and eclectic. Ecologically and geographically, at least, there seems little reason for treating the province as an analytical unit. And yet much of Salta's history and character are bound up with its location and ecological diversity.

Its constitution as an ecological boundary within Argentina and southern South America historically provided the province with much of its economic and political, and hence social character, and lay at the heart of its tumultuous and unstable history. Sandwiched between a variety of major ecological zones, including the fertile pampas and central

plains to the south, the "Litoral" to the east, the pacific to the west, and the Altiplano to the north, the province exploited its geographical position and ecological diversity to build, in its early days, an enormous commercial prosperity. Araoz and Aranovich (1977:242) note in this regard:

> "Since its origins, our Northwest has been firmly united to the areas contiguous to it, the Atacama (Chile) and the Altiplano (Bolivia), not only due to the similarities between many of its physical features, but also to the common socio-economic interests which have evidently existed since it was populated. This integration exists with such strength that when one talks regionally of the Frontier, it isn't the national frontier that is being referred to."[1]

In some manner the province participates in all the regions above mentioned; within its boundaries are the junctures between these areas. In its early colonial days, the merchants of many products travelling north to south, or vise versa, had to shift from modes of transportation suited to the flatlands, to other means more adapted to steep, rocky and dry mountain canyons that served as the main routes into the highland areas of South America. Not only did commodities have to be shifted from slow lumbering ox-pulled carts coming from the south to be loaded onto the sturdy and sure-footed mules which were more appropriate for mountain transport, in Salta, but its green and well-watered valleys, bounded naturally by steep and dry hillsides, made excellent grazing lands for the mules and cattle which were subsequently shipped north. Thus, Salta's original wealth and glory were greatly

a product of its ability to take advantage of its ecological diversity, and of its position as an "ecological boundary". A symbiotic relationship between large landowners and merchants permitted this form of exploitation of the environment.

During other periods its ecology was transformed into a liability by political and economic events beyond the control of provincial power holders. During the mid 19th century the northern and western frontiers (non-existent during the Spanish colonial period) were closed during various periods of time; in other words, the creation of political barriers, and the subsequent populating and exploiting of the pampas, made possible in large measure to the wire fence and new meat packing techniques, turned Salta's rich ecological diversity into a tremendous liability. As an area of agricultural production for the world market it couldn't compete with ecological areas that were more uniform, such as the Pampa's, and Cordoba's and Cuyo's fertile irrigated lands. Likewise, the difficulty of transportation caused by the variety of terrains, which had been much of the basis for its riches, became a source of poverty and isolation. Where Salta had once stood as one of the most progressive provinces and societies, it became turned in on itself, traditional, weighed down by an impoverished oligarchy which conserved its power by monopolizing political power and maintaining its traditions. Thus, the interlinking of political, economic and historical factors with geographical/ecological factors have

provided the stage for the creation and evolution of Salta's society, and provided a unique unit of analysis which is the focus of exploration of this study (see Ashur and Caro Figueroa, 1974).

Nevertheless, Salta represents a unit of analysis due not to its "economic integration", which existed during certain periods of its history, but rather because it represents the "space" of the traditional elite exercise of power and reproduction, which extended out from the city of Salta to the surrounding areas and eventually to whole province. "Space" is defined here following Giddens' (1979:206) discussion:

> "The social management of space is ... in definitive ways a feature of all societies. Virtually all collectives have a locale of operation, spatially distinct from that associated with others. Locale is in some respects a preferable term to that of 'place', more commonly employed in social geography: for it carries something of the connotation of space used as a 'setting' for interaction. A setting is not just a spatial parameter, and physical environment, in which interaction 'occurs': it is these elements mobilized as part of the interaction."

Thus, the province represents the spatial setting of Salta's traditional elite social activity. In this sense it is a "unit"; it has been the "space" in which the oligarchy extended and exercised power. Several features characterize the social space in which this particular type of elite exercised and reproduced its power. First, it involved the control over ecological diversity. Each ecological area represented unique problems and adaptations in regard to production activities, with the underlying "themes" of elite

power. Thus, in discussing the nature of Salta's ecology we are completely avoiding the notion of ecological determinism; we are attempting to explore, rather, the manner in which different ecological zones are incorporated into the "space" of elite activity and reproduction.

A second characteristic was the control of land as a product of the incorporation of space into the traditional elite sphere of power. Historically this occurred through the incorporation of "vacuum spaces" into the realm of elite power through a system of legal donation of the land by the state, taking place not only during the colonial period, but also until the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, the boundaries of the province has represented historically the space of control of the traditional elite based in Salta. Frontier zones were those areas which had not yet been incorporated into the system of traditional landownership. That control has been maintained through a monopolization of land, which in turn resulted in a monopolization of the space of reproduction of the elite.

Third, the "space" of the traditional oligarchic activity was characterized by the absence of state power in the rural areas, and the concentration of state power within the city. This is characteristic of peripheral states within the world capitalist system: "On the one hand, the class-character of capitalism incorporates international systems of center and periphery; on the other, class domination is strongly influenced and reproduced by patterns of rural/urban

differences and by the differentiation of neighborhoods within cities (Giddens 1979:206)." The penetration of capitalism during the mid-20th century has transformed the nature of the definition of elite space in a gradual process. Rural/urban differentiation has gradually broken down, as rural dwellers become proletarianized and as rural/urban migration has become more prominent. Increasingly, traditional agricultural systems have been transformed into capitalist agriculture producing for the world market, and an agricultural bourgeois has become firmly established. The role of the state has changed as well, penetrating into rural areas. This transformation has resulted in the diminishing role of the oligarchy in the economic and political affairs of the province, and in the increasing importance of state institutions.

The Demographics of Domination:

Demographic characteristics played an important role in the power structure of Salta's society. Salta was for most of its history a relatively small society, isolated from major population centers, perpetually suffering labor shortages, particularly in the rural areas. There is no doubt that this pattern influenced the development of Salta's agrarian economy, making the large landholding a key to controlling the short labor supply, and placing emphasis on the cattle-based economy, which required little labor or investment capital. Ironically, then, the increased isolation and consequent

poverty of the province provided the necessary conditions for heightening the hegemony of the oligarchy. The small size of the population as well as its limited growth allowed the oligarchy to maintain its grip on Salta without facing competition from emerging power groups, and prevented agrarian labor classes from consolidating any semblance of united class identity to confront oligarchic hegemony. Nor were peasants able to grow to the levels necessary to demand greater access to land. The small size of the population created conditions for very personalistic social relations in Salta, and paternalistic relations between members of the elite and the subordinate classes.

Salta's society was never large, and except for the early colonial period, never represented a significant proportion of Argentine population. Even at the height of its growth, it never surpassed the 5% marked of the Rio de la Plata population (see Table 1). This is interesting, since the northwest region, which includes Salta, had by far the highest concentration of indigenous peoples in the Argentine territory at the time of the conquest, estimate at 250,000. That the area did not grow in importance may be partly related to the fact that in comparison to the Central Andean area, the indigenous population was relatively small, and during most of the colonial period Salta represented a periphery to this area, and not to the Rio de la Plata basin. Thus, Salta never became a major regional center. A further factor which must be considered is that Salta's indigenous population was

Table 1: Proportion of National Population Living in Salta

Year	% of national population living in Salta
1778	2.7
1801	2.4
1854	5.0
1869	5.1
1895	3.0
1914	1.8
1947	1.8
1960	2.1
1970	2.2
1980	2.4

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas y Censos, 1980

severely depleted during the conquest.

The growth of Salta's population has thus been slow (see Table 2). It has only grown at an average of 2% annually throughout its history. The province was not affected by the major waves of immigration which so transformed Buenos Aires and the Litoral region. Most of Salta's population was ingrown, and during periods in which it did experience immigration, immigrants came primarily from neighboring countries, Bolivia and Chile. Sola (1889), for example, only lists a few Europeans living in the city in 1889, as opposed to 200 Bolivians.

Salta remained primarily an agrarian-based economy throughout its history; this is reflected in the composition of the city itself. Until this century Salta was truly no more than a village which hardly justified its division into "neighborhoods". (see Table 3) More importantly, although the Valle de Lerma had a populatioin concentration, the capital city itself constituted only a small percentage of the province's entire population (see Table 4). It thus fits Giddens' (1981) description of cities in "class-divided" societies, as seats of elite power and as repositories of state power. State power failed to penetrate beyond the boundaries of the city, power being exercised in the country by landowners themselves.

The demographic characteristics of the oligarchy itself are virtually impossible to define, not only because its members were never tallied, but also because the boundaries

Table 2: Population Growth in Salta, 1778-1980

Year	Population	Average annual growth rate %
1778	11,565[1]	
1801	13,528[2]	.7
1854	61,400	2.9
1869	88,933	2.5
1895	118,015	1.1
1914	142,156	1.0
1947	290,826	2.2
1960	412,854	2.7
1970	509,803	2.1
1980	662,870	2.7
Average annual growth rate 1778-1980		2.0

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas y Censos, 1980

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[1]From the census of Charles III, which separated the population by race. According to the census, the city of Salta contained a population of 4305, and the rural area 7260.

[2]From the report by Bishop Angel Mariano Moscoso. In this census, the capital had a population of 5093, while the rest of the province's population was 8435.

Table 3: Population of City and Province of Salta

Year	Province	Capital	Capital/Province Ratio %
1869	88,933	16,877	18.98
1895	118,015	20,361	17.25
1914	142,156	33,636	23.66
1947	290,826	76,552	26.32
1960	412,854	123,172	29.83
1970	511,744	182,770	35.71
1980	662,369	265,632	40.10

Source: Gonzalez de Lazarovich and Zaiz Irun, 1982.

Table 4: Population Distribution in Salta: Valle de Lerma and the Frontier

Year	Percentage of Population by Area				
	Valle de Lerma[2]	Valles Calchaquies[3]	Northeast[1]	Other Departments	Total
1869	40	23	7	30	100
1895	38	20	13	29	100
1914	43	15	11	31	100
1947	41	8	24	24	100
1960	44	5	30	21	100
1970	49	4	28	19	100
1980	53	4	26	17	100

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas y Censos, 1980

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[1]Oran, Gral. San Martin, Rivadavia

[2]Capital, Gral. Guemes (Campo Santo), La Caldera, Cerrillos, Rosario de Lerma, Chicoana

[3]Cafayarte, San Carlos, Molinos, Cachi, La Poma

of the groups were never clearly defined. It was undoubtedly a relatively small group throughout its history, but since the population of the province was itself small it constituted, during certain periods of its history, an important segment of the population. Haigh (1968) lists fifty or so families in the oligarchy at the time of the revolution; Frias (1981) lists a much larger number, perhaps as many as 200 families.

I would argue that there are no methods to accurately measure the population of this class; this is, indeed, not simply a methodological problem, but also sheds light on the very nature of the oligarchy. Despite its ingrown character, oligarchic membership was being constantly renovated, as new members were incorporated, and new resources appropriated with those new members. At no period was this process of renovation absent, but oligarchic membership did derive from three major waves of immigration: settlers which arrived prior to 1750, the great commerce oriented immigrant wave of 1750-1810, and the multi-national immigrants of the late 19th century. Immigrants of the latter group incorporated their French, British, Italian and Spanish names into the traditional hierarchy.

Ecological areas

The province of Salta (the province of Jujuy, which until 1834 was part of Salta's jurisdiction and had many close economic and social ties with Salta's elite, shares many of Salta' characteristics) represents the confluence of several

major ecological/cultural areas, which provide it with a unique character and a great ecological diversity. The are five major areas; within each of these are many micro-environments.

a. The Puna

To the west and north is located the Puna, or altiplano, a vast, dry, cold plateau which begins at approximately 3500-4000 meters above sea level. It is subject to extreme daily temperature fluctuations, and harsh climatic conditions. The Salta Puna is an extension both of the Bolivian altiplano and of the Chilean Atacama Desert to the west. Indeed, the borders of these countries in the area has changed several times since the period of independence, and seems to carry little significance to those who live here.

This extreme environmental conditions offer little in the way of livelihood. Agriculture is made difficult by strong winds, high altitude and freezing approximately 300 days of the year. Thus, it is not surprising that it is the area with the lowest population density in Salta. The area has a transient population of diverse origins. During the colonial period and at various other times much of the population of this area moved down into the Calchaqui Valleys or down to the Valle de Lerma. Much of the population is relatively new , brought in from other areas of the province and from the country as labor for the construction and maintenance of the spectacular Salta-Antofagasta railroad, or by the sulfur,

borax and other mines which operate sporadically on the Chilean-Argentine border and in all the Puna. The populations which migrate up to these high altitudes settle in precarious towns which empty as soon as their employment in the mines end. Such ghost towns abound all over the Puna. San Antonio de los Cobres, the largest town in the Puna, situated on the eastern edge of the plateau, was created as the center of the railroad operations to Antofagasta; but the failure of the railroad has left it stagnant. As has been the case in the past, the most important economic activity of the stable population in the area is commerce (Aranovich and Reboratti 1975). The Puna serves as a spread-out highway to many highland communities, and is the only means of passage between the Bolivian highlands, the Argentine northwest, and the Pacific coast. Sheep and llama herding serve as a source of work and income as well. Petty commodity production is also practiced; particularly important is the weaving activities of peasant families.

b. The Quebradas

The Puna is edged spectacularly on the east by a large snow-capped mountain range in which stand the highest peaks in the northwest of Argentina. These carry Indian names inherited from pre-columbian times: Nevada's de Chani, Acay, Cachi, Aconquija, and others. The deep and steeply descending mountain canyons carved out by mountain streams and rivers flowing rapidly southward between stark, seemingly

uninhabitable ranges form the second area, often called the valles or quebradas. Four primary valley systems dominate the Salta and Jujuy mountain landscape: the Humahuaca/Mojotro Quebradas, the Quebrada Toro, the Calchaqui/Santa Maria valley system, and the Escoipe/Calchaqui valleys; and in addition, in Tucuman, the Amaicha/Tafi del Valle valleys. Innumerable smaller valleys act as tributaries.

The major quebradas are the only natural avenues between the north and the south. They have long sustained human life on their green and narrow floors, assisted since at least 1000 A.D. by complex irrigation systems and terracing (Gonzalez and Perez 1976). Archaeological remains of the Ampajango culture suggest that humans had already settled in the area 20.000 years ago (Gonzalez and Perez 1976:23). Later, prior to the arrival of the Spanish, these narrow valleys constituted the most important and the most populous pre-hispanic areas in the whole of western Argentina. Large village-forts, or pucaras, perched strategically on hilltops and hillsides overlooked community-owned fields located on the valley floors and on terraces which climbed the valley walls. Some of the important ones upon which the Spanish stumbled were La Paya, Quilmes, Tilcara, Huacalera and Humahuaca, Chicoana, Pulares, among others. The area constituted the southwestern frontier of Inca political and military influence at the time of the Spanish arrival; it was an avenue of trade between the highland empires and the lowland areas which were outside of the sphere of the empires' influence (Araoz 1977, Canals Frau

1958). Likewise the archaeological evidence confirms trade with the Pacific coastal cultures.

The Spanish originally descended into the northern Rio de la Plata areas and Chile through these valleys, and due to the concentration of the indigenous population and its strategic location as a supplier and support region for the mining communities of the Alto Peru, settled earliest there establishing reducciones, encomiendas, and fort/settlements. The conquest of the indigenous groups took over a century to accomplish, despite several military campaigns and the establishment of several Jesuit missions, and despite mass deportations of indians to other parts of the province and of the country (see Alexander de Schorr 1968). Large encomiendas were distributed to conquistadores by the Spanish crown, working through the Audiencia in Charcas. These resettled the indians in communities which surrounded the cascos or salas (as the main houses of the haciendas were called) of the encomiendas on the valley floors. The picturesque towns that they formed were impractical, since they suffered severe floods every summer and took up valuable agricultural land on the valley floors. Yet the pattern fit the commercial and "supplier area" needs of the Spanish mining economy. A large proportion of the population was sent to Potosi to work in the mines under the mita system. The floors of the valleys continued to be cultivated utilizing the irrigation system of precolumbian origins. As the mule and cattle trade became increasingly important, subsistence agriculture was displaced

by agriculture geared to the pasteurizing of the mules; alfalfa became the most important crop. Other commercial activities (petty commodity production) picked up in importance as well: water mills scattered plentifully throughout the valleys ground wheat, maize, spices and other products. Leather tanneries also were established, and artesanal activities such as silver working, weaving and pottery became well known. Trade from the Cuyo area, Chile, and from the south passed through the area on its way north to Peru and Charcas. The area competed with the central valleys for volume of mule trade as well. Many of Salta's elite families trace their origins back to the area during this period.

The center of power of this area was the town of San Carlos. Founded as one of the earliest cities in the Rio de la Plata area as Barco I, II, and III, its original purpose was mission oriented (see Fortuny 1966). It was located at the crucial juncture of the Calchaqui and the Santa Maria valleys, at the head of a valley almost as broad (although much more arid) as the Valle de Lerma, and thus during the 17th and 18th centuries rivaled the city of Salta in importance. It became the important center of a regional elite during the colonial period, representing the landowners of these valleys and of the merchants which travelled these routes. The intermarriage of these families formed the basis of lineages which persist to this day. Some of the families located here, rather than in Salta, were the Aramburus,

Gurruchagas, Frias, Isasmendi, Dias, Diez and other families (Reyes Gajardo 1938). With the decline of this area these families established themselves in the city of Salta.

The decline of the mining economy reduced the trade activity of the valleys, and as its population folded in on itself, its economy stagnated. The dominance of an hacienda system became solidified, and its feudo lords became the bulwark of conservative traditional interests in the province during the 19th and early 20th centuries (Corbacho and Torino n.d.). Here, more than anywhere else in the province, the economy took on the characteristics of the latifundia economy, and it is here that subsistence peasant economies continue to be practiced. With the penetration of capitalist agriculture into the central valleys and the frontier regions, seasonal and outmigration depleted the populations of the region as peasants found work in the tobacco fields or in the sugar cane harvests (Gatti 1975). Today, it has become one of the most isolated and least productive zones in Salta; the total area under irrigation today is less than it was during the independence (Ministerio de Agricultura 1982). The construction of roads and railroads isolated it yet farther, since these now bypass, or pass speedily through, the areas where formerly trade always stopped.

c. The Valles Centrales

The third area has been called the "central valleys" area. It is comprised of three interconnected valleys

stretching from the province of Salta to Jujuy: the Valle de Lerma, the Valle de Perico or Jujuy, in southern Jujuy, and the connecting depression called the Valle de Guemes. Of the three, the most important historically has been the Valle de Lerma. Located at an altitude of 1400 to 1100 meters above sea level, it stretches north to south almost 150 km between the precordillera to the west, and a lower chain of mountains to the east. Morphologically the valley is a rift area, and may have formed the bed of a large lake in the tertiary period.

Four major rivers, and innumerable smaller rivers, leave the confines of the quebradas described above, and spread out broadly over the valley floor. They form the basis of extensive irrigation projects in the valley, and are also cause of tremendous flood damage that occurs almost yearly there. After traversing the valley, they meet in two spots only, in the northeast and southeast corners, and leave the area as major tributaries of river systems that will eventually flow into the Parana River basin.

Structurally, the most distinctive feature of the valley is the dominance that the city of Salta has over the area. This has made the valley the area of greatest population density in the province, the most advanced in terms of communications, and the area that has the greatest concentration of state-subsidized infrastructure in it. The centrality of the city of Salta originally owed its importance within the province to several factors: first, it was

centrally located in the route between the Alto Peru and the southeast. Second, its placement permitted the Spanish to establish control over the region's ecological diversity. Salta served as the mediating point between the highlands and the lowlands, and thus permitted its elite to control the ecological diversity of the area, controlling not only the trade traffic, but the surrounding indigenous populations as well. Santillan, et al (1974), explains that the valley was an area of contact and of great conflict between highland cultures and lowland cultures. The Incas may have maintained small forts at the mouths of the quebradas as defenses of their southeastern border, but the land was not densely cultivated, nor highly populated. Due to its border-like character, it seemed an unlikely spot to place the capital of the area, and in fact, its placement was hotly debated between those who favored the location of the capital in San Carlos, and those who favored it in Salta (Fortuny 1966). Three attempts to found settlements prior to Salta's founding in 1582 met in failure, with the resulting deaths of several Jesuit missionaries (Santillan, et al, 1974). For over a century after its founding it barely survived, and in fact its cabildo was forced to pass a law prohibiting the abandonment of the city by its residents on pain of death. A lack of indigenous labor in the region made the setting up of agriculture in the valley more difficult as well. Settlement of the Valle de Lerma was directly related to the growth of the city. As Spanish soldiers and entrepreneurs settled in

the city, they requested and were given mercedes, land grants, which included urban plots, larger plots on the outskirts of the city, called quintas, and meant for the cultivation of agricultural products for household consumption, and estancias, large pieces of land more distant from the city meant for cattle grazing (Cornejo 1938). The area most affected by this process during the early period was precisely the central valleys. It was thus that the distribution of rural properties in the area, and eventually in the entire province, was founded upon an urban base of land control. Consequently, the landowning elite was established with both an urban and a rural base of power. This contrasted markedly from the pattern established by the encomienda system which predominated in the early colonial periods in other parts of the province. The resettlement of highland indians in the Valle de Lerma, such as the Chicoana's and the Pulares, provided much of the labor for the early estancias.

It was, however, the mule trade which gave Salta and the central valleys their importance in the 17th and 18th centuries. The geographical situation of Salta was instrumental in making the valley the political and economic center and hub of the province, for it was here that in colonial and post-colonial times the form of transportation of goods destined to or from the Alto Peru had to change; the ox-drawn carts and horse-drawn buggies were exchanged for the sturdy mule backs which could weather the rugged terrain of the quebradas and the Puna. Large tracts of land, not only

in the central valley region, but in the Calchaqui Valley as well, were dedicated to the winterizing of mules and cattle. Yearly ferias (markets) were held in various spots of the Valle de Lerma, the largest and most famous being Sumalao in the center of the valley, to trade mules. Much of the land of this area was owned by a very small number of families.

The closing of the northern borders and the battles between Spanish and Criollos brought about a halt to most of the mule trade. Cattle continued to be the most important activity in the province during the 19th century, although primarily for local consumption. The Central Valleys underwent their greatest degree of change around the turn of the century. The transformation of the Valle de Lerma was a result of a number of factors which brought Salta's society into direct contact with the world economy, and consequently deepened the penetration of capitalism into agricultural production. The arrival of the railroad in the late 19th century was instrumental in breaking down the distance between Salta and Buenos Aires. During the same period, and particularly during the second decade of this century transnational corporations created a market for tobacco production in the area. It thus became the most important cash crop in both the Valle de Lerma and in the Perico Valley. The opening of national and international markets also gave impulse to sugar production in the intermediate Guemes area and in the northern departments of Oran. And other forms of capitalist penetration soon followed: the discovery of

petroleum in the area brought in both rigid state control in the use of land in the northern section of the province, and large amounts of investment capital into the region.

The transformation of these valleys resulted in the extreme division of property, and the establishment of a small bourgeois agricultural sector dependent on the state and on foreign capital. It also resulted in a much greater degree of state penetration and control in the form of subsidizations through the Banco de la Provincia, and research on new Virginia and Burley tobacco hybrids, pesticides, and the like carried out in the INTA (National Institute of Agricultural Research). The state has carried out complex irrigation projects. There are presently four major reservoir projects which serve (in the case of three of them) to irrigate the valley floor. The largest project, Cabra Corral, forms a man-made lake 42 kms. long, and has been destined to irrigate 80,000 hectares of land in southeast Salta and northwest corner of Santiago del Estero. This project, together with four other smaller hydroelectric projects, provide electricity to the area as well. In the province of Jujuy, a similar project to Cabra Corral, the Los Maderos Dam, captures the waters of the Rio Grande, which flows through the Quebrada de Humahuaca, both for irrigation and electricity. With the division of land has also come a changing role of the valley towns. No longer <u>estancia</u> population centers, they have become incorporated and serve as centers of political activity of national parties, and of state regional control.

d. La Frontera

The fourth major ecological area of the province is known as La Frontera (The Frontier), and is located in the northeast and southeast corners of the province, extending beyond Salta's borders to the provinces of Santiago del Estero and Tucuman. It is a fertile area, and recent water projects have brought irrigation to much vast expanses of previously underutilized lands. The Spanish recognized its value very early in the conquest period, but were virtually unsuccessful in settling the area. There were two basic reasons for this: first, the settlements established in this area were under constant attack by unfriendly Toba indians, who came out of the Chaco region. The Spanish established a line of forts and garrisons in the area which later served as the foundations of present towns such as San Jose de Metan and Rosario de la Frontera. Hence the name of "the frontier". It also established a line of Jesuit and Franciscan missions which hoped to pacify the indigenous population through spiritual means. Efforts to found cities were minimally successful: the city of Nuestra Senora de la Talavera de Esteco, an early commercial competitor with the city of Salta, was destroyed by an earthquake in the 17th century, and its merchants resettled in the cities of Salta and Jujuy. Oran, in the north, was the last city on the American continent founded by the Spanish, under the Bourbon kings, but was marginal until the second decade of the 20th century. The second reason that

colonization of the area failed was the low population density in the area and the difficulty of clearing the dense bush for agricultural purposes. Due to these factors the area developed a unique agricultural economy based on cattle raising, characterized by the gaucho.

Much of the land in this area and in the chaco area of Salta have remained as fiscal property. The giving away of fiscal lands to impoverished elite members and to wealthy immigrants allowed the elite to expand the space of control over previously uncontrolled areas. While a similar concept of landownership control was maintained as in other areas, the unique ecological characteristics of the area made necessary a different strategy. During the course of last century the state donated large tracts of land to members of the elite families in Salta, following a policy established by the Spanish colonial system. The vast estancias which resulted from these mercedes (land grants) were very different from their highland counterparts. The cattle herds ran free in the scrub, cared for by the puesteros, a gaucho arrendero (land renter) who took care of the herds in the corner of the estancia in which he was established, and in payment was able to graze his own smaller herd on the land. The gaucho was both herder and defense force against indian attacks. Landowners called on the gauchos to be incorporated into fighting forces during the several wars and struggles of the last century, including the famed gaucho battles during the fight against highland-based Spanish forces between 1810 and

1821. Most were immigrants or mestizos, often described as criollos, harboring a deep antagonism toward indians. They represented a frontier mentality of individualism loyalty, and self-reliance.

The Frontera is possibly the area of greatest recent transformation in Salta. The discovery of petroleum and the introduction of sugar and citrus production into the area of Oran began a rapid shift in which traditional agricultural systems were displaced by capitalist agriculture. The new agriculture maintains even today a symbiotic relationship with highland traditional agriculture, from where it recruits seasonal labor (see Whiteford 1981, Gatti 1975). Labor has also been recruited from local indigenous groups, particularly the Guarani groups located in the Ramal and Salta's Chaco, and Bolivian seasonal migrants. In the last 20 years a great deal of emphasis has been placed on crops which don't require seasonal labor. The most important cultivation are beans, which are primarily produced for export to the Caribbean and other areas. The cultivation of beans has required enormous quantities of capital to clear the land of brush and wood, for fertilizers and pesticides, and for machinery. Much of this cultivation is financed by national and international companies; Bunge and Born, for example, are major landowners and cultivators in the northern part of the province, or by local petty bourgeois farmers who are subsidized by the provincial government. The association of bean growers in Rosario de la Frontera has emerged, together with the Tobacco

Growers Association, as two of the most powerful lobbying forces in the province.

The state has been directly involved with the development of the area, displacing to a large measure the control of the traditional elite. Major water control projects have been instituted, permitting expansion of the areas under cultivation. As was mentioned above, the Cabra Corral Dam and the whole Juramento River project are projected to expand the frontera area under cultivation in southeast Salta by 50,000 hectares. In the north large irrigation projects in the Bermejo River basin have directly benefitted the sugar growers and the Ingenio Tabacal. An even large project involving the damming of the river in the Zanja del Tigre, and the construction of navigable canals to the Parana River are also being planned. The state also provides, on a discriminatory basis, tax exemptions for capitalist agriculture. The construction of infrastructure as well has assisted in the development of the area.

e. <u>The Chaco Salteno</u>

The Chaco region is the least developed and least populated of Salta's major areas. Occupying a very large proportion of the provincial territory, it has traditionally had an extractive economy, focussed on lumbering. A large percentage of the land in this region is state owned; its lands have been one of the primary sources of state power as the state allocates these lands through large grants. During

the latter half of the 19th century members of the oligarchy were often recipients of these lands, particularly in the southern part of the province. The control over these lands was one of the key factors which enabled the state to wrest control of the state aparatus from exclusive oligarchic control. This territory continues to be the primary region still inhabited by unassimilated indian groups, including the Toba, the Chiriguano and Chane, and the Mataco indians.

The Chaco has gained a tremendous significance during this century due to the discovery of petroleum in the northeast corner of the province. The impact of the petroleum industry has been felt both in the economic inputs into the province, and in the power of the oligarchy within the national context (see Hollander 1976). Nevertheless, with the exception of those areas in the immediate vicinity of petroleum exploration, the low density of population and the great concentration of landholdings in this area have not changed. The provinces principle "fiscal" lands continue to be located in this region.

City of Salta

Upon entering the city of Salta through the Portezuelo, the low pass from which one catches a total view for the first time the city spread out below, the theme of tradition is immediately apparent and prominent. This is expressed in its spacial distribution, its streets, architecture, monuments, and its traditional and historical character. It is full of

reminiscences particularly, of its colonial past, considered its most glorious and illustrious period. The city conscientiously encourages new building to follow a "colonial-style" agriculture. Monuments of figures involved in Salta's foundation, prominent local Spanish conquistadors and early colonial governors, local heroes of the colonial period and independence battles are scattered throughout the city. City streets also carry the names of personages prominent in local history and society. There are many historical monuments and places of historical interest: various churches dating back to the colonial period, houses of former prominent families which have been renovated and house museums, libraries, archives. Narrow streets following a grid pattern lead to a central plaza on which are located the traditional cathedral and the cabildo. As tradition speaks of a city with a deep sense of history, it also speaks of an era when a small respectable group of elites, or "gente descente", dominated the city and the province.

The city of Salta is a relatively small and a very picturesque city located in the northeastern section of the Valle de Lerma. Located at the juncture of two of the valley's rivers, it has, since early times, had the dubious distinction of suffering constant floods, primarily because the Spanish founders unwisely located the city in the lowest part of that section of the valley. Not long after its founding in 1582, many residents argued unsuccessfully that due to this it needed relocation. The site of the city was

chosen due to its strategic location on the route from the Litoral to the Alto Peru, and with the purpose of creating a colonial administrative center in the vast area of the Intendencia de Salta. Its location was not undisputed, since it lacked indigenous labor to support the rich agricultural area which surrounded it, and due to the fact that it was vulnerable. During the early colonial period the city suffered constant attacks from lowland Indians, bringing it to the verge of extinction several times. It's small size and slow development led it to compete for economic importance with several other towns in the province.

The city gradually developed characteristics similar to those described by Giddens (1981:144) in his discussion of the "pre-capitalist city". The city became an enclave of elite families whose economic base consisted either of merchant activities (which permitted a form of primitive accumulation), or of rural landholdings, but whose base of power lay in the urban context. During the 18th and 19th centuries the city became the "living space" of its traditional elite, mapped out and organized as an expression of elite power. As Giddens (1981:146) notes of pre-capitalist cities, the division of class during this period was expressed spatially in a rural/urban dichotomy. Administrative and commercial activities took place in the city, while productive activities generally were confined to the rural areas, since they were invariably agricultural in nature.

The spacial expression of this system of power was

clearly visible in the set-up of the city's neighborhoods and use of space prior to the penetration of capitalism. Its arrangement of neighborhoods clearly defined the central urban spaces as an elite construction of power. Two of them, the Barrios de Arriba and de San Francisco (named after the church located there) monopolized the center of the city, surrounding the plaza and extending to the north and west, and housed the prominent Salteno families, while the other two, located on the outskirts of the city, housed the urban poor, the artisans, the rural immigrants, and others who serviced the elite. The former two neighborhoods had sidewalks and tree lined avenues. Their large multiroom and balconied houses which lined the streets included not only living quarters of the family, but several patios as well (often filled with vegetable gardens and fruit trees), living quarters for servants (criados) and slaves, and corrals in which to stable the families' carriages, buggies, and horses. The houses spoke of the dual rural and urban character of their owners: the latest styles of art, literature, furniture and utensils sat among lassos, reins, saddles, blankets, rugs made on their estancias. The fronts of the houses, called tiendas, were often occupied by the families' businesses, often general stores with stocks of everything from kitchenware, to imported cloth and furniture, to food and meat, or were rented to others. Even today, many central businesses continue to be housed in this fashion, although fewer remain family residences.

To the south, between the beds of the two rivers, the Rio Arias and the Rio Arenales, was the barrio de la Vina, named after its principle church. Here were located all the artisan shops and other small-scale production activities: leather-working shops, pottery makers, silversmiths, boot makers, seamstresses, weavers. These activities essentially served the needs of the landowners and merchants who resided in the center neighborhoods. Immigrants often settled in this area; following that tradition, it is today the sector where many Syrian/Lebanese immigrant descendants still live. To the east, in the lowest part of the city (hence the name Barrio de Abajo) was the poor sector, described in early accounts as the barrio where black and indian slaves and ex-slaves lived. This neighborhood was viewed with disdain, although it was thought to be colorful, full of interesting and mysterious happenings. It was seen as the area of crime in the city, and the place where prostitutes did business. Yet it was of fundamental importance to the functioning of the city: it provided labor for household tasks, for menial municipal tasks, and from here merchants drew men to drive mule trains north or convoys south, or for other tasks. Vagrancy laws also made possible the drawing upon its male population for defense purposes in the many armed battles in the history of the city, or even for labor on the <u>estancias</u>. A canal separated the barrio from the rest of the city.

This structure of the city, particularly during last century, made the center of the city the almost exclusive

ground of the elite. The plaza represented that geographical center, from which culture, wealth, status, power emanated (Frias 1976). The plaza itself was surrounded on all sides by a fence to keep out the plebe, or lower "uncultured" classes. It was the safe and surveillanced ground of the young single women of high society (Araoz 1969) and Frias (1976) notes that the older men of the "gente de bien" watched over them from the sidewalk confiterias and from the Club (referring to the Club 20 de Febrero), also located on the plaza. The plaza itself had a obelisk or pyramid which celebrated the foundation of the city; the old obelisk has been replaced by a monument to one of Salta's local military heroes, General Arenales. The plaza also had churches on two corners, a Jesuit one which was later appropriated after the expulsion of the sect, and made into the cathedral. The present cathedral was rebuilt several times, and a designation is received late last century when the old Jesuit temple was destroyed. On another corner stood the Cabildo, which served as the primary government building during the colonial period and most of last century. Its colonial style architecture with its thick adobe walls and tiled roof represent the essence today of Salta's colonial heritage. The Club 20 de Febrero was located first on one side of the plaza, where it built the only theatre in the city, and then on the other side of the plaza, copying a French style of architecture. It contained large ballrooms and a theater, a cafe, a billiard room, a library and a card room. Its balcony looked over the

whole of the center of the city. According to the accounts of various chroniclers of last century, most government decisions were made at the club, and emissaries from the central government were said to have gone directly to the club upon arriving at the city rather than the government house (see Corbacho 1978). Late last century a hotel, the Hotel Salta, was built on one of the corners of the plaza to house prominent guests who arrived into the city. The other areas which lined the plaza were occupied by the houses of prominent families in the city. The Costas house next to the Cabildo is said to have been the setting of the first dance on the 20th of February, 1813, attended by the enemy generals, Belgrano and Tristan. The Day family, an immigrant family, build a large palace next to the club during the early part of this century, later completed with gothic arches which covered over the sidewalk. The Arabic-styled bishops house was later built next to the cathedral. Commercial centers also surrounded the plaza, and lined the adjoining streets.

During the 19th century the subordination of state institutions to the elite power became visible as government buildings and institutions virtually disappeared from the center of the city. The colonial cabildo was sold around mid century to commercial interests in the city, and served as a leased police station, several restaurants, a shoe repair shop, as well as other functions. When a government building was constructed around the turn of the century, it stood on what was at the time the northern outskirts of the city.

Today this building serves as the Legislative Building.

In recent decades it has experienced explosive growth which has led to doubling of its population in 15 years. Today 40% of the province's population reside in the city. With the growth has come a transformation, the result of a number of forces. Since the turn of this century migration from rural areas into the city has increased as peasants and rural laborers seek work and opportunity in the capital. Migration has been accompanied by a change in the role of the state in the province as capitalist relations of production penetrated both into the city and the rural areas. The penetration of the state apparatus into the countryside has increased until it has become the primary employer in the state; it is also the primary source of income. Finally, elite domination of urban space has undergone a change as the state has legitimized migration through the construction of government-subsidized neighborhoods for the "working classes", and shift their dependence on the elite to the state. This became particularly clear with the arrival of Peronism and the subsequent military governments. The former elite center of the city has been appropriated by state institutions, which are literally housed, in many cases such as the courts, the departments of education, the municipal building, the departments of statistics, agriculture, and land registry. The peronist government expropriated the former Club 20 de Febrero, transforming it into the executive office of the province. The Cabildo on the plaza has been restored, and

turned into a museum which openly expresses the role of the state in colonial Salta. As a consequence, the elite have been displaced to suburban areas of the city called "Monumento Guemes" and Tres Cerritos, although many remain in the center of the city. Ironically, the former is located on the spot the former Barrio de Abajo had previously been. Other neighborhoods have sprung up, and a strong middle class has become evident.

Endnotes to Chapter II

1."Desde los origenes, nuestro Noroeste ha estado firmemente unido a las zonas colindantes de Atacama (Chile) y del Altiplano ((Bolivia), tanto por la similitud de muchos de sus rasgos fisicos, como por la trabazon de los intereses socio-economicos que es evidente han existido desde los origenes del poblamiento. Esta trabazon persiste aun con tal fuerza que cuando regionalmente se habla de la Frontera, jamas se piensa en la frontera internacional."

Chapter III

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COLONIAL CLASS STRUCTURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore some of the fundamental elements that were important in the construction of an oligarchy in Salta. Historically the Salta's oligarchy has its roots in the Spanish colonization of the province. It is the contention of this chapter that the oligarchy did not appear until the late colonial period. Nevertheless, conditions for its rise were laid out during the colonization process. Among the important elements of this period were state control over accumulation, the creation of a fission between those elites dependent on the colonial state and those which were not. The eventual rise of the latter, and the destruction of the colonial state structure were fundamental in the creation of Salta's oligarchy. Also, the definition of territoriality and the dichotomization of rural and urban structures (and their linkages) had major implications for the class structure that the oligarchy later dominated.

This section will thus explore a number of questions that arise from the process of Spanish colonization. One question is in regard to the nature of Spanish expansionism into the area, since this will influence the nature of Salta's development and ultimately its class structure. A second question regards the process of formation of a class structure within the colonial and peripheral setting. Third, what role

did ethnicity play in that class structure, and why did ethnicity largely disappear at the end of the colonial period as a factor in the class structure? Finally, what role did cities play in the formation of a class structure?

The Spanish conquest was by no means a single homogeneous process. Regional conquests were often propelled by concerns coming from dominant regions within the colonies. The aims of regional conquests varied not only in regard to their location and periodization (which affected how conquests fit into the overall colonial "scheme") but also in regard to how they were undertaken and receptivity of indigenous populations they encountered. The result was that the various attempts by the Spanish to establish their control over different areas in Latin America resulted in quite distinct colonial structures in the various regions of Spanish America. Consequently, the economies and class structures of the various colonial domains often differed in various fundamental ways.

In Salta specifically Spanish penetration was motivated by the resources which could be extracted from the region for the mining centers of the Upper Peru. As Wallerstein (1974) notes, colonial expansion in this region resulted primarily from the increasing dependence of Spain on a bullionist economy, partially a consequence of its semi-peripheral position within the world system during the 16th century. The penetration south into the Rio de la Plata region and Chile was driven by a virtual explosion of the Potosi mining economy

during the late 16th century, which resulted in an urgent need for labor and many of the resources used in the mining process. The first expeditions interested in settlement, not surprisingly, originated from Potosi, specifically from La Plata, administrative seat of the Potosi region. The expeditions were financed and organized primarily by mine owners and mining interests (Fortuny 1966). During the 16th century Salta's colonial economy reflected its dependent and peripheral relationship to the Potosi mines. It's primary economic activity during this period was the production and exporting of mine related commodities to the highland mines; its most important commodity was indigenous labor.[1] This practice, together with other practices which depleted the region's indigenous populations, resulted ironically in chronic complaints about labor shortages by local encomenderos and landowners. Other local problems emerged from these practices as well; the depopulation of indigenous communities produced instability in Spanish settlements, and often led to the disappearance of Spanish-founded cities. Thus, during the early colonial period the class structure which formed in Salta was dependent entirely on the Potosi economy itself, and had no autonomous existence. The role of indigenous groups within this structure is particularly interesting, for they were only partially (although harshly) integrated into this structure.

The gradual emergence of a class structure following Spanish penetration into the area was unique, dependent

particularly on Salta's place as a periphery of the Spanish-Peruvian colonial system. It contained several key elements: a pre-established urban structure and territorial definition which precluded the penetration of the state into rural areas; the encomienda, which served as the primary means for the reproduction of the class structure; and ethnicity, which was a category of class exploitation actively utilized by the Spanish.

Prehispanic Social Organization in the Northwest[2]

In order to understand the means by which indigenous societies were incorporated into a regional colonial class formation, it is first necessary to have an idea of the social, economic and political organization of these groups at the time of the arrival of the Spanish. Relatively little is known about the prehispanic social organization of indigenous groups in this region, in part because studies of these groups have generally relied heavily on ethnohistorical materials, and only more recently on more direct archeological evidence.[3] Although early, accounts from this period reporting Spanish/Indian conflicts or describing indigenous communities incorporated into local encomiendas were somewhat distorted by the already aimed pointedness of those observations. And, in contrast with some other areas of Spanish America, few church records remain from the early colonial period. This is due partly because the Tucuman province constituted a peripheral area in the colonies, and

was colonized at a relatively late stage, after much of the newness of the American cultures had disappeared for the Spanish, and also after many of the debates regarding protection of the Indians had already transpired. Furthermore, the frequent attacks by Indians of cities, missions and communities which often led to abandonment may have destroyed records which may have existed. Many priests who did take an interest in recording elements of Indian culture, such as Padre Lozano, didn't arrive until later in the colonization process (during the 18th century), and therefore had to rely on second hand accounts of the conquest.

The problem of reconstructing the nature and organization of prehispanic societies in the northwest is compounded by the orientation of many of the ethnologists and archeologists who studied them. Their orientation has tended to emphasize the survival of prehispanic cultural and folk traditions to the present day. While they have provided valuable descriptions of indigenous ways of life and folklore, they fail to provide a perspective which deals with important historical issues.[4] Consequently, the ethnological material provides little enlightenment regarding a variety of crucial historical issues such as the nature of the indigenous rebellions during the 16th and 17th centuries, and the disappearance of ethnic identities of highland and valley Indians following the rebellions.[5] Indigenous social movements have often been described as barbaric or at best as impulsive reactions to the repression and inhuman conditions of the Spanish colonial

system, not as part of a process which involved class formation in the region. Nevertheless, there is clear evidence that the many indigenous movements and struggles which lasted more than a century formed part of larger events which were occurring both regionally, and within the world system, and were not simply local outbursts of rebellion. The fact that no clear evidence exists of large scale warfare prior to the arrival of the Spanish suggests the probability that revolts against the Spanish during the conquest were in some way related to the incorporation of indigenous communities into a colonial class structure. It still remains for anthropological and historical research on indigenous groups in this region explain the processes involved in cultural contact, and the nature of prolonged conflict between Indian groups and the Spanish domain.

The presence of indigenous groups in Northwest Argentina goes back at least 11,000 years (Gonzalez and Perez 1976). The oldest evidence of the presence of humans in the River Plate region is the Ampajango culture, located in the highland areas of Catamarca. Ceramic cultures appeared around the beginning of the christian era. Ceramic styles in the region reflected from the earliest periods a strong influence from the altiplano cultures; this was particularly true of those groups located in the highlands and precordilleras of the Andes. The earliest such influences are related to the Tiahuanaco, dated between 600 and 1000 a.d. The degree of influence was not always uniform: the middle period cultures

(1000-1300) suggest that the influence of complex societies located in the Central Andes was less, although later contact was stronger, particularly at the time of Inca expansion (Gonzalez and Perez 1976). The Incas seem to have greatly influenced the area, despite the relatively short period of occupation. What is suggested by the archeological material is that the northwest region, particularly in the highland regions, was a center of trade and cultural exchange during much of the prehispanic period (Gonzalez and Perez 1976) Archeologists have suggested that the highland areas, including both the Puna and precordillera, constituted an ecological frontier between cultural-ecological areas and possibly a political or economic frontier of the various state-level central Andean civilization; this is particularly true of the Inca society (Canals Frau 1958; Gonzalez and Perez 1976). The northwest can be divided essentially according to ecological and linguistic criteria: the Puna or Altiplano communities, the Precordillera groups, the Chaco, the Central flatlands and the low hills of Santiago del Estero and Cordoba, and the Cuyo area. The division belies the complexity of the region culturally at the time of Spanish arrival, as well as the cultural and material exchange between regions.

The Spanish divided the region in two different ways. They divided the indigenous groups into regional groups, reflecting to an extent, although not strictly, ecological regions. Thus, the indigenous groups were divided into

Atacams/Omaguacas, Pulares/Calchaquies/Diaguitas (often with the generic name of Calchaquies), the Juries/Mocovies/ Comechingones of the lowland southeastern part of the province, and the Chiriguano/Toba/Mataco groups of the Salta's chaco. In this case Spanish typology reflected the regional conflicts which erupted, and often the alliances between indigenous groups in their confrontations with the Spanish. The typology reflected chronology as well, as several of the conflicts lasted into later stages of the colonial period. Thus, the Calchaqui Valley uprisings (again, somewhat a misnomer, since only part of the conflict actually took place in the Valleys, and a major part of the rebellion occurred in present day Catamarca, Tucuman, La Rioja and Jujuy) lasted into the latter part of the 17th century. It is possible that displaced highland groups joined forces with lowland and Chaco groups to confront the Spanish, thus breaking down previous ecological distinctions. Resistance to Spanish incursion into the Chaco lasted longest, until the 1880's, although sporadic uprisings in the highlands also occurred into the 19th century (Rutledge 1977).

The other means of dividing the area was much more particularistic, related directly to the handing out of encomiendas and repartimientos. In this case Indians were identified according to community of origin. Under this classificatory scheme each community was treated as a separate entity; in some cases communities were divided between a number of encomenderos. No effort was made in these divisions

to explain the relationship of communities to the larger indigenous socio-political system. The encomienda will be explored more in detail below.[6]

Despite the antiquity of indigenous groups in the Puna, at the time of the Spanish entrance they did not constitute a distinguishable cultural area. The Puna's harsh environment and its cold and dry climate made it an area of sparse population. It has served more as an area of cultural and economic exchange between other culture centers than as a carrier of its own cultural traditions (Canals Frau 1958). As a result the region shared many of its important cultural traits with those of regions to which it is connected geographically. the Puna served particularly as a transporter of the cultural traits of the Pacific/Atacama groups and Central andean civilizations to southern and eastern regions.

Settlements in the area were small, and copied the architectural forms of other groups located around it. Thus a variety of cultural traditions were represented at the time of the Spanish entrance. It is not uncommon, for example to find the pucara, or village/fort, in the Puna settlements, expressing architecturally the influence of the Incas to the north, the Chilean Atacama groups, and the Humahuaca groups. Villages in the Puna were small, located in the small oases which spot the highland desert. The villages were agriculturally based, and had low-level irrigation systems. The principle economic activities, particularly after the Inca conquest, seems to have been the extensive herding of llamas

and alpacas. Collier, et al, (1982) suggest that the Puna may have served as one of the primary areas for the herding of the royal Inca herds. The archeological evidence suggests that the Puna was directly under Inca domination at the time of the Spanish arrival, as it had been of the Tiahuanaco culture before it. The borrowing involved in the exchange process is clearly visible in all the archeological levels of the region (Gonzalez and Perez 1976).

The indigenous groups in the region most important to the Spanish were those located in the mountain and highland valley areas located on the eastern and southern borders of the Puna. Known as Diaguitas or Calchaquies, these were the most populous groups in the whole of the Rio de La Plata region, and their technological development and socio-political structure was the most complex. Gonzalez and Perez (1976) estimate that approximately 215,000 Indians inhabited the area at the time of Spanish arrival, about two thirds of the entire indigenous population.[7] The estimates are based on reports of Indians distributed to the encomenderos, and are not reliable. Several groups were represented. The ethnohistorical data leads us to believe that the indigenous groups of the area were actually composed of a number of diverse community/forts which controlled surrounding territories, and protected both agricultural lands and trade routes which wound their way along the narrow river-valley bottoms and over mountain passes. Their warlike character is vividly described in early first-hand Spanish accounts, who,

from the moment of their entrance, ran into fierce resistance of the local populations.

The communities which the Spanish found did not, it seems, belong to a large state structure, and their integration into the Inca system seems to have been peripheral.[8] The little evidence that remains suggests that they were organized into loosely structured confederations of village/forts, which controlled surrounding territories of irrigated agriculture and pasturing, but more importantly, which controlled stretches of trade routes which wound their way along the river valley floors. The trade networks suggest a system of enforced specialization or distinctiveness similar to that found in precolonial Oaxaca, in which each community produced artesanal or other products for trade with other communities around it. The autonomous expression of each community found in different ceramic styles, weaving patterns, wood working, and other artisanal activities, can be seen despite certain commonalities which are seen in these activities throughout the region. Trade thus seems to have expressed the individual identity of communities; warfare seems to have defended against uniformity in the area. There was also a degree of vertical trading, as the valleys served as trade routes between the Puna and lowland Indian groups.

Each village was a political unit headed by a cacique.[9] The nature of their inter-community relations and alliances are virtually unknown. The warlike character of these groups were bitterly described by the Spanish; their fierce

resistance to even the earliest Spanish expeditions and their rebellion against Spanish rule for over a century was the most common element in accounts of Spanish settlers.

Little is known about the social organization of the highland valley groups. They lived in autonomous communities located on the sides of mountains, so as not to occupy precious agricultural space. Agriculture was intensive; elaborate systems of irrigation, inherited from pre-Inca periods, irrigated almost all of the agricultural lands. Maize, potatoes, squash and beans were primary crops. In Humahuaca at least 15 varieties of potatoes were cultivated (Canals Frau 1958). Villages appear to have been basically self-sufficient in terms of food. We have no knowledge of land tenure arrangements, although it appears clear from other evidence in the Central Andes and from Spanish accounts that land was not a commoditized item, and was probably allocated on a kinship basis (Collier, et al 1982). Hunting and gathering also seem to have constituted important economic activities. The gathering of algarroba, a bean which grows on a tree of the same name and which was prepared in a number of ways, was a fundamental source of gathered food in the area.[10] The gathering of the algarroba signified the end of the harvest period (Canals Frau 1958). The herding of llamas and alpacas was also practiced. These animals were utilized primarily for their wool and for carriage; their meat doesn't seem to have been a major part of indigenous diet.

The larger communities, such as Quilmes, Tastil, Tilcara,

and Humahuaca had populations of between 2000 and 5000 inhabitants. Settlement patterns varied. Building were round or rectangular. Generally their were built of dry stone (with no mortar), called pircas. In some areas this was substituted by mud brick or stone and mud plaster. In most communities what is most striking is the lack of a pre-arranged urban plan; buildings were simply added to the outer edges, as population increases necessitated. There are no defined streets in many of these communities; passage was attained atop the pircas or through common patios. Canals Frau (1958), among others, suggests that entrance into individual dwellings in many communities was probably through holes in the roofs, and inter-building communication was made by walking along the pircas. Community structure suggests also the minimal presence of a hierarchy of private space in the urban area, since patios and rooms communicated directly with one another, and dwelling construction was homogeneous throughout the communities. Some communities had central open areas which served religious purposes and also as centers of community activities. The settlement patterns suggest that communities did not have an "urban function"; differentiating urban from rural areas, and concentrating state power in the city. Rather, they seem to have represented nucleated settlements without class hierarchies or state organization.

Located close or next to the communities were the pucaras, hilltop or hillside fortresses which defended the communities and their territories. The most striking pucaras

were located on the pinnacles of small hilltops or abutments of mountain chains. They were virtually impenetrable. They often command incredible views up and down the narrow valleys, controlling virtually any movements in the areas. The pucaras point to the warring nature of these societies. That communities formed alliances with each other to combat common enemies is clear; these alliances, however, did not lead to the formation of larger state organizations controlled by a state apparatus. At the time of the Spanish conquest indigenous leaders emerged which commanded large fighting forces representing a number of communities.[11] The leaders, called caciques or curacas, did not seem, however, more than achieved positions in warfare. Warfare served various purposes. It was important in the defense of territory and community. More importantly, it was important in the defense of trade routes and of trade itself. Finally, warfare may have been carried out against expansionist tendencies, particularly of lowland groups such as the Chiriguanos. Gonzalez and Perez (1976) suggest that the highland valley areas may have constituted the southeast corner of the Inca empire.

The degree and importance of the Inca presence in the area is not thoroughly known, although the presence of the Inca empire is very visible. It is estimated that Incas first entered the area in 1480 (Gonzalez and Perez 1976), but it isn't clear whether they conquered the area militarily or only established an economic dominance. No accounts of the Inca

entrance are known. However, the brevity of their occupation in the region belies the influence they had on local cultures. The Inca influence can be seen in settlement patterns and fortifications; several forts located in the Humahuaca and Mojotoro valleys are attributed to the Incas.[12] The Incas constructed their roads in the area as well. Inca influence is seen in the ceramic styles, weapons and metallurgy as well. It is not clear whether the mitimaes, or work obligation, common to other parts of the Andes was imposed (Collier et al 1982). However, in Catamarca there remains a large Inca warehouse, and Canals Frau (1958) also states that an Inca curaca was instituted as political leader at La Paya, in the center of the Calchaqui Valleys. Quichua, the language common to the Incas, was spoken only in the Quebrada de Humahuaca; Cacan was the language spoken among the Diaguitas and Calchaquies. Thus, there is evidence that suggests that Inca incursion in the region was too short for a total incorporation into the empire to occur.[13]

Less is known about the lowland groups such as the Lules and Juries. This is due in part to the fact that their population was less dense, and their communities smaller and less well built. It is also due to the fact that they were unable to resist Spanish penetration, and thus were among the first groups to capitulate and earliest to disappear. Lowland groups tended to have an even less formal level of organization, many of them based on a semi-nomadic slash and burn type of technology. These groups concern us less here,

since they were less important in relation to Salta proper.

The conquest

To speak of the Spanish "conquest" in Salta, as commonly done in the history books (e.g. Cornejo 1934 and Lizondo Borda 1941), is a bit of a misnomer. The Spanish did not, strictly speaking, "conquer" Salta. Their entrance, rather, took the form of small disorganized expeditions into the region to lay claim to huge territories (which had been pre-defined before entrance) and their inhabitants. They set up small precarious forts with little foresight or sensitivity to the region, and set up elaborate legal and political institutions reflecting the general colonial administration of the empire, and which contradicted the precarious reality of their domination. They divided up for themselves the abundant lands and the indigenous populations living on them. The process was carried out as though in a vacuum: indigenous populations were treated not as competing societies, but as part of the landscape, one of the resources which existed there. The conquistadores fought among themselves as much as they fought the Indians for control over populations they hadn't yet dominated. Oblivious to the ecological lessons centuries had taught the Indians, the Spanish built their towns next to rivers, and had them quickly washed away by summer floods. The conquerors' settlements occupied scarce valley floors previously reserved for agricultural activities.[14]

The degree to which Spanish entrance affected the

indigenous societies during the first half century of occupation isn't clear. As Gonzalez Rodriguez (1984) notes the indigenous population was reduced drastically during this century, to at least half its size. Yet, on the other hand, the same author argues that the many community themselves were hardly touched by the early Spanish, either because of disinterest or because of resistance, leaving them virtually unaffected. The arrival of the Spanish, obviously, had a deep effect on many indigenous populations, although perhaps in a more indirect manner. Disease brought by the invaders decimated the population, as it did in other parts of the continent, and the process of depopulation was exacerbated by the forced shipments of Indians to the Potosi mines (Table 5).

Nor does the warfare that the Spanish waged against Indian populations depict a sense of "conquest". Battles tended to be sporadic and indecisive, and from the Spanish perspective were often more than not a matter of survival. Battles tended to be small, between communities and the expeditioners; no generalized warfare took place until after the Spanish were well entrenched. Some communities offered no resist at all, but rather formed alliances with the Spanish, and joined in battles against other communities. Thus, at times it isn't clear whether conflict was a reaction to the invasion or expressed localized conflicts. Ironically, as will be discussed below, the Spanish often battled among themselves with vehemence, and drew indigenous allies into those conflicts. Thus, the "conquest" as represented by the

Table 5: Population Estimates for the Colonial Province of Tucuman

Year	Indian	Spanish
1583	34,000	800
1586	54,000	1000
1596	56,500	
1600	50,000	
1607	20,304	3500
1617		8750
1629		2500
1636		2500
1673	15,934	
1692	7,199	
1700		10,000 to 12,500
1702	5002	
1708		15,000
1719	7,500	
1778-79	35,318	

Source: Gonzalez Rodriguez 1984:87.

typical conquest process which characterized Cortés and Pizarro did not occur in the Argentine provinces. When large scale Spanish-Calchaqui conflicts do take place in the 17th century, it represents a post-conquest period and is related to the formation of a peripheral class structure.

The Spanish first entered the northern Argentine area from the Alto Peru in 1536, on an exploratory trip headed by Diego de Almagro. At the time of their entry, the Spanish had already established themselves solidly in the central Andes and the Altiplano, as well as in Mexico. Thus, the "Province of Tucuman" constituted a hinterland in the colonial system. The purpose of Spanish expansionism was, at this point, clearly oriented toward supporting the already established and rapidly growing mining economy of the Altiplano. In many South American colonies the focus of attention was on the silver mines of Potosí. The development of peripheral areas was primarily to provide labor for the mines, as well as to provide subsistence goods and other necessities which the harsh environments of the mining areas could not provide. The high density of indigenous population in the northwest made it an area of particular interest to mining entrepreneurs, who saw it as a primary source of labor. The area served later as a source of food and wood, locally manufactured goods, mules and cattle. The development of this trade will be developed in the next chapter. The importance of this orientation in the settlement of Salta must be stressed: until the 19th century Salta's economic strengths were founded upon

its peripheral character.[15] Its class structure likewise reflected its dependence on the central mining economies.

Spanish entrance into Salta took place under the authorization of Viceroy Francisco de Toledo, an innovator and visionary of the importance of the mining economy. His authorization permitted Diego de Rojas to organize an expedition to explore "...the new regions of the Provincia of Tucuman (Levillier 1945)." The orientation of the expedition is apparent, since it was backed financially by three partners, all who had interests in the mines of Potosi. De Rojas' expedition headed down the Quebrada de Humahuaca and the Valles Calchaquies, and divided in two. One division went to Chile, the other headed toward Santiago del Estero. Subsequent expeditions followed this trajectory.

Spanish control over the newly explored territory was not established until cities were founded, for it was from the urban base that spatial control over territories was put into effect in the form of mercedes or land grants. The founding of cities legitimized colonial territorial control, for rural areas were considered to be the hinterlands (campañas) of urban centers. The building of cities was as much a conceptual reordering of the political dimensions of space as a material act; thus, legal and religious institutions were set up first in the creation of a city, prior to the construction of its buildings. The benefits which accrued to expeditioners (generally non-noble mercenaries) for their participation in the "conquest" were tantalizing, even if

somewhat ephemeral. Participation was rewarded with land grants, sometimes an assignment of Indians in the form of the encomienda, and a place in the urban political structure as a vecino.[16] Actual well being, however, depended on the availability of indigenous labor, which in turn depended on the geographical location of the settlement and on indigenous receptivity to this arrangement. The first major ventures settling of cities were shortlived, due to Indian hostility, the depopulation of indigenous communities, and the infighting among Spanish over access to encomiendas. Indian hostility was often sparked by Spanish mistreatment; consequently the Spanish found relying on the cooperation of Indian leaders or caciques, to establish their control of Indian communities. It is possible that this resulted in the transformation of the cacique role in the region.

The Colonial Class Structure in Formation

As mentioned earlier, the presence and conquest of the Spanish in the area did not signify the immediate formation of a class structure in Salta, but rather a tenuous occupation of the region. The Spanish redefined the territory in a manner that would make sense for the colonial system of class domination that had been set up elsewhere in the conquered areas of the American continent. However, the definition of space was very different from actual occupation and practice of colonial structures, and it was long before many indigenous populations of the area were actually incorporated into a

class structure. This class structure which eventually emerged was a combination of elements of the Spanish social system and the realities of the colonial system imposed on the class structure.

Several key elements are involved in the colonial social structure. We will explore a number of these: first, the relationship of Salta's colonial society to the larger Spanish colonial system centered in Peru; second, the nature of the cities; and finally, the encomienda.

a. Salta and the world system during the conquest

As noted above, Spanish expansion into the River Plate basin occurred at a relatively late period in the colonization process. The first entrance into the area by Diego de Almagro was in 1536; the second occurred 7 years later in 1543 by Diego de Rojas. By this time the Spanish presence on the continent was known by the indigenous groups of the area, as Nuñez del Prado makes a reference to the presence of Galician hens in the area. It is possible, as suggested by Fortuny (1966), that Indians fleeing from the altiplano settled in the Salta region. Knowledge concerning the Spanish may have contributed to the resistance the first expeditioners encountered.

Spanish interest in the area at this time was related to the discovery and exploitation of the Potosi silver mines. Potosi was discovered in 1545 (Buechler 1981). The mining economy experienced an explosive growth as a consequence of

the relatively easy means it provided to enrichment and also because of the Crown's encouragement regarding mining activities. The interest of the crown in the mining economy can be explained by the fact that as an empire it had serious financial difficulties. Wallerstein (1974) explains this crisis in terms of an overextended expansion in Europe, an overextended bureaucratic structure which was too large for its economic base, and a political system which rewarded primarily an aristocratic class which didn't produce the empire's wealth. The crown fell increasingly into a dependence on a bullionist economy to finance its debts (see Wallerstein, 1974 and Garcia Fuentes 1980). In 1577 it went bankrupt. Charles V abdicated the throne to his son Philip II, who subsequently lost much of the empire's holdings in Europe. The reorganization of the empire did not alleviate the pressures its government, and its increasing dependence on other centers of power in Europe, and thus the continued system of incentives for the production of silver, the largest source of revenue for the crown, and other means of creating revenue were actively encouraged. One revenue-raising device was the encomienda, another the sale of colonial offices.[17]

The crown appropriated a fifth of the silver produced by means of a tax called the quinta. The mining of silver was financed privately although the government provided loans and subsidies. Originally the most important activity in the silver process was mining itself; however, with the introduction of the amalgamation process in 1580 the owners

of the stamping plants, or ingenios, became the most important and lucrative aspect of mining. Eventually all the Potosi mines were in effect owned by ingenio owners (Buechler 1981). An upper class of enormously wealthy mining entrepreneurs came into being which extended their economic and political interests elsewhere. Many bought haciendas in surrounding valleys, producing goods which they sold in Potosi. They also became involved in extending trade ties over long distances, not only to Spain and other major centers of the American continent, but also to Potosi's hinterlands such as the Rio de la Plata basin. Many bought titles of nobility as well (another source of revenue for the crown) and established mayorazgos which guaranteed a source of sustenance for their heirs.[18] The power the mining barons eventually obtained was demonstrated time and again in their various challenges to and the concessions won from the crown and the viceroy.[19]

The critical element in the profitability of the mines was labor. This was particularly true during the early stages of mining in which silver was purified through a heating process. This process needed enormous amounts of manpower because it was both a slow and a small scale processing system. With the introduction of mercury amalgamation, processing required less labor relative to output, but production levels had increased, increasing the need for labor in the mines, in transportation, and in other aspects of the mining process. Potosi is located on a high plateau, virtually devoid of human population. The need and search for

labor was a constant preoccupation throughout the highland mining areas, and the success of a mining entrepreneur depended a great deal on his ability to acquire a steady and guaranteed labor supply. Individual ingenio owners at times employed thousands of workers, both in the mines and in the ingenios. The primary means for obtaining labor was through the mita.

b. The City

> ...Por tanto, su Senoría el dicho Señor Gobernador, comformandose con el dicho parecer mando hacer e se hizo un hoyo en este dicho asiento, donde cerca de el estaba un palo puesto y dijo: Que en nombre de la Santisima Trinidad, Padre, Hijo y Espiritu Santo, tres personas distintas y un solo Dios verdadero, e de la gloriosisima Virgen su bendita Madre, e del Apostol Santiago, luz y espejo de las Espanas, y en nombre de su Magestad el Senor Rey Felipe Segundo, como su Gobernador e Capitan General Justicia Mayor de estas dichas provincias del Tucuman, como leal criado y Vasallo suyo, e por virtud de sus Reales poderes e instrucciones mandaba e mando poner e se puso el dicho Palo, por Picota, en el dicho hoyo que asi esta hecho e acostumbrado en las demas ciudades de estas Provincias Reinos y Senorios de su Magestad en su Real nombre como mero e mixto imperio y entera jurisdiccion. Donde dijo que senalaba e senalo que fuese la plaza publica de esta dicha ciudad, y en medio de la cuadra de dicha plaza, y que de hoy en adelante para siempre jamas se nombre e llama esta dicha ciudad la ciudad de Lerma en el valle de Salta, provincia del Tucuman, e que asi se ponga en todos los autos y escrituras que se ofrecieren...
>
> A los 16 días del mes de Abril de mil quinientos e ochenta e dos. (Legal document founding the city of Salta, quoted in Sola, 1945:7)

Salta was founded in 1582 at the commands of the Viceroy of Peru, Francisco de Toledo, after several attempts at founding a city in the area. The Viceroy's interest in settling the area was related to his efforts at modernizing

and strengthening the mines of Potosi. Salta was to serve as a hinterland to the mines, providing key resources and indigenous labor. In the 1560's several attempts were made to found a city in the southern part of the Valle de Lerma; these were named San Clemente I and II. Another attempt was made in 1565 to the east of the present city, in the present area of Cobos. Documents demonstrate that the Spanish intended originally to found a city in the Valles Calchaquies, due to the centrality of the location in relationship both to the concentration of indigenous populations located there, and also due to the strategic value of the area, located directly on the key route to the Upper Peru. The settlements failed, however, due to indigenous hostility, and ultimately, after a great deal of debate among settlers of Santiago del Estero, the site of Salta was chosen due precisely to the fact that it distant from most indigenous groups, and thus thought to be easier to defend. The city was besieged time and time again until the beginning of the 18th century, from Indians located both to the west and to the east.[20] The tenuous settlement of the city lasted until mid-18th century, and it failed to provide comforting defense in its part of the province.

Giddens (1984) notes that cities are social expressions of different class structures. He notes that cities in a capitalist system have a different function and different character than do pre-capitalist or semi-peripheral zones. He notes that class structures in peripheries of the

capitalist system were divided to a degree along rural/urban lines. Urban structures are defined or constructed along different lines than rural counterparts. Cities are centers of power, where elites reside and government functions are centralized. Cities are residing points of the elites. The spanish colonial system was built upon a rural-urban dichotomy. Cities were constructed to create a class structure along these lines. The nature of Spanish colonization was two-pronged: control over extensions of territory and its population through the encomienda, and the setting up of cities.

In the colonial province of Tucuman, as in the cases of other areas of Spanish America, numerous cities were founded. The first was established in 1553 near the present Santiago de Estero; it was soon moved due to flooding and indigenous attacks. Other cities included Londres, Barco, Belen, San Miguel, Esteco, Cordoba, and Jujuy.

As Levillier (1982) has noted, the city in the Spanish colonial system was a juridical construct which included not only the city itself, but its entire territory. The city included not only its actual urban structure, but the territory or campaña over which it exercised governing power as well. The territory of a city was defined legally as the space over which the government of the city had control, and was put into practice by the partitioning of grants of lands to the vecinos. Thus, the founding of a city involved the redefinition of the space it occupied: it was incorporated

into crown property with city jurisdiction over it. Excluded only were territories of the encomienda, which belonged to the Indian communities which occupied them, and ultimately came under crown jurisdiction. Grants of land apportioned by the cities' cabildos could not include these lands.

A number of types of land were included in the colonial city. Vecinos were given plots of urban land to construct residences called solares. The solar included enough space to house the owners' horses when brought into the city. It also provided space for small gardens, often located in the patio of the house. Small plots located outside the city called suertes de chacra were given for agricultural uses. These were away from the cattle raising areas. The largest size of land grant was the estancia, which was also located at a further distance from the urban center. The estancia was by law 1/2 legua in width and 1,1/2 legua in length, enough to support 1000 head of cattle. In Salta, the division of lands conformed to "natural boundaries" rather than to specific size. Measurements were standardized by the crown in order to prevent the formation of excessively large landholdings, a problem which had plagued it in Spain. Nevertheless, by the 17th century land concentration was occurring in all the American continent. Cities had lands owned by the city itself, either in the form of baldios (empty lots), or the ejido, located on the city's outskirts. The latter could not be sold, but could be rented as a source of taxes. There were also common lands and properties, which included all

running water, pasture lands for minor cattle, and montes, from which fire wood was collected. Lands were designated to individuals for their service to the crown. Immediately following the founding of Salta land grants were free, but in the 17th century lands were bought from the state.

Apportionment was directed by the governor.[21] There was an abundance of land, and yet political disputes were present even in the early days of colonization. Conflicts often created a factionalizing of the community, drawing in its members and even indigenous groups. Conflicts may have already had a great deal to do with the peripheral nature of the settlement, as factions from Potosi and other areas were revealed at local levels.

Vecinos who had voting and governing rights were defined as landowners. The cabildo, the local branch of government representing local interests, had a different jurisdiction from the governor. The cabildo represents at its outset local interests which at times came in conflict with the bureaucratic colonial structure. Cabildo members were "elected" by the vecinos of the city, and their functions were temporary. From the 18th century on the positions of the cabildo were bought and sold as a means of raising revenues for the crown.[22] Generally the cabildo represented the interests of the "criollos" and the province.

The Encomienda

One of the fundamental building blocks of Salta's class structure was the encomienda. Its persistence in Salta as one of the key economic institutions until the late 18th century demonstrates its importance. The colonial province of Tucuman had close to 150 encomenderos scattered throughout its territory by 1583; a century later that number had double despite the fact that the Indian population had fallen to less than one fifth its original size. In Salta proper the same pattern could be seen (see Table 6).[23] The average size of the encomienda was relatively small, with only three or four families per encomendero; nevertheless, the lack of a labor pool and the benefits of the encomienda arrangements made the encomienda highly sought after. The lack of other economic resources in the province, particularly when the markets of Potosi dried up on the 17th century, made the encomienda one of the fundamental sources of livelihood for Spanish settlers. Gonzalez Rodriguez (1984:94) states:

> "...by the end of the 16th century, and with the province for all intents and purposes conquered, the encomienda had been able to establish itself solidly, becoming one of the fundamental pillars of the political, economic and social development in the provincial territory. This process was aided by the complete lack of deposits of minerals or precious stones in the region, so that the institution gained the attention not only of the first settlers but also in later years, of their descendants, since it provided the best conditions for a well accommodated lifestyle, providing as it did the labor necessary for the cultivation of the land and the care of cattle, which were the principle activities of the inhabitants of the province."[24]

Table 6: Evolution of the Encomienda and Encomendero Population in Salta

Year	Encomienda Population	Encomenderos
1586	5000	
1590	4000	
1596	5000	
1607	1800	30
1673	1996	
1692-94	1104	
1702	319	23
1719	446	41
1778-79	3070[1]	

Source: Gonzalez Rodriguez 1984.

[1]Including newly conquered groups from the eastern part of the province who were resettled on existing highland or valley encomiendas.

As an economy which was located on the fringes of and dependent on the Potosi mining center, the availability of labor became highly valued. Indian labor could be turned into a source of wealth immediately through its rental, sale, or loan to the mine owners, trade caravan drivers, or to other settlers in the area. Indian labor also provided a source of subsistence provisioning to the encomendero, who was not responsible either for the reproduction of the Indian labor force nor for its caretaking. Legally the encomendero had the obligation to pay for the labor any Indians provided him. The wage, however, was low, and irregularities ran rampant during much of the colonial period. Labor shortages were one of the primary problems the province faced throughout the colonial period, and the encomienda thus served to separate the encomendero from the mere land or hacienda owner.

The first encomienda was authorized in 1549 by the president of the Real Audiencia of Lima, de la Gasca, authorizing Nunez del Prado to penetrate the province, to found a city and to distribute to its vecinos the surrounding Indians in encomiendas. The authorization commands Nuñez del Prado:

> "...you will divide among good and conscientious persons ... the indians of the territory that you conquer and pacify, appraising the tributes and service that such indians will give before those you have designated as encomenderos are given possession of the repartimientos and encomiendas of indians, considering always that such appraisal should be moderate and that their fulfillment by those indians not be overly "relevant" (burdensome) so that their work not be a block against the imparting of our Christian religion and good customs, so that

> relieved and unburdened by work, and treated with humility and justice and reason, they should live among us and be persuaded to convert to our holy catholic faith and to imitate our good customs." (Levillier 1931:161 - quoted in Gonzalez Rodriguez 1984)[25]

The proviso was carried out in 1550 with the founding of Barco I by Nuñez del Prado, in the general vicinity of the city of Santiago del Estero. 36 encomiendas were handed out. The founding of each subsequent city was accompanied by new distributions of encomiendas so that by 1583 153 encomiendas were listed for the cities of Cordoba, Talavera, Santiago del Estero and San Miguel (Comadran 1969). Salta had just been founded, and wasn't yet listed. Four years later with the inclusion of the new cities of La Rioja, Salta and Esteco, 200 encomenderos were listed. The encomienda was a fundamental aspect of the conquest process. Its functions included subduing the surrounding Indian population, providing defense for the cities, creating a productive structure that could serve Spanish colonial purposes both in terms of setting up an economic system and also in aiding the process of colonization itself in a financially strapped state. It should be noted that in the early stages of settlement a large portion of the vecinos may have been designated encomiendas; however, the percentage dropped rapidly until only a small number of elites had the privilege.

Little research has been done on the process of setting up the encomiendas themselves in northwest Argentina. One of the reasons for this may be that often encomenderos were

designated their encomiendas prior to the actual process of subduing the Indians. They were then to use their own resources to subdue their communities, Christianize them, and provide for them. Consequently, in many cases few official records of the actual process are left. The point has wider implications, for it sets up a system in which the influence of the state is limited, and doesn't reach into the rural hinterland. The encomendero thus served as linkage between the colonial state and the rural populations.

It is also true that encomiendas were often distributed before a great deal of information was known about the indigenous communities in question. Gonzalez Rodriguez (1984) notes that this was a frequent cause of conflict between encomenderos, since it often meant that the same groups of Indians were designate to more than one encomendero.

What is certain about the process of establishing the encomiendas was that it varied greatly in the colonial province of Tucuman. The earliest Indians subdued were the lowland Indians, the Juries, Lules, Comechingones, although, it might be noted, they were not the first groups with which the Spanish came in contact. The rapid establishment of the encomienda in this area can be explained by the low densities of the indigenous groups, their relatively simple political organization and the low level of their material culture and technology.[26] Individual encomenderos accompanied by a number of soldiers had a relatively simple task of subduing theses groups.

The case of the Calchaqui, Diaguitas and other highland groups was another matter, however. Ironically, it was in these groups that the Spanish were most interested, not only for their numbers, but also for the strategic value of the areas they controlled. Nevertheless, it wasn't until a century after the first penetration, after numerous founding of cities and subsequent destruction of those cities, and after several large scale military campaigns that the communities were finally subdued and exiled to other parts of the province. The high level of political organization and sophisticated knowledge of guerrilla type warfare made them formidable enemies. Thus, it was only after 1670 that the communities were changed in an irreversible fashion, and integrated wholly into the encomienda. The fact that they were displaced made them more vulnerable to both abuse and to illness and poverty, leading to a rapid decline in their numbers.

Finally, the Chaco Indians such as the Toba and Chiriguano were only gradually subdued. As they were subdued they were captured and placed into existing encomiendas. This may be due to the fact that they occupied relatively marginal lands which weren't of great interest to the Spanish. Accounts of battles with the Tobas suggest also that they were fierce in their resistance to the colonizers, and thus caused great fear among the Spanish.

The institutionalization of the encomienda reflects the nature of the colonization process and the set up of a

colonial class structure. Wallerstein (1974) notes that while the encomienda had feudal tendencies, it was in several respects fundamentally different from medieval feudalism. It was first of all a system which produced for a world market and depended upon a strong central government. Thus, the class of elites which arose from the colonization process and from the encomienda was dependent directly on the crown, and had no independent being. While the encomendero enjoyed the labor of Indians, he neither owned the Indian nor the land on which the Indian was located; these were perpetually in the hands of the crown (Wallerstein 1974; Wolf 1984). And usufruct of Indian labor was not held in perpetuity, but deliberately controlled by the crown. Furthermore, the crown denied petitions by encomenderos to form part of the Spanish feudal hierarchy.

Furthermore, the encomienda served to establish a class structure which could contribute to the core, particularly as it supported a bullionist economy (Garcia Fuentes 1980). A tension was created due to the overexploitation of the Indians on the American continent, but the crown detained this legally through a codicil passed in 1542 prohibiting the personal use of Indians and establishing in its place a system of tribute. Wallerstein (1974) notes that this in essence represents the establishment of a "coerced-free labor system". The encomendero could gain use of Indian labor if he could demonstrate need, and if it was done so in a moderate fashion. Encomenderos were to pay wages to Indians who worked

for them, and were to release them after their predetermined term of labor had terminated, through the repartimiento, or mita, as it was known in the Andean colonies. Despite its efforts to stop abuse, the practice continued, and the Indian population continued to decline.

The class structure which emerged in Salta consisted of a group of elites located at the top of the social hierarchy which were made up primarily of encomenderos and officials with government posts. The local encomienda class formed a tightly knit elite in colonial Salta, although limited in power by the small size of the population they belonged to and the marginal area they inhabited. The city of Salta had a population of perhaps 800 around mid-18th century. The principle characteristic of this class was that its expansion and reproduction were limited not only by the limited number of Indians available, but also due to their dependence on the colonial state for their social position. The encomienda was normally designated for two lifetimes; in certain cases it was extended to three or even four generations. Dependence on the colonial state apparatus made it a class which focussed more on its ties to the colonial centers such as Lima and Charcas, or in some cases even on Spain, than on local society. This exacerbated tensions at the local level with criollo elites, since the latter were often limited in their access to power positions. Furthermore, the reproduction of their class position often depended on the encomendero and oficialist class, since these often controlled the source of

labor. A lack of extensive political ties also created for them a politically unstable situation.

The encomendero class used its position to gain power and wealth for themselves and their families. A degree of nepotism did occur despite its illegality, and in some cases families were owners of more than one encomienda, a practice prohibited by the crown (Gonzalez Rodriguez 1984). In their upward mobility encomenderos often preferred to find a niche in Charcas or Lima than to remain in Salta, since the very nature of Salta's position restricted their aspirations. In order to gain more autonomy for their class they sought constantly for the holding of encomiendas in perpetuity, or requested for the crown the designation of a titulo nobiliario.[27] It is interesting few families belonging to the encomienda class survive as members of the oligarchy. Their names, in most cases, disappear following the revolutionary period. It suggests in fact that they could not reproduce their class position without direct dependence on the state; the disappearance of the state apparatus meant their own disappearance. This wasn't universally the case, however. In later stages of the colonial period the encomendero class was able to integrate through marriage into the merchant and hacienda-owning class. But their class base was nevertheless destroyed. During the revolution many fled to areas controlled by Spain in Peru and the Upper Peru.

Other vecinos followed, consisting mainly of large land-owners. Until the 18th century other vecinos lacked power due

to the inability to realize accumulation through productive activity (see Table 7). There were a number of reasons for this: a localized market which was too small to sustain an hacienda economy, a serious shortage of free labor, a stagnated regional economy, and weak ties to the colonial state. Both the encomendero and Spanish officials (the generic term didn't always reflect reality) provided a source of accumulation to the core, particularly in its role as a base of support for the mining economy, as well as through taxes and the buying of office. At the lower end of the hierarchy were the Indian communities. Ethnicity played a great role since it was in the interest of the encomendero to maintain the indigenous communities. The crown's "humanistic expression" thus had a level of functionality. The indigenous community was transformed particularly in its power structure. The role of the cacique was deeply changed as he became an essential and powerful broker between the encomendero and the Spanish settler. The cacique was able to benefit the community vis a vis the Spanish colonists, and at the same time was able to apply coercion and influence internal community power relations to the benefit of the encomendero. The importance of the role of the cacique is demonstrated through numerous incidents during the colonial process, particularly in the Calchaqui wars, where caciques were able to mobilize large numbers of communities to battle and to negotiate with the Spanish. One such case is that of Pedro Bohorquez, the false Inca. Portrayed by historians as

Table 7: The Colonial Spanish Population of the Province of Tucuman

PROVINCE	VECINOS	
	1708	1778
Salta	416	3190
San Miguel de Tucuman	491	3166
Santiago del Estero	808	2247
Catamarca	700	2247
San Salvador de Jujuy	233	653
La Rioja	159	2617
Cordoba		18,493
Total	2807[1]	34,956

Source: Gonzalez Rodriguez 1984:81-82.

[1]Without including Cordoba's population.

a renegade, Bohorquez was a Spanish descendant from the Central Andean area who was able to establish himself in the Calchaqui Valleys during the 1650's and 1660's. He was the prime initiator behind the largest Indigenous uprising in the colonial history of the area, and was considered the prime negotiator for Indian demands. The Spanish did their negotiation through him and his lieutenants. He was finally captured in 1667, and the movements suffered defeat. The Spanish secured their victory by dividing communities and transplanting them elsewhere, both in the province and outside.[28] Ultimately the example serves to demonstrate the nature of the caciques' broker position within the class structure. It might be noted that the practice of working through a cacique was Spanish policy throughout the American continent, and that caciques were able to accumulate wealth through their position and in some cases to integrate themselves into Spanish elite society.

The encomienda eventually disappeared in Salta in the mid-18th century, long after it had disappeared in many other parts of the continent. The Bourbon reforms formally abolished the institution, but was actually only an expression of changes which had already occurred. In Salta the major changes occurred as a result of the opening up of new markets and due to the mule trade. The opening of the Port of Buenos Aires, and the subsequent formation of the Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires which included the upper Peru and its mines, made Salta a key mediterranean port through which supplies and

mules moved northward to the mines, and silver made its way down to the Port. The result was a rejuvenated merchant and landed class, which became the center of accumulation during the golden years of Salta's history. The establishment of this class created tensions between the officialist stated-based class, expressed symbolically in the tension between criollos and Spanish. The crown's efforts to contain the merchant class and its shifting alliances to the new European core, led to a rift which eventually led to the downfall of the empire. We will explore this in the next chapter. It was from this class that Salta's oligarchy arose. The new class was characterized by an independence from the central state (by definition it was the state), but its dependence on and involvement in a world system destroyed such tendencies.

In contrast to other areas of Spanish colonization, the land itself was of little value in the early stages of colonization in the Salta provinces. The primary interest of the colonizers, evidence that conquest documents seem to suggest, was the indigenous labor which was used as a labor force in the Potosi mines. The indigenous labor, however, could be had only through the "encomienda", a form of possession of the land, giving the encomendero rights to Indians which occupied the land. By the time of Spanish occupation of Salta, Spanish law forbade the enslavement of Indians, and their forced labor as well. Consequently, labor usually was obtained through the "loan" or rental arrangements

of Indians that belonged to encomenderos. Evidence thus seems to suggest that apart from the encomendero exportation of Indian labor, the indigenous communities were not incorporated into an exploited labor force in the early stages of the colonization process. Some indigenous communities were moved to the cabeceras of encomiendas, forming new villages which were more directly under control of the Spanish, but there is no evidence that this was the most common practice, nor that it occurred in the earliest stages.[29] It should be noted that these communities were not considered urban centers, even when their size competed with the Spanish cities; they were considered to be generically different. Indians located on the encomiendas were allowed to continue their subsistence practices, together with the service they performed for the encomendero.

What changed this situation was the stagnation of the Potosi mines at the end of the 16th century. The depression of the mining economy was deeply felt in the hinterland provinces. Consequently the regional economies became isolated and turned in on themselves. Those who held land began utilizing that land in somewhat subsistence activities. Indigenous labor became incorporated more directly into a class structure. In many communities of the highlands this seems to have resulted in greater indigenous resistance.

It was first and foremost an economic system that was peripheral. Accumulation was the consequence of successful relationships to outside economic structures. From its

inception the Salta economy was dependent on the performance of the Potosi mining economy, and in later periods this dependence was transferred to Buenos Aires. Efforts at independence failed, due to a variety of factors. Population size was too small, so that no adequate internal markets could be created (cities in themselves were too small a market). The class structure itself was inadequate to handle internal autonomy; the class structure was a consequence of the external logic of the economy. Resources were too scarce internally; it took outside resources to build an economic base of accumulation. And political autonomy was never adequate in establishing economic independence. Thus, the class structure ultimately reflected the dependent nature of Salta's economy.

Second, it was a top heavy class structure. What is meant by this is that it was the dominant classes which were most vulnerable and unstable. The peasant and rural classes were relatively stable, less affected by changes in the world economy. Changes and transformations of the world system and the local system occurred without the consequent unnerving of the local dominated classes. In contrast, the dominant classes were violently changed or destroyed, vulnerable to outside forces.[30]

Conclusion

Salta's oligarchy views the conquest as its beginnings. Great effort goes into tracing the exact chronology of the

conquest. It is as though Salta's social life finds its roots in them. The emphasis in these historical searchings, however, is not on the structural historical outcome of the beginnings. Rather, the emphasis is on the moral character of the foundations, and on the "kinship" of that morality. Salteño society is an heir, through moral genealogy, of the beginnings.

In the details of the conquest the moral character and fortitude of the conquistadores is embellished. A "moral" search for an explanation of anomalous behavior of the conquistadores is undertaken. Historians have placed carried out extensive searches on their noble Spanish backgrounds; nevertheless, since many conquistadores have somewhat obscure Spanish beginnings, the historians use generalized concepts, such as one or another belonging to an important family. In the same vein of moral history, the fierceness and nobility of Indians are affirmed time and again as well; the cause of conflicts is hardly important. The fact that the battle takes place during the conquest ennobles it. The ennobling of the battle puts the "beginning" on a higher plane, the actual material causes of the conflicts are somewhat irrelevant. The founding of cities also are given the significance that in reality they probably didn't have. Their small sizes and tenuous and tortured survival during several centuries is hardly portrayed in the accounts of their glorious foundations. Conflicts between the Spanish, recognized as such, are treated as tragic episodes. It is ultimately the

hermeneutic of the detail that defines the moral character of the beginning.

It is not the intention here to carry out a hermeneutic of the beginnings of Salta's oligarchy. It represents an example of the process of mythification. What is of note is that there is little connection between the image of the conquest and the oligarchy itself. The conquest may have laid down the moral foundation and the structural base upon which the oligarchy later built, but there is no evidence that it in fact arose at this time. In fact, the relationship between the conquistadores and the Salteño society is vague. Few families descend from conquistadores. The relationship between today's landowners and those that were originally distributed are likewise vague.

A number of conclusions can be made about the class formation which emerged from the colonization period. First, it established verticality and traditionalism as primary characteristics of the class system. Verticality was expressed in the relationship between the communities and the encomendero; the cacique served as broker between the community and the larger colonial structure. Furthermore, this class structure highlighted ethnicity as an important element in its formation.

Second, labor was introduced into the class structure and remained essentially unfree and uncommoditized. The system of class domination restricted labor movement (and thus a labor market) and reinforced ethnicity. Labor was not a

commodity in this system, at least strictly speaking; it was valuable, and the basis of accumulation. Nevertheless, it couldn't be owned or sold on the market. As a consequence, the laboring class, Indians, lacked a unified class character.

Third, an ambiguous relationship seemed to exist between the preservation of an Indian labor force, and its exploitation. The state made attempts at its preservation; but the temporary nature of the encomienda and the binding it represented, as well as the peripheral and non-reproducing class structure, may have contributed to the extensive disappearance of Indian groups.

Fourth, the political structure was defined by the colonization process. State control ends at the "edge" of the city. The labor class located in the rural areas has no state representation. Abuses of rural labor are punished by replacing the repartimiento, not by giving the worker representation within the state. State thus fails to serve as mediator between classes. The state reinforces the ambiguity of the encomendero role.

Finally, there is not only a political division, but a social and ideological division between the rural and the urban as well. The city is the center of power; labor exists in rural areas. Elites center their influence in urban areas; here they make their ties to the state. But by doing so they also limit the influence of the state in rural areas.

Endnotes to Chapter III:

1.Fortuny (1966) and Gonzalez Rodriguez (1983) note that indigenous labor had through the encomienda was sold or rented to the mines of the Potosí region, despite its illegality. The authors note that this practice was a major cause for the rapid depletion of indian groups in the Salta region. Buechler (1979) states that even when they weren't directly sold or rented by encomenderos, indians often fled to Potosí to take advantage of the free labor contracts which, although submitting them to harsh conditions, were preferred to the personal service required on the encomienda.

2.Where possible the term "indigenous" is used to refer to Native American peoples. "Indian" is utilized in the chapter to refer to the communities that the Spanish have redefined in their penetration into the province. This seems appropriate, since the term that the Spanish used was "indian"; but it also helps to distinguish those groups that have been affected by Spanish presence from those communities that were "genuinely" indigenous.

3.Turbay (1985) notes this problem. This is said with a great deal of caution. However, when exploring the earlier ethnographic accounts one finds a great deal of reliance on Spanish writings of the time. Where this was a rich source of ethnological materials in the case of Mesoamerica and the central Andean area, it is less so in the case of Argentina. As will be discussed below, Spanish conceptualization of indigenous communities in the northwest region of the Argentina was of a utilitarian nature, primarily oriented toward one of two goals: the successful waging of war and pacification, and the distribution of encomiendas. Both of these factors may have deeply redefined the nature of the indigenous community, without Spanish acknowledgement of having done so. The result is that ethnohistorical accounts may be somewhat misrepresentative. Early church accounts, the most reliable sources in other parts of the colonies, are lacking until the later part of the colonial period.

4.The importance of this observation lies in the fact that one must distinguish, in the historical analysis, between "culture clash", which occurs when two cultures originally meet, and the issues of ethnicity which occurs within a class formation.

5.A problem further exacerbating this archaeological dilemma is common to many other regions in the world. Archaeological studies often reflect contemporary national boundaries due to the nature of funding and research programs, which are themselves nationally bounded. Ironically one speaks of

Argentine archaeology although there is no basis for this distinction.

6.This scheme has major consequences for the internal definition of the communities. Communities were defined not by settlement pattern, but by political organization, or more specifically, by the presence of caciques. What role the cacique played in the prehispanic structure of the communities is not clear. It is clear that their position of power within the communities was redefined and re-enforced by the Spanish themselves. There is a certain irony to this, since "caciquismo" is seen today as one of the primary surviving indigenous institutions.

7.Gonzalez Rodriguez (1984) places the number quite a bit lower, closer to 50,000.

8.Turbay (1983) suggests that on the of the principle fortresses of the Calchaquí system, Quilmes, was in fact Inca. It is not my purpose to dispute, or even question his conclusions. It is simply necessary to point out that most other experts in the area do not come to that conclusion. (Canals Frau, 1958; Gonzalez Rodriguez, 1984; Gonzalez y Perez, 1976).

9.It should be noted here that our knowledge of the cacique system may be somewhat distorted due to the Spanish colonial system. The Spanish defined the indian community unit by means of the cacique, with the consequence that the role of the cacique may have been drastically altered when the Spanish arrived, even though it was an "indigenous system".

10.Aloja, a fermented drink, is the most famous product made from the algarroba. As Fortuny (1955) notes, algarroba is one of the most common themes within the region's folklore.

11.For this reason particularly the Spanish began giving "generic" names to the indigenous groups they came in conflict with. The most infamous were the Calchaquíes, named after the cacique Calchaquí, who was able to confront the Spanish with a large fighting force during a 20 year period at the end of the 16th century.

12.Turbay (1983) suggests that Quilmes was an Inca fortification as well.

13.One of the reasons that explain the lack of ethnohistorical evidence regarding the influence of the Incas was the late arrival of the Spanish into Salta. Permanent Spanish settlement in the area didn't take place until 1553, long after the central Inca empire had been destroyed. Thus, it is possible that the Spanish encountered a somewhat recently modified political and social structure which had been

produced by the disappearance of the Inca presence in the region.

14.The obvious might be stated here, and that is that Spanish settlement patterns were very much influenced by indigenous settlement patterns. Spanish cities by definition were located in the vicinity of indigenous communities. the point is interesting, since it signifies that to a degree Spanish settlements mirrored the settlement patterns established prior to their arrival. This may have had later repercussions in Salta's (and Latin America's) social and political organization, since the location of cities was not necessarily adaptive to a territorially based system of state control.

15.It is interesting that Salteño and Argentine history do not stress this point, but rather tend to emphasize the interconnectedness of Salta with Lima and the Peruvian court (see Frias 1981). A task yet needed is the tracing of the relationship during the colonial period of the agrarian based oligarchy in the periphery with the mining bourgeoisie of the Upper Peru.

16.Vecino signifies dweller, resident. Its significance lies in the emphasis on the urban nature of the resident, connotating perhaps the bourgeois nature of the settlement process. In the early stages of colonization vecino was a virtually universal category of Spanish settlers. Later in the colonization process, however, it became the basis for the formation of a privileged elite. Vecinos had a vote in the cabildo, the local seat of government. One could become a vecino only through the ownership of land.

17.Wallerstein (1974:pp) argues that in fact the encomienda created little extra revenue for the crown. Nevertheless, it was a system in which the cost of colonization was minimal, and provided a base for an "extractive economy".

18.The mayorazgo is a system of inheritance in which the older male child receives both property and the title of the parent. Practiced in feudal Spain, its implementation in the Americas, a short one to be sure, differed in a number of crucial respects. Mayorazgos in the Americas were not backed up by the feudal economic system, nor by a feudal class structure. It thus lacked the stability found in Spain, and was subject to the economic uncertainties of the new system. It was obtained by entrepreneurs, not a feudal noble class, altering the original economic base. And its American implementation seems to have carried little weight in Spanish society. As an institution it died out prior to the close of the colonial period.

19.Buechler (1981) discusses various instances where this occurred. One such instance was the concession the Potosinos obtained in maintaining the mita labor system, even after the crown had abolished it.

20.A law was passed shortly after its foundation prohibiting vecinos from abandoning the city, on penalty of death, due to the lack of manpower to defend the city, and the rapid depletion of the city's population due to abandonment. The last major indigenous attack against the city occurred in 1730 when it was sieged by the Toba.

21.This contrasts with the apportionment of the encomiendas, which was done by the Real Audiencia de Charcas, and approved by the viceroy or the King.

22.Zorraquin Becu (1982) points out that the appointment of cabildo members by governors and viceroys was prohibited, and yet the prohibition was frequently broken.

23.The colonial province of Tucuman included the present provinces of Tucuman, Salta, Jujuy, Santiago del Estero, Cordoba, La Rioja, Catamarca, and the western edges of Formosa and Chaco.

24."...a fines del siglo XVI y con la provincia practicamente conquistada, la encomienda habia logrado afianzarse plenamente, convirtinedose en uno de los pilares fundamentales del desarrollo político, económico y social de la gobernacion. Hecho que se vio favorecido por la carencia casi absoluta de yacimientos de metales o piedras preciosas, por lo que esta institución acaparó en gran medida la atencion no solo de los primeros pobladores sino tambien de sus descendientes en anos posteriores, ya que proporcionaba las mejores condiciones para lograr una vida bastante comoda, al ofrecer la mano de obra necesaria para el cultivo de la tierra y el cuidado del ganado, principales actividades de los habitantes de la gobernacion."

25."...repartireis por personas buenas y de conciencia ... los indios de dicha comarca que conquistaredes y trajederes de paz, tasando los tributos y servicio que los dichos indios han de dar primero y antes que a las personas a quien los encomendaredes pusieredes en la posesion de dichos repartimientos y encomiendas de ellos, teniendo siempre consideracion que la dicha tasa sea muy moderada y a tal que los dichos indios en el cumplimiento de ello no sean muy relevados de manera que el trabajo no les sea estorbo para no se aficionar a nuestra religion cristiana y buenas costumbres de los cristianos mas que antes, siendo relevados y descargados del trabajo y tratados con humildad y mantenidos en justicia y razon se conviden y persuaden a convertirse a

nuestra santa fe catolica e imitar nuestras buenas costumbres."

26.These groups were often hunters and gatherers or simple horticulturalists. They lacked the sophisticated irrigation systems and agricultural organization of the highland groups.

27.During the later stages of the colonial period the crown did grant titles to various wealthy encomenderos, entrepreneurs and mine owners (Buechler 1981). The sale of title was a revenue-raising device. The titles thus designated had little weight, however, in Spanish society. The colonial state also resorted to the selling of offices for the same purpose. The practice did not endear the criollo class to the colonial government, since they often had little access to these positions.

28.The Quilmes indians were taken first to Cordoba, and later to Buenos Aires, where they were made to build the Fuerte de Buenos Aires.

29.Some of the cabeceras include Cachi, Payogasta, Piul, Molinos, Seclantas, and Tolombon.

30.Need specific examples to back up these statements. the stagnation of the Potosi mines might be such an example. The abandonment of lands and the moving away of city dwellers are also symptoms.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY AS PARADOX: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SALTA'S OLIGARCHY

> "¿Pero qué es la historia de América toda sino una crónica de lo real-maravilloso?" (Carpentier 1978:57)
>
> "Debiendo salir en campaña, ante el anuncio de la invasión del cura Campos, gobernador de Tucumán, [Jose Maria Todd] dejó el bastón del mando al Señor del Milagro, patrono de Salta." (Cornejo 1938)

The Oligarchic Paradox

In August of 1950 the Peronist governor of Salta, Oscar Horacio Costas, expropriated the Club 20 de Febrero, and placed the provincial executive office in the building. Located on the central plaza, the Club was built in a French colonial style during the 1920's. Its high ceilings, crystal chandeliers, and marble floors, exuded a sense of luxury and high living. It was par excellence the club of the oligarchy. It was known throughout the country as a high establishment of culture and a center of artistic expression. Its halls hosted poetry readings, theatre productions, concerts and recitals and other artistic endeavors. Important celebrities, internationally known musicians, writers and artists, and important national political figures had been its guests. Its dominance of the cultural life of the city was so great that one authors noted that all public functions in the city were suspended while a social event was taking place in the club (Corbacho 1978). It represented not only

oligarchic power, but the appropriation of culture by the "gente decente" as well.

On the membership list of the Club were the most prominent and well-known citizens of the province, those who had wealth or lands, or held political office, or were important in other respects. Invariably Salta's governors, national legislators, judges, national and provincial ministers and office holders, belonged to the Club. Most importantly, the membership list included the core of the high society traditional families of the province.

Officially, the expropriation was a response to the need for new housing for the executive branch of the government (Corbacho 1978). The symbolic significance of the expropriation was not lost on Salteños, however; it represented a direct attack on a long period of oligarchic rule. The act was a final step in a process which had begun perhaps 35 years earlier leading to the demise of the oligarchy. The expropriation did not, however, eliminate the oligarchy as a class, nor were the lands controlled by the traditional families touched. In effect, the class which formed the oligarchy did not suffer any direct consequences on its economic dominance in the province. What was so significant about the expropriation then? Principally that it represented a major change in the relationship of the oligarchy to the state. In effect, the alienation of state power from oligarchic hegemony signalled the end of the oligarchy as a power group, and the emergence of a capitalistic state.

The history of the Club 20 de Febrero is instructive in understanding the nature and the historical development of Salta's oligarchy because they are so closely intertwined in each other. As Corbacho (1978:69) states:

> "The men and women of Salta's high classes have so inextricably intertwined their lives with the trajectory of the Club, that it is possible to affirm that each memorable occasion in their lives is associated with its ostentatious character."

This chapter explores the emergence of Salta's oligarchy, the political economy of its dominance in the province, the class basis of its power, and the eventual transformation of the oligarchy into a capitalist class. The principle argument here is that as the oligarchy emerged, it deconstructed its class nature, finding instead its identity in kinship and in the monopolization of power positions. The process of deconstruction involved not only the denial of a class nature, but an attempt to construct a class-divided society in a non-class way. Members of the dominant classes in Salta made efforts to create identities which cut across class lines, and efforts to define class positions were violently stopped. The paradox of this was, of course, that as a high status group which concentrated wealth, resources and political power, the denial of a dominant position within a class structure was contradictory. Here is the paradox, then: a powerful elite built itself precisely on the negation of its class character. The eventual demise of the oligarchy as socially constituted power elite and its transformation (at least in certain of its sectors) into a capitalist class came not when

another class challenged its dominance, but rather when it was forced to become "class-based".

This chapter explores Salta's oligarchy from a historical perspective. While today Salta's principle families often claim to be patrician families, descended from the region's conquistadores, in most cases this is wishful historical reconstructionism rather than an "accurate" statement of the families' histories. Many families arrived in Salta during the latter half of the 18th century. Many others arrived during the latter half of the 19th century, and indeed a number of "traditional" families found their place in Salta only in the 20th century.

In oligarchic accounts, Salta's history is an oligarchic history, one that presumes oligarchic dominance. Historical reconstruction by members of the oligarchy also presumes that the presence of the families which made up the oligarchy in Salta was synonymous to affirming the historical existence of the oligarchy; i.e. kinship expressed the class character of the oligarchy. In other words, local history has often assumed that Salta's traditional families always were part of, and indeed incorporated from their beginnings, a local oligarchy. The nature of power exercised by Salta's oligarchy, indeed, was built on the assumption of being originators not only of the region's traditional upper classes, but of the whole of Salteño society itself. From this derives the name familias patricias, or patrician families.

One aspect of this historical reconstructionism is the conversion of the history of the oligarchy into society's history. Historical figures within the oligarchy represent not only their own class, but all other local classes as well. There is no other history than that presented by the comings and goings of this noble class. Likewise, under the same scheme of things the genealogies of the families become the genealogies of all of society; thus, when Cornejo published a genealogy of his own family he audaciously, but not surprisingly, called it Genealogias de Salta.[1] In essence, then, the oligarchy is not only originator of Salteño society, but collectively represents that society as well. Consequently, this history has been constructed in a way that Salteño society is coterminous with the oligarchy, and its existence of is virtually synonymous with the existence of the oligarchy.

None the less, while categories such as family, class and oligarchy are fused and confused in this history, as a strict category the oligarchy fits into a specific historical framework and has a specific historical significance. Concretely, Salta's elite classes formed an oligarchy during the second decade of the 19th century, and remained an oligarchy until the 1940's. The oligarchy developed due to a number of forces which were only products of local conditions, but of world circumstances as well. Perhaps one of the most striking characteristics of the oligarchy was that it exercised primarily a local basis of power, and yet it was

conditions in the world system which provided it the basis of local power. Local power reflected, as if in a mirror, the condition of powerlessness both at the national level, and in the world domain, and yet paradoxically local power was dependence on world conditions. Thus, oligarchic hegemony at the local level responded to lack of power which characterized the oligarchy beyond its own borders. Another characteristic was that it constituted a family based system of power; in other words, families formed the basis of membership in the class. But this created a contradiction between rules which governed kinship and the exigencies class membership. The tension which results appears throughout the history of the oligarchy in the nature of internal conflict which constantly plagued the group. These principles served both unite and divide this social group. The nature of this contradiction will be explored more fully in the next two chapters.

This chapter explores the trajectory of Salta's oligarchy, focussing on this paradox in the formation of the oligarchy. The first section focusses on the formation of a "national oligarchy", of which Salta's oligarchy formed a part. It argues that Salta's oligarchy was fundamentally localist or regionally based in nature, but that this could only operate within a certain larger political economic context. Thus, it came to form part of an alliance of regionally-based oligarchies in Argentina whose dynamic permitted the delicate balance between localized hegemony and participating in a national political and economic structure.

As will be noted, the ultimate triumph of the formation of a "national oligarchy" was ironic, since it created the conditions for the formation of a national state apparatus which eventually took on a life of its own, and became alienated from oligarchic domination.

The second section of the chapter explores the historical conditions in Salta's class structure, during the colonial period, which gave rise to a criollo oligarchy. It notes that the conditions for the existence of an oligarchy were evident prior to the defeat of Spanish colonial power, but that the Spanish colonial state acted as a unifying force in the territory. Furthermore, the full emergence of an oligarchy was delayed by the existence of a competing elite which was directly tied to the colonial state. Section three looks at the breakdown of the Spanish colonial state in Salta, and the emerging struggle of the oligarchy to define its class character.

In the fourth section the conflict which erupts among members of the oligarchy, and between regional oligarchies during the first half of the 19th century is explored. The historical conditions of those conflicts are analyzed, focussing on the weakness of a regionally-based system of power and on the lack as a legitimate state power base as themes pervading this period of conflict. This period represents the true character, the weaknesses and strengths, of the oligarchy.

The circumstances which eventually unite Salta's

oligarhic members are explored in the final section of the chapter. This unity is paradoxical, for it contains the conditions which eventually lead to the demise of the oligarchy as a power elite, and the emergence of a rurally-based capitalist class in Salta. The process of this transformation, and its consequences within Salta's power structure are explored.

The National Oligarchy: Constructing a National System of Power

The emergence of the oligarchy in Salta was connected to a large measure to conditions in Argentina as a whole. Salta's oligarchy appeared during a period in which Argentina was dominated by multiple localized oligarchies, each unable to compel national unity, each weakened by the inherent regionalism of oligarchic power. Much of Argentina's 19th century history, then, plays out this dilemma. One of the central problems in Argentine historiography concerns the place that its oligarchies (and ultimately a unified oligarchy) has played. It is possible to say, as Hollander (1976) and Ramos (1981) have affirmed, that much of Argentina's national history is an oligarchic history. While ideological conflicts have certainly occupied a place in the formation of the nation, the struggle for oligarchic dominance and the form that this took is perhaps at the very core of that history. It is true, for example, that the eventual consolidation of the nation during the latter half of the 19th

century is really a consolidation or alliance of its regional oligarchies. It may perhaps be useful, therefore, to trace in a very cursory fashion, using broad strokes of the brush, an outline of process and struggle for the formation of a consolidated national elite, of which Salta's oligarchy eventually formed a part.

Several major stages may be traced in the formation of that oligarchy. The first stage began during the colonial period with the dominance, particularly in Buenos Aires, of the Spanish colonial bureaucrats and merchants (Socolow Migden 1977). The Spanish bureaucracy was the principle unifying force among fiercely competitive regional economies. The economy during the latter half of the 18th century grew tremendously, and the wealth created together with the Spanish bureaucracy ameliorated regional and inter-class tensions. There were hints of internal instability, however, with the large contraband with entered the viceroyalty and the pressure of the British and other European powers to have a piece of the colonial economic pie.

The second period was heralded by the destruction of the Spanish crown's control over the colonies. More than a political problem, Spain's ousting meant the loss of the only centralizing force that held the region together, splintering the former viceroyalty into multiple regional oligarchies who exercised hegemony locally, but who were unable extend their power institutionally beyond their borders. Regional and factional struggles ensued over regionally defined economic

and political interests. The form that the state apparatus was to take was literally up for grabs, as various factions attempted to gain control of the state and to define it according to their own interests. The situation resulted in civil war throughout the country. The ruling elite, represented in the merchant class and landowners, continued to rule in most regions without the representation of other classes. Ruling groups formed close-knit family clusters, their signature of strength, and yet were vulnerable to internal struggles as different families and political groups vied for control. The lack of a legitimate state organization hindered the state from mediating conflicts which were ultimately couched in kinship or regional terms. Nor was the constitution of a dominant class, with its underlying mode of reproduction, defined at the national level.

The primary actors of the independence movement, who had a decidedly liberal mercantilist orientation, were replaced, not without a great deal of bloodshed, by the great <u>estancia</u> owners of the Pampas. This group was very different from its predecessor; while it maintained close ties with the Porteno merchants, it was very much more provincially oriented, more regionally focussed, and much more conservative. Its understanding of economic policy was autonomistic and hegemonic, not world-oriented.

Meanwhile, conflicts which erupted between and within the regional oligarchies threatened to erupt into class-based warfare. Members of local oligarchies relied for power on the

gaucho classes, as well as indian groups, and often emerged as caudillos (Zorrilla 1972). The emergence of caudillos from among oligarchic ranks threatened to transform inter-oligarchic conflict into a class-oriented conflict, as caudillos took on the role of defenders of these underclasses. At its heart caudillismo was an expression of regionalism attempting to enforce itself nationalistically. In effect, however, conflict only reinforced regionalisms, weakening further the influence the regional oligarchies had within the national context, and diminishing as well their strength within their own territories. This fact led to drastic measures to unify the country and to attempt to destroy caudillismo.

The aim to unify the country's oligarchy became a clear policy with the downfall of Rosas, and the rise to national prominence of Urquiza, Mitre, and others involved in dismantling Rosas' federalism. Among the first goals of this policy was the destruction of Rosas' base of power, built nationally on the basis of regional caudillo politics. Caudillos such as Urquiza were perhaps unwittingly drawn into this plan. A national unification plan was drawn up, which would in essence form a legitimate government based on the alliance between regional elites and on an accepted constitution. Mitre's party recognized that national unification could only come by guaranteeing regionalized power and autonomy (i.e. bolstering the position of regional oligarchies), since this system was already entrenched. The

"national oligarchy" thus embodied the alliance of regional interests at the top, with no true unity at the lower social levels; it represented nothing less than the unity of regional separations. The national government formed under this system was set up to be "representative" (allowing the expression of regional interests within the national framework, as opposed to caudillismo), but in a limited framework. The consensus attained among regional oligarchies required two related actions: the destruction of regional caudillos, and the elimination of the gaucho in military and class terms. The first was done through a direct attack on the old caudillos, systematic elimination or exile. Among these were the Chacho Peñaloza, Facundo Quiroga, Estanislao Lopez, Felipe Varela, and Rosas himself, along with his lieutenants, Artigas, Araoz and others in Tucuman and Santiago del Estero. The Salteño Güemes was among the first caudillos to fall. Lopez Jordan, defeated in 1874, was the final major caudillo whose power was challenged (Rock 1986:129).

The second strategy was the elimination of the gaucho in military and class terms. The gaucho represented the clearest "class-based" threat to the elite, a group with an increasing consciousness of itself and its own interests.[2] The newly unified oligarchy waged a war of extermination against the group. The primary mode of the gaucho's extermination was warfare, particularly the Campaña del Desierto; the second strategy was through a policy of selective European immigration. The former strategy worked very well: the

campaigns both in the south and in the northern areas of the country had both the effect of destroying warring gauchos either by involving them in the war itself, or by eliminating territories often used as hideouts for renegade gauchos. Jose Hernandez, in his Martin Fierro, notes this characteristic: the desierto (desert) was in fact not necessarily an area controlled by hostile indians, but an area which lay outside the control of the state. Gauchos who survived the war were often stationed on newly formed estancias, to form a captive labor force which had no role in political activities.

The second policy, that of selective immigration to replace the gaucho, was less successful, perhaps because it was flawed from the start. The plan was a central aspect of Mitre's development plan, and was also diligently and energetically pursued by his successor Domingo Sarmiento. The plan was to populate the rural areas of the pampas and elsewhere in the country with European immigrants, most of whom came from peasant backgrounds and had little interest in political activism. The plan was not without a racist tone (against the "Indian" or mestizo element of the criollo working class). The policy failed because it conflicted, even in its conception, with already established and now strongly reinforced (through the campaigns of the desert) land tenure arrangements, and immigrants found that, with a few exceptions, they were not able to colonize the rural areas, but rather were destined to became rural wage laborers competing directly with the gauchos. Transformed into a rural

proletariat, the immigrants had little reason to stay in the countryside. The majority thus moved to the city and became urban workers. Criollo peasants, it should be noted, played only a minor role in this process, because they represented a relatively small proportion of the country's population, and because they resided primarily in marginal areas of the united provinces. Only in the more remote cattle growing areas, where the traditional estancia was still predominant, was the gaucho population preserved, as it mingled and became confused with the peasant, bound to land and landowner through land rent arrangements.

The national oligarchy attained hegemony within the country during the 1860's. It accomplished this by establishing an agreed-upon oligarchic government which allowed regional oligarchies a say in the national structure of power. The writing of a constitution in 1853, and the federalization of the Buenos Aires in 1880, expressed the alliance of regional interests, rather than the submission of regional interests to a centralized state.[3] Regional oligarchies were allowed to select their representatives to the national legislature, and to govern their own provincial domains. Conflict between regional interests continued to erupt, but the arrangement provided a better avenue for conflict resolution. Argentina of the 1880's looked like a strange mixture of conservative ideologies in the political and social realm, with economic liberalism being the activator. What is clear is that neither the upper classes

nor the lower classes found a defined class expression. The gauchos had been destroyed and controlled; the European immigrants were too new and disorganized, and the oligarchy couldn't express class-defined interests because of an internal threat of conflict. Basically, the oligarchy allowed the development and expansion of the economy without resolving internal conflict, and without defining a coherent internal class structure. The expansion was fueled by primarily British capital, which was able to ameliorate the eventual crisis which would come due to indefinition.

The crisis did come. Several reasons brought it about: a crisis in the foreign markets (1990) led to local economic and political crisis, not only because the British pulled out the underlying financial support for this uneasy alliance, but also because suddenly class interests came to the fore as issues in economic policy making. The conflict strengthened the hand of the export connected oligarchy, without breaking the fragile alliance. The second factor was the organization politically of a very active and vocal immigrant working class. Anarchist and socialist tendencies served to organize urban workers, even those working in rurally-connected activities. The first union to organize entirely were the railroad workers; thus British capital had contained the seeds of destruction of the oligarchy. The pressure from these groups led, for the first time, to the recognition of a class focus or a class-type of conflict, which the oligarchy's repression was unable to contain. The pressure led to the

electoral law, in 1912, and to the eventual takeover by the Union Civica Radical in 1915. It also led to a deepening conflict between those sectors of the oligarchy which had to define their class interests, because of union pressure, and those that were still relatively untouched, the landowners.

The elected government carried out a number of state policies designed to wrest control of the state from the oligarchy, but also to use the state as a means of resolving inter-class conflict. It nationalized key resources such as mineral rights and telephones. It established a number of state companies, such as YPF and a national railroad company. It bureaucratized itself, taking away the monopoly control over state institutions.[4] And it placed limits on British control of resources which in effect undermined the financial backing of the oligarchy.

The oligarchy proved resilient to efforts to undermine its power, however. Alvear, the successor to Yrigoyen, provided a compromise between populist forces and the oligarchy. But his government proved only how deeply the state had become alienated from oligarchic power. The long-brewing crisis finally came to head in 1930, and for the first time the military stepped in and overthrew the elected government. Uriburu, a member of Salta's oligarchy, overthrew Yrigoyen. The return to oligarchic power proved ephemeral and short-lived. The military itself was divided, and eventually found that the class pressures forced popular expression in government. Unionization continued to grow, partly to the

delight of industrialists. Eventually Peronism emerged, forging an new alliance between populism and the military. Populism represented weakened class interests, and led to the strengthening of the state. Populism could be seen as a modern version of caudillismo: it has the potential to turn into class conflict, but the alliance between elites and lower classes also diffuses it.

Salta's oligarchy was formed under the constraints of these larger events. Its character, and the trajectory of its dominance, were inextricably bound to the large political economic context.

The Formation of a Regional Elite: 1750-1810

The roots of Salta's oligarchy, and the conditions which led to its ascension to power, were lain in the late 18th century, during a period of unprecedented economic prosperity in the Rio de La Plata Viceroyalty. The tendency of local historians to place the founding of Salta's patrician families in the conquest often mistakenly conveys the idea that their origins germinated in ancient Salteno history, but in fact it was newcomers which arrived in Salta after 1750 which made up the bulk of the families which would later constitute the oligarchy. In the genealogical idiom of the oligarchy, however, it is true that many oligarchic families could and can trace ascent back, if only indirectly, to one of Salta's conquistadores or early settler, for the simple reason that immigrant elites commonly married members of the older criollo

families which had long been established in the region. Salta's best known genealogist, for example, includes in the genealogy of his family the lines of many other families, such as the Arias Velazquez, whose roots do go back to Salta's founding. The numerous genealogists of the local hero, General Martin Miguel de Guemes, note that he also is descended, through his mother, from founder of the city of Jujuy, although his father was a recent immigrant from Spain (c.f. Haigh 1968). This reveals again the paradox of defining a class position in the idiom of kinship rather than in the idiom of class, which more closely identifies the character of the oligarchic group.

The question regarding the age of Salta's oligarchic families raises the issue of when Salta's oligarchy actually comes into being. The arrival of many of the families which would later make up the principle actors within Salta's oligarchy did not, in itself, create an oligarchy. The formation of a kinship based elite did not alone suffice for constituting an oligarchy as a power elite in the province. Rather, as noted in the introduction to this chapter, the power of the oligarchy rested on a number of conditions, including a specific relationship to the state, and a particular type of class formation. These did not develope in the province until the early 19th century, and were not present when most of the families immigrated to Salta. During the period between the arrival of many of these families, from 1750 onward, to the revolution in 1810, many of the conditions

which were later important in the constitution of an oligarchy developed. Among the most important of these conditions were the concentration of land and of mercantile activities in the hands of a relatively few actors and their families, the increasing regionalization of economic and political interests and the drive for greater local representation while, paradoxically, the simultaneous drive by the colonialist state toward a more centralized and absolutist political and economic structure, and the local formation of a kinship based elite which represented within itself both conflicting tendencies. This section will explore the development of the conditions which later laid the basis for the rise of the oligarchy.[5]

Until the mid 1700's Salta could apply be described as still struggling for its existence, relatively marginalized and poor. As Rock (1987) notes, it shared with other cities of the "interior" of that period the characteristic localized economy, stagnant, unable to extend itself beyond serving local markets. Merely village of 7000 in 1810, it remained vulnerable to Indian attacks at the beginning of the century, forcing its cabildo to legislate the death penalty for any man who abandoned the city, for fear that it would be left defenseless (Cornejo 1934). Despite the fact that Salta was the province's capital, the region's traditional social and economic center lay to the southwest, in the Valles Calchaquies, where vestiges of the encomienda system and the survival of limited Indian labor permitted an entrenched

landed elite to lead an aristocratic but provincial subsistence, and to form what Frias (1981) calls a gente decente. The social center of this elite was the ancient village of San Carlos, formerly the site of a Jesuit mission, located in the heart of the Calchaquí Valley. Here ancient families such as the Aramburus, Arias, Diez Gomez, Peñalbas, Aguirres, Isasmendis, Lea y Plazas, and Lisperguers held enormous feudal-like haciendas, carved out of former encomiendas, and created an isolated social life for themselves. Reyes Gajardo (1938), in recompiling the composition of this elite in San Carlos, reveals that they were held together by the multiple strands created by intermarriage, enabling this tightly knit and very homogeneous group to monopolize control over the land and the local labor supply. A number of the families, such as the Aguirres, traced their roots back to Salta's conquistadores, laying basis to their claim to belonging to "noble" (in a criollo sense) patrician clans. The Aguirre family descended from Francisco de Aguirre, who founded Santiago del Estero and a number of other cities in the area. Other families, such as the Castellanos, the Arias de Valezquez, Lisperguers, and Aramburús traced themselves back to Salta's early settlers.[6] Interestingly, many of these older families, truly criollo, were divided internally with regard to the support of the revolutionary cause in 1810, and several were among the fiercest supporters of the royal cause, making the division between Spanish and criollos a somewhat ambivalent one (c.f.

Frias 1981).

As noted above, although this group is often associated with the origins of Salta's oligarchy, it did not, in fact, form the core, nor even a major element, of the oligarchy with became dominant in the 19th century. The families which formed the basis of the later oligarchy began to appear in Salta only during the second half of the 18th century. Most came from among the large influx of immigrants from Spain and other from other parts of the colonies which arrived in Salta with the defined intent of exploiting Salta's geographical and geopolitical advantages for commerce. This group was qualitatively different from the small impoverished elite which had persisted in the region up to that point. Many of the immigrants apparently arrived with strong financial backing, well established commercial connections or with powerful political relations and positions to set up commercial operations. A number of the immigrants were segundones, as Frias (1981) calls them, non-inheriting members of Spanish nobility, and established themselves in Salta to better the fortunes of their houses.[7] Others were offshoots of powerful encomienda and merchant families of other areas of the colonies.[8] Their economic outlook and entrepreneurial attitudes were markedly different from the older families; they represented a class whose primary interest was to take advantage of expanding markets and the new incentives for mercantile operations set up by the Bourbon state. Rapidly, these newly arrived families took over both the economic and

social life of the province, and transformed it completely. They opened new frontiers and settled in regions formerly outside the sphere of control of the colonial state. Many became major landowners in the region not only through land purchases, but by marrying into the older landed criollo families, and often held great political influence in the province.[9]

The influx of this mercantilist elite into the province during the second half of the 18th century was driven by a number of major changes in the region. After a century and a half of stagnation and decline, the output of silver extracted in Potosí rose spectacularly. As Rock (1987) notes, the regeneration of the Potosí mines was a consequence less of technological innovations to extract new sources of silver as new incentives to produce which the Bourbon monarchy instituted through a variety of economic and political measures. The impact of the mining boom reverberated economically in all the Spanish held regions south of Lima, as new markets opened up in Potosí for regional products (c.f. Buechler 1981). Salta became one of the principle conduits through which products from the Rio de La Plata region and from Europe reached Potosí. The nature of this commerce will be described more fully below. A second major change which deeply affected the evolution of Salta's economy was the new role Buenos Aires began taking within the Spanish colonial system. Prior to 1750 Lima held a trade monopoly within the southern part of South America. In 1767 the Bourbon monarchy

provided Buenos Aires, along with a number of other colonial cities, license to trade with Spanish ports. The change was due to a complexity of factors. As Rock (1987) notes, it responded in part as a defensive mechanism against British expansionism. Following the French and Indian wars, Britain had attained dominance in North America and was seeking to expand its markets in the southern part of the continent. Furthermore, British naval superiority permitted it to virtually control the principle sea lanes between the Caribbean and Europe, making it imperative that Spain establish new routes of communication with its colonies. Buenos Aires became the principle port of entry for most Spanish goods coming into the South American continent by 1770, and in 1776 was declared the port of exit for treasury silver. It also became the new administrative center of the newly formed viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, which incorporated the principle sources of revenue of the continent for the crown, not only the silver mines of the Upper Peru, but Asunción and the Banda Oriental (later Uruguay) as well (c.f.Brown 1979, Halperin-Donghi 1975).

The cities of the interior were among the primary beneficiaries of the changes; the economic transformation brought rapid population growth to Mendoza, Cordoba, Santa Fe, Santiago and Tucuman, as well as Salta and Jujuy. Salta particularly benefitted, for a number of reasons. Geographically, Salta lay in the heart of the area between Peru and the Litoral.[10] Not only was it a major point on the

route, it also formed part of a major ecological borderland between plain and mountain, where the transfer of goods went from ox-drawn carts to mule back, and vice versa. Furthermore, it gained from the political reorganization of the territory made by the Bourbons in 1778, making the city the seat of the governor of the Intendency of Tucuman, which included the cities of Tucuman, Catamarca, La Rioja, Santiago del Estero and Jujuy, as well as Salta. The location of the dry customs house was transferred from Cordoba to Jujuy, establishing an important seat of state revenues close to the area. Other Bourbon policies impacted favorably on Salta as well, these will be discussed more fully below.

The city of Salta thus became a major center of trade in the reorganized colonial system. Trade throughout the region became important, and a major source of revenue for the colonial government. Yerba arrived from Paraguay, wines (aguardientes) from Cuyo, mules and cattle from the south. (see Lloveras de Arce 1982) Cloth, furniture, housewares, came from Buenos Aires, originating in Britain or in the Dutch lowlands (Halperin-Donghi 1975). The cost and risks of transportation caused trade items to double or triple in value in their movement from Buenos Aires or the Pampas to the Upper Peruvian mines (Brown 1979). Many of the goods went on to Cuzco, Lima and other parts of Peru, as Buenos Aires gradually became the major point of contact of the area with the Atlantic. Major merchant houses set up operations in all of the cities on the route, and thus Salta's plaza became

dominated by major merchant houses involved in the overland trade. The city became unrecognizable, as its economy became dominated by extra-local trade.

The most important item of trade by far, however, was the mule. The mining economy had a voracious appetite for the animals, consuming hundreds of thousands each year. The mules were used primarily for transporting ore from the mines to the ore processing centers, or haciendas, but were also used to transport wood, mercury, and other essentials to the mining center (c.f. Buechler 1981) Mules, of course, were used in the overland trade which connected Potosí with many other parts of the empire, which took place over mountainous routes; they were also consumed by miners and other workers in the dry highland mining area. They were obtained from numerous sources; however, one of the most important was the Rio de la Plata basin. Mules from the provinces of Cordoba, Santa Fe and Buenos Aires were wintered in Salta and Jujuy, and then shipped north through the narrow river valleys. Up to 70,000 mules were wintered in Salta annually, although this figure varied greatly (Concolocorvo 1942). They were sold in the enormous mule ferias (markets) located in Sumalao, and then driven in groups of several hundred up the quebradas and over the Puna to the mining centers. Enormous investments were placed in the mule and cattle trade. The value and use of land was transformed by the mule trade as well; land values went up, as land was used for pasturing or for growing alfalfa. Land use became so one-sided that one author notes

that a food shortage was a perennial problem (Caro Figueroa 1976). The mule trade created a class of landowners who were concerned with consolidating control over regional political and economic interests, but who were also merchants whose fortunes depended in part on being able to influence extra-local, and indeed world, circumstances.

From this context rose an incipient class structure which wasn't given the time to solidify and resolve internal contradictions. The class structure was partly defined by inter-regional and world conditions, and yet was also bound to attempt to find a local expression which accommodated the economic and political realities of the region. The dominant class, if one can call it this, was composed primarily of merchants, landowners and landowner-merchants, and colonial bureaucrats and military. Often individuals and families overlapped in these categories, and indeed, while strains were apparent in the constitution of this dominant class, because all the sectors of this economic structure were viable, the potentially conflicting interests within this group rarely sparked open conflict. The nature of the composition of this group, and a closer look at some of the members of this group will be examined more fully below.

The nature of labor changed as well, and reflected the unresolved contradictions which were apparent in the elite. Vestiges of the encomienda disappeared, replaced almost entirely by an adaptive form of labor, the gaucho. The gaucho is difficult to classify; he combined elements of a rural

proletariat with other elements which were more akin to a peasant livelihood. While traditional Indian and peasant labor did continue to exist during this period, primarily in the Valles Calchaquies, it was the gaucho who became the dominant form of labor in this economy. The mule trade, and the accompanying mercantilist economy, demanded much less field labor than agriculture. Gauchos often worked under a sharecropping arrangements, enabling many of them to build their own small herds. Many gauchos were also arrieros (cattle drivers), driving cattle north to the Upper Peru and beyond for contractually specified wages or commissions (c.f. Frias 1981). Arrieros and herd owners often made trips lasting six months and more, often caravanning commodities of great value. Capable arrieros occupied an important place in the structure of labor within the colonial economy, and compared to other forms of labor were relatively well paid. The herds they drove north often contained some of their own animals, which they sold at a profit. Nevertheless, despite the image of being "free" proletarians, gauchos often were bound ritually and traditionally to patrons or estancieros, and thus rarely expressed clearly established indications of collective class consciousness. Thus, their reputation for fierce independence and individualism adapted to a frontier environment is contrasted with their loyalties to the dominant landowning elite.

The economic boom brought on by the mule trade placed land at a premium, and consequently created a push by local

elites to expand the territories which the Spanish controlled. As noted earlier, prior to the middle of the 18th century Salta was precariously positioned within the largely unpopulated territory surrounding it. San Carlos and the Valles Calchaquies were in all probability of greater real significance, although Salta was an administrative center. Salta's isolation was particularly trying due to Mataco and Toba uprisings to the east.[11] The dangers of indigenous disruptions to settlers was clearly epitomized by the tremendous impact that the Tupac Amaru uprisings had on the trade in the area.[12] Frontier ranchers often promoted the building and manning of forts, often at their own expense. For their efforts they were rewarded by the colonial state with military titles, which were remunerative, or land. Forts stretched from Oran and the Valle de Zenta down the San Francisco valley, across Cobos and southward to San Jose and Rosario de la Frontera. More important than forts for the containment of the Indian threat were missions. The most important of these were Jesuit, although the Dominicans were also very active in the frontier areas. Jesuit missions were strung out along the principle routes in Salta, protecting them. Many were located in the Perico Valley, and southward across Campo Santo to the Metan area.

The increased importance of land, and the opportunities which the economic boom presented to emigrates, boosted the efforts to push the "frontiers" back by sending military expeditions into the Chaco and Ramal area. Indians captured

during these expeditions were often brutally punished by hanging, decapitation, and other more gruesome punishments in an effort to pacify them (Vergara n.d.). A number of Indians were incorporated into the labor forces of frontier estancias, although this was not always successful, and could lead to the arming of Indian groups. More importantly, the interest in territorial expansion brought the Jesuits into conflict with the colonial elite. Their missions, previously bastions which protected precarious Spanish settlements, now became obstacles to that expansion. The expulsion of the Jesuits from the colonies in 1767 conveniently removed them; the lands their missions had occupied were quickly auctioned off and grabbed up by members of the merchant and landowning elite. Most of the areas of expansion were purchased by immigrants who rapidly occupied positions of prominence within Salta's political and economic structure. Among the principle families who took advantage of this expansion, and who were immigrants during the second half of the 18th century, were the Fernandez Cornejo family (which included at least two brothers), the Toledo Pimentels, the Puchs, Saravias, Figueroas, Tineos, and Gorritis. Other older families, generally located in the Valles Calchaquies, such as the Aramburús, Diez Gomez, Isasmendis, Ruiz de los Llanos, Aguirres and Dias, joined in on the economic gain, but generally took a back seat. Partly as a consequence of this expansion on the eastern slopes of the province, the centrality previously located in San Carlos shifted to Salta.

Many immigrants, particularly those who were merchants, arrived in Salta with clearly established continental and even transcontinental interests and connections. Two of the most important merchants of the period were Pedro Antonio de Gurruchaga and Juan Antonio Moldes. Both had close ties to estancieros in southern Cordoba and Santa Fe, and Cornejo (1934) has suggested that the connections extended to Spain and to Charcas. Frias (1981:194) notes that both families maintained their commercial connections with Cadiz; they often purchased their merchandize directly from the Iberian Peninsula, rather than from the merchant plaza in Buenos Aires, as most other merchants were forced to do. Goods flowed from the port, as well as from other areas of the interior, upward through Salta. These merchants trafficked in many items, including British cloth and furniture, Sevillian cloth and goods, leather goods, spices, and perhaps mercury. Both families sent their children to Spain to be educated, and to serve in the Spanish court; despite this, their children were also at the forefront of the revolutionary movement of 1809-1810. Their focus, thus, was of a global nature so that most family members retired from Salta at the outbreak of the war, recognizing that once Salta had lost its geopolitical advantages, it had little to offer in terms of merchant activities.

Another prominent Salteno family to arrive around mid-century, and which maintained extensive extra-local ties and resources was the Fernandez Cornejo family. Originally

from in Tacna, Peru, Fernandez Cornejo sibblings (perhaps three brothers - the record is not clear) settled in Salta and bought extensive lands east of Salta and Jujuy. These land had previously been subject to attacks by Indians (Concolocorvo 1942). Their holdings (many of which continue to belong to the family) extended from the Perico Valley (presently in Jujuy) to the Rio Conchas area. The leading member of this family, Juan Adrian, occupied a prominent place in Salta's cabildo, and was also appointed to carry out the expulsion of the Jesuits. Juan Adrian's extra-local focus is clearly illustrated by his risky exploration of the Rio Bermejo, as he searched for an alternative and cheaper route to the Atlantic, and also by the fact that the he and his family continued to maintain some of of their commercial interests in the Upper Peru. The family set down a patrimony for later generations, particularly in its cultivation of sugar cane, whose mill is still owned by a branch of the family.

Other families arrived apparently without a great deal of wealth but with the intent of taking advantage of the economic boom in Salta. Such is the case of the Saravia's, who arrived into Salta from Santiago del Estero, and earlier from Cordoba. According to Haigh (1968), Jose Domingo Saravia, the founder of Salta's family, had little personal wealth; the family came into its prestigious position when it joined forces with the Tineo's through the marriage of Jose Domingo's son, Pedro Jose, to Barbara Tineo, one of the heirs

to the Tineo fortune. The Tineos, who arrived in Salta only a few decades earlier than the Saravias, owned a great deal of land between Salta and Jujuy, in the Mojotoro Valley. Most importantly, they owned the famous Estancia Castañares on the northern outskirts of the city. The advantage of the Saravia family seems to have been its ties to other regions of the viceroyalty.[13]

Other families which became predominant in the Salteño elite were the Toledo Pimentels and the Figueroas, also criollos from other parts areas of the colonies. Antonino Toledo Pimentel, founder of the Salteño family, was a direct descendent of the famous Viceroy of Peru, Francisco Toledo, who had spurred the conquest of the Salta region. Antonio Figueroa, founder of this family, arrived in the 1750's, and acquired extensive lands in the Southern part of the Valle de Lerma, an important grazing area for mules. Only a few family names survive from earlier colonial periods, including the Arias family, the Gallo family, the Castellanos family.

The mercantilist economy which developed in the region was deeply vulnerable to uncontrollable internal and external forces. The strategies of its members were closely tied to mercantilist type of accumulation. As the century progressed there was an increasing search for labor needed for the herding of mules northward, and for the pasturing of mules. Peasants were still an important component of the local labor force, particularly in the cultivation of alfalfa. Often landowners had an advantage over the merchant, since they

could often rely on captive labor forces which could serve both as peasants, or at least as ranch hands, and as drivers. With the process of economic growth, classes became increasingly defined, not only as merchants and landowners, gauchos and peasants, but also a petty bourgeoisie began appearing in the city as artisans, weavers, tanners, millers, wine makers, and leather workers. One of Salta's neighborhoods, La Banda, was dedicated to these activities (Frias 1976). Nevertheless, the class structure was relatively weak because the accumulation process was closely guarded and dependent on the state.

During the approximately 50 years of spectacular growth in Salta no single family grouping gained economic or political preeminence in province. This may in part be due to the fact that many of Salta's families maintained their ties to other areas in the colonies and to Spain, and therefore power was not as localized as it might have been. Also, during this period a great deal of fluidity existed in Salteño society, and new capital and new faces arrived frequently, periodically changing the character of the local elite. The orientation of these immigrants was not regional, but global; they were integrated members of a world economy, and their location in Salta was meant to take advantage of the system. Invariably, those who arrived were involved in trade, even those who had acquired lands. The emphasis on trade lay down the structure of the city of Salta: prominent families lived on or close to the plaza, most in the back areas or the

second stories of their houses; the fronts were dedicated to stores where goods which were shipped in were sold at wholesale or retail. Salta's center quickly became commercial. Other activities in the city served as appendages to the mercantile activities.

Ultimately the incipient mercantilist class structure of colonial Salta was made possible by the unifying and regulating role of the colonial state. In contrast to patterns found in Europe, whose mercantile capitalism combined the domain of mercantile activities with the incipient capitalism of the urban centers, Salta's mercantile economy forged landed and merchant activities into a sometimes strained but also indissoluble alliance. The state permitted such an alliance, since it provided a regulatory function which allowed for a strictly delineated accumulation process. The unity of the viceregal regions, and the internal unity of the colonies, could not have been forged without the function of the colonial government, and the geo-economic "logic" which it implemented.

Thus, the period from 1750 to 1810 led to profound changes within the composition of Salteno society, and particularly in its class structure. The economic boom of this period which resulted from the opening up of the port of Buenos Aires and the integration of new territories under Spanish control resulted in the emergence of an incipient local class structure. The class structure formed part of a larger class system within the colonial system. At the

pinnacle of the local class structure could be members of the colonial bureaucratic elite, large landowners, and a mercantile nobility.

Independence and the Victory of the Criollo Elite: 1810-1821

The "Declaration of May" pronounced in Buenos Aires in 1810, deposing Viceroy Cisneros and announcing the formation of an Junta independent of Spanish authority, threw Salta's power elite into a deep crisis. The repercussions for Salta of Buenos Aires's pronouncement were at best unclear; consequently, the local responses to the declaration were initially confused. Evidently, many of Salta's dominant elites interpreted Buenos Aires' actions as an effort to preserve the Spanish crown's control over the colonies, to maintain the status quo of the viceregal system, and therefore supported the pronouncement. Others, ironically, supported the new Junta on the understanding that the actions taken by the Junta in Buenos Aires were just the opposite, an act of rebellion. Salta had a strong contingent of royalists, but even they recognized that the province's fortunes were intimately connected to Buenos Aires. And indeed, as Rock (1987) notes, Buenos Aires actively nourished Salteno support. Thus, for a variety of contradictory reasons, the bulk of Salta's elite initially threw its support enthusiastically behind Buenos Aires's revolt.

Thus, upon receiving news of the pronouncement in mid-June, Salta's cabildo voted overwhelmingly in its favor.

Among the favorable votes was that of the Intendency's interim governor, Nicolás Severo de Isasmendi, a second generation criollo, owner of extensive lands in the Calchaquí Valleys, and a staunch royalist. Other favorable votes came from Thomas de Archondo, and the Gorostiaga, Ibazeta and Costas families, all staunch royalists, who thought that the Junta was to be a temporary phenomenon. Others in favor and later committed to the revolutionary cause, were Mateo Zorrilla, a spaniard and president of the cabildo, Vicente Toledo, son of a powerful merchant, Juan Manuel Quiroz, Antonino Cornejo, son of an immigrant from Peru and owner of extensive lands east of Salta in Campo Santo, and Alonso Zavala, as well as Jose Gabriel de Figueroa, of a powerful landowning family in the southern part of the Valle de Lerma; the two last were priests. Voting against support of Buenos Aires were Domingo Santivañez, who later emigrated to Chuquisaca, in the Upper Peru, and Juan Nadal y Guarda; both were staunch loyalists, and viewed the pronouncement with pessimism. The powerful lawyers guild also voted in favor. Members included Pedro Antonio Arias Velazques, belonging to one of Salta's oldest families, Andres Zenarrusa, Santiago Saravia, also of a landowning family and son of an immigrant from Santiago del Estero, and Mariano Boedo.

The united response, however, was short lived as the lines of battle became clearer. In Cordoba a counterrevolutionary effort was being put together by the former viceroy, Cisneros. In the Upper Peru, the quick show

of support for the rebellion was crushed by Spanish forces under the leadership of Nieto, and the largest Spanish forces on the South American continent were assembled on the altiplano to counterattack, with the hope of meeting with their allied forces in Cordoba, and descending from there onto Buenos Aires. Salta found itself caught in the middle. The deep incipient rifts which had long lain dormant within the dominant classes exploded into open conflict. The recent allies became bitter enemies. Governor Isasmendi reversed his former support of the Junta, and imprisoned many of the cabildo's revolutionary members. Later, as Salta's revolutionary members clearly gained control of the local political establishment, he himself was deposed and shipped to Buenos Aires a prisoner. Many of Salta's principle families found themselves split, often along generational lines, or along affinal or other lines. While the conflict became openly polarized, the nature of this polarization and its ideological components is less clear. Local historians, including Frias (1981) himself, locate the essential dividing line between criollos (American born) and Spaniards, or, more specifically, between families identified with those origins.[14] The dividing lines are drawn along the lines of kinship and origins. The evidence, however, does not suggest such a clear cut division. Certainly Spanish immigrants and their immediate offspring were most heavily represented on the side of the royalist cause, but not at all exclusively so. As the conflict took more clearly defined sides, Spanish

immigrants, and particularly their immediate offspring, were found on both sides of the conflict.[15] At the same time a number of Salta's oldest families, or others with kin ties to the older families, allied themselves to the royalist cause. Among these criollo families were the Isasmendis, the Aramburús, the Diez Gomez and the Costas families, most of whom owned extensive lands in the Valles Calchaquies, a traditional power base in Salta's history (Frias 1981:482).

The effort to discover a clearly defined the ideological or political-philosophical difference between the sides is also problematic. Class, for example, does not seem to play a clear-cut role in the conflict, at least in its initial stages. The dominant sectors in the local class structure, made up of merchants and landowners, were to be found on both sides of the struggle, although most merchants do seem to have favored the revolutionary cause. Spanish bureaucrats tended to be royalists, not surprisingly, particularly those whose appointments had originated extra-locally. Career military figures seem to have taken both sides as well (and indeed, emerged as leaders on both sides both locally and nationally), and were equally active on both sides in organizing armies.[16] Certainly, the political philosophies of each side in the conflict were confused, not only because the ideological nature of the struggle was unclear, but also because of the many levels of ideological conflict which interposed themselves into the conflict. The multifaceted ideological struggle in Buenos Aires, which included not only liberal and

conservative points of view, but which also included positions which espoused a monarchical versus a republican system of government, trickled its way into the Salteno debate as well. In this sense, localist autonomistic forces were already beginning to appear in opposition to more federalistic tendencies.

It is evident that, from a political economic perspective, the actions of the Portenos, in revolting against the crown, compromised the Salteno elite. The latter's economic well being had always depended on the geopolitical unity that the viceroyalty had established. Destruction of that unity could only hurt Salteno mercantile (and thus all economic) interests. The unpredictable outcome of the revolt was, therefore, perhaps more of a factor in the taking of sides than actually ideological positions. Salta's fate depended, most immediately, on the position that the Alto Peru would adopt. Initially it's northern neighbor did adhere to the revolutionary cause, but it also had the strongest Spanish military forces in the viceroyalty, eventually turning it into a Spanish stronghold from which raids were launched southward into Jujuy and Salta. Thus, the splintering of the dominant class into factions seems in part to have been based on a difference between those who thought they could benefit from a unified system independent of Spanish colonial power, and those who thought that Salta's economic survival depended on the maintaining the unity and centralization of the old colonial system.

There is no doubt that initially, at least, it was the former position that the revolutionary side took. The position may have been less ideological than pragmatic; there is no doubt that Buenos Aires forced Salta's hand to a degree by throwing the entire system out of balance. According to Rock (1987) other provinces in the interior suffered the same consequences, but nevertheless showed little enthusiasm for Buenos Aires's leadership. Their luke warm reception was fueled by the counter-revolutionary movement which threatened in Cordoba. Buenos Aires, however, recognized that it had gained a crucial ally in Salta; by controlling Salta it disrupted the cohesiveness of the entire colonial system, putting pressure on other regions whose livelihood depended on maintaining the unity of the system. A further advantage for Buenos Aires coming out of its relationship with Salta was that the latter, located strategically in the path of all Spanish invasions from the Alto Peru, acted as a buffer to any military invasion. In all, Salta absorbed seven destructive incursions by the Spanish between 1812 and 1821,

What I am suggesting, therefore, is that the alternatives available to the Salteno elite were limited. Whatever side Saltenos took, their stance only served to clarify the dependence of Salta's economy, and its class structure, on a wider system. There was little control internally of larger political and economic interests. Salta, in effect, went from a central cog in the colonial system of accumulation to a marginal point. Thus, the split within Salteño society

represented not a class-based split, but rather a division based on decisions of least vulnerability.[17] In the following several decades, the division and conflict within the Salteño oligarchy would change as the national and world economic order shifted in direction, but not until the 20th century would action within the oligarchy take a specific class-based direction.

Throughout the battle for independence and on into later conflicts the nature of the conflicts are obscured by the lack of clarity concerning which families took the different sides. Not only did the division not follow Spanish-criollo lines, but the confusion is exacerbated by the fact that families often split over the conflict. The Archondo family, for example, experienced a split between Thomas de Archondo, the Spanish patriarch, and his clergy son, who took up the revolutionary cause. Others followed suit, including the Tejada's (Frias 1976) Thus, it is possible to say that although often family loyalties did hold families together, the division was not along family lines, and thus not between families.

There is some doubt to the aims of the Porteño elite toward Salta. The radical historians Caro Figueroa and Ramos suggest that the major part of the porteño elite were not interested in maintaining the integrated system of the viceroy, but rather acted to impose their hegemony over the entire territory. According to this perspective Salta was abandoned to its fate, left to defend itself against Spanish

incursions. Furthermore, the porteños allowed the Alto Peru to defect from the viceroyalty territory, taking away the geographical advantages that Salta had always had. However, there is no evidence that Buenos Aires had this intent initially, and I would suggest that the shift in that direction later in the decade represented a change of power within segments of Buenos Aires' elite, shifting from the merchant domination to the pampa/export complex.

The heated conflict was due in part to the lack of a legitimate state structure, both at the local and at the national levels, which could mediate the intra-elite conflicts. Initially there was no agreement on a representative form of government in Salta. Once Isasmendi, the last royalist governor, had been deposed, the cabildo awaited a porteño appointment. It became evident rapidly that Buenos Aires could not appoint a governor who satisfied the exigencies of the different segments of Salta's elites. Outsiders had the advantage of not belonging to any one of the local factions, and yet they also often lacked the local knowledge and sensitivity to bring peace between the different factions. Insiders inevitably belonged to one or another faction, preventing their ability to mediate conflict. Thus, provincial governments failed to gain legitimacy because of the persons represented in government offices.

A solution was eventually found in the figure of General Martin Miguel de Güemes. Güemes combined both a national

stature, as a career military figure, and membership within the local elite. He was the son of a Spanish bureaucrat, the royal treasurer in Jujuy, who had married into the Jujeño elite, but who had not been unable to establish to establish a landed fortune. Martin was the oldest child of the family. He entered into a professional military career at an early age, and saw action as a young lieutenant in Buenos Aires' rejection of the British invasions in 1806 and 1807. In 1811 he came north as a captain in the Army of the North, under the command of Manuel Belgrano, and participated in a number of battles in Upper Peru. He became well known for his intimate knowledge of the geography of the area, his military prowess and his fast-strike tactics, often characterized as guerrilla tactics. He was forced to return to Buenos Aires by Belgrano prior to the famous "Batalla de Salta" in 1813, and only returned to Salta two years later as a coronel under the command of Pueyrredon. Following a dispute with Pueyrredon in 1815, Güemes resigned his post in the Quebrada de Humahuaca, and returned to Salta. That same year he was "elected" governor of the province, and was subsequently approved by Buenos Aires (Halperin Donghi 1971).[18] The following year he was named commander of the Army of the North by Jose de San Martin, commander of all of the confederacy's forces. He remained in the governor's seat until his death by the Spanish in 1821. During this time he rebuffed five Spanish incursions into the area, and defeated an attempt by the local elite to unseat him.

In an extensive and thoughtful study, Roger Haigh has traced the political and social forces which led to Güemes' rise (see Haigh 1967 and 1968). He notes that the kinship ties to the major elite families of the province made him an ideal candidate for a leadership role in the province. Through his father's marriage, his own to Carmen Puch, and the marriages of his siblings, he was directly or indirectly related to many of Salta's most prominent and wealthiest families.[19] This, according to Haigh, placed Güemes in the center of Salta's society, despite the fact that he was neither landowner nor merchant.

However, the assumption that kinship ties could be translated into political power may not be completely warranted. Many prominent citizens in Salta had kinship relations as extensive as those of Güemes, and many of these had the power of wealth as well. Nor were the elite who were related to Güemes completely in his favor. In fact, a number of authors have suggested that a number of Salta's families may have been involved in conspiring to Güemes' assassination. In 1821 Güemes left the city to resolve a dispute with the caudillo of Tucuman, Araoz, and during his absence the cabildo deposed him and placed Juan Antonio Cornejo in the governor's seat in his stead. Thus, Güemes' kinship ties alone does not explain the conflict which he had with members of his class.

The case of Güemes is instructive as to the nature of power within the oligarchy, but perhaps not in the way that

Haigh has stated. Haigh's account of Güemes' rise to power raises a number of questions which his model cannot explain. Haigh's proposition is that Güemes gains his power by virtue of the fact that he represents the collective interests of his kin group/class. Explicitly he states:

> "This study has demonstrated that in Salta the caudillo was merely the agent of the dominant group, the kinship elite. Despite his acknowledged popularity with certain gaucho elements, he had no personal power that would enable him to go against the wishes of his patrons." (1968:52)

What this position presupposes is that the oligarchy had a common interest which united it in the face of political adversity. The model presupposes that divisiveness is external, that elite kinship binds into unity, at least unity against the outside. The case of Güemes illustrates a very different picture. Despite his kinship ties (which again, were not unique among the oligarchy), Güemes represents a deeply divided elite, whose division was internal, and whose exercise of power was fragmented. The divisions begin immediately in 1810, between royalists and patriots, with the consequences for many royalists of expulsion from the province, arrest (as in the case of Bishop Videla, a staunch royalist), expropriation or dispossession of property, or extreme taxation to fund the war.[20] (see appendix E in Haigh 1968) Other divisions occur as the war progresses: factions which side with either Alvear or Rondeau in a struggle in Buenos Aires for control of the Army of the North and ultimately national power,[21] conflicts over the appointments

that Buenos Aires makes of governors, and similar conflicts. Perhaps the deepest conflict was between the "Patria Vieja" faction, headed by Güemes, and the "Patria Nueva" faction, headed by former Güemes supporters, particularly Jose Antonio Fernandez Cornejo. The Patria Nueva deposed Güemes in 1821 while the caudillo was in the southern part of the province battling the forces of Bernabé Araoz, president of the short-lived Independent Republic of Tucuman, and place Cornejo in the Governor's seat. Güemes returned and re-established his government, promising to resign as soon as Spanish forces had been expelled from Salta. Haigh suggests that the Patria Nueva may have been sympathetic to the assassination of Güemes, if not directly involved.

The internal disputes which Guemes found himself enveloped in were not limited to factional antagonisms; rather, it is evident that conflicts within the oligarchy were multidimensional. Güemes himself often came into conflict with the class he was supposed to represent. Conflict erupted due to the caudillo's efforts to continue the war, even after the province had been devastated. Forced levies were further cause of disenchantment. Perhaps the strongest bone of contention was the <u>fuero gaucho</u>, a law passed in 1818, which exempt all gauchos fighting with the revolutionary forces from paying their land rents. Needless to say, the landowning members of the oligarchy protested bitterly. The <u>fuero gaucho</u> suggests that Güemes was increasingly independent of his class backing, and that his source of power was increasingly

military and popular; i.e. it became increasingly class-based. I will argue that this proved to be the most volatile issue for the oligarchy, for it threatened to place them in opposition to the primary underlying class in the province, and consequently to expose the oligarchy as a class. The indefinitions of class so fundamental to oligarchic power could be exposed. The apologetics of Güemes as a local and national hero are interesting to follow at this juncture, for they reveal just how sensitive the oligarchy are to this issue. Atilio Cornejo, a primary apologist for Güemes' heroism, denies that the fuero was an important factor in the province at the time of the revolution, and notes furthermore that the fuero had a legal precedent in colonial law. Cornejo, in effect, in his apologetic makes Güemes the representative of Salta's oligarchy, and does so be denying the class nature of the oligarchy. Through his study of Güemes Cornejo creates an image of class, while denying that the oligarchy is in fact a class. Cornejo, in effect, affirms the very point that Haigh is making, that Güemes was a full member of his class, and was a defendant of his kinship relations above all else. While conflicts were acknowledged to have erupted between the caudillo and other members of the elite, these take on the characteristics of personality conflicts.[22]

Note the difference between the above and the apologetics of a leftist historian. Caro Figueroa highlights the fuero gaucho, and states emphatically that Güemes left no land or

other wealth, other than a small quinta, to his descendants, as proof of the fact that Güemes was acting in the class interests of the gaucho. Güemes is portrayed as a professional military figure, a radical thinker who clearly saw the value of the notion of the Patria Grande, a sympathizer with the underclasses. Güemes' power derived from his popular following, not from his class membership. Not surprisingly, Caro Figueroa fails to mention Güemes' kinship connections and associations with the oligarchy. The apologetics in this case go to the opposite extreme: the model presupposes the absolute necessity of establishing the class identity and class interests of the oligarchy, as opposed to the class interests of exploited classes. The model fails to explain Güemes' enigmatic character.

The argument brings us around to the starting point. The difficulties of exposing Güemes' "true character" are in accordance with the nature of the oligarchy itself. True to character, Güemes fails to conform simply to a class membership. Conflicts have real and deep political, economic and sometimes life-related consequences, and yet they remain ill defined, ambiguous. Güemes fights for his own class, and yet destroys the class in an effort to attain his goals. He recognizes the need for Salta to have a geographically mediterranean position in order to maintain its prosperity, and drives the province into the ground to attain that goal, yet he is besieged by political enemies, most of whom are relatives. Finally, the hero is assassinated, and the

conspirators venerate the hero they have refused to let live or reign.

The Oligarchy in Conflict: 1821-1862

Güemes' legacy provided the oligarchy complete and autonomous control of the province. Following the death of Güemes and the signing of the peace treaty with Spanish forces in 1821, the core of Salta's elite families controlled without opposition the local power structure, unchallenged by either a colonial bureaucracy or by the national government. After the purges and the large emigration from the province during the revolutionary period, the elite represented an almost homogeneous class, as the old divisions between colonial bureaucrats and local powerholders, and between merchants and landholders, disappeared with independence. More importantly, freed from the Spanish bureaucratic political structure and from the Iberian social hierarchy, and united in a common struggle against Spain, Salta's oligarchy was beginning to gain a sense of social identity and local power. Socially this newly found autonomy was marked by the increasing propensity of local families to intermarry. Nevertheless, despite the newly acquired oligarchic hegemony, what most characterized the period following independence was the continuous and devastating intra-oligarchic violence which dominated the province for forty years. During this time the territories of the provincial were overrun with independent gaucho militias under the leadership of local caudillos who

challenged the power of the provincial state. Provincial governments, always in the hands of one or another oligarchic faction, were vulnerable and unstable. All told, between 1821 and 1864 over 19 successful revolutions, and numerous unsuccessful ones, made continuity in government impossible. The oligarchy had inherited the province, but were unable to consolidate and rule it.

This period is thus one of almost constant civil war within the Salteno countryside, historically a time of perplexity. Rebel forces tended to be organized around clusters of allied oligarchic families bound by common interests and kin ties, combining their private militias raised from the gauchos and peones (rural workers) who lived on their estancias. The nature of the divisions between these armed groups were often unclear, and the issues underlying the conflicts seemed to shift frequently. Most often local factions represented themselves as a local version of national conflicts, and assumed the names of the latter, Morenistas or Rivadavianos, Federalistas or Unitarios, and later Urquicistas or Mitristas. This articulation between national struggles and local conflict did affect the nature of the latter, but the complexities of the local conflicts only faintly resembled the national movements from which they took their names. This was so particularly because the conflicts were usually of a family nature, reflecting antagonisms and alliances between "clans" or groups of families within the local oligarchy. At times militants had little more than titular

political stances, switching positions and alliances as the local and national conflicts shifted and changed. The membership of these family-based alliances changed often, or the groups broke down entirely; as old politico-familial groups disappeared, new alliances formed around new cores of family clusters rapidly emerged to take their place. In essence, the nature of Salta's civil wars is much too complex to reducing them to struggles by competing class or other class-related interests attempting to establish their hegemony within the province.

What, then, did lead to these internecine battles between the members of an essentially homogeneous and hegemonic local oligarchy; what was the nature of this conflict? This is the basic question explored in this section. One factor involved both in the homogenization of the oligarchy, and in creating conflict between its members, was the extreme economic impoverishment of the province. While the oligarchy dominated both the political and economic institutions of the province during this period, it was, in comparison with pre-independence conditions, a very poor oligarchy. Undoubtedly violence often was not only part of a struggle for hegemony among various factions, but for survival itself among many of these families. The causes of impoverishment are complex, related not only to the historical development of class forces in Salta, but also to the conditions of dependence on Buenos Aires, and to the lack of legitimate national and local state structures which could more equitably

distribute power among Argentina's various regions. These will be explored below. However, the lack of an independent state apparatus is particularly important in explaining local conflict, for it implies that a ruling class cannot rule without the intervention of the state; it implies, in other words, that the state functions not only to mediate between ruling and subordinate classes, but which also to intervene between factions of the ruling classes themselves, consolidating them, as well as placing limits and boundaries within which their factions can rule. The failure of the ruling class to establish an independent state apparatus, and the accompanying lack of state penetration into both Salta's rural hinterlands and its lower classes, certainly contributed to the creation of family-based power groups which monopolized power and economic resources, and which depended on kin connections and on family solidarity to maintain, or gain access to, power. The violence which occurred in Salta during this period was clearly not only a struggle between families and factions within the oligarchy, but also a struggle to establish a legitimized state order. Why the struggle was unsuccessful in Salta is important in understanding the localized nature of the oligarchy itself, and in its "anti-classist" character. I would like to explore these factors below.

First, however, the devastation of Salta's economic structure and the accompanying changes in the constitution of the ruling class must be explored, for these play a crucial

role in explaining why class principles play such a weak part in the organization and comportment of the oligarchy. The wars of independence had left the economy of the province in a ruinous state and many of its merchants and landowners destitute. Prior to 1860 Salta's economy went through what Ferrer (1981) calls a transition period, a period which lacked solid direction, lasting until capitalist relations were established in the province. This period was characterized basically by economic, particularly commercial, stagnation, fiscal poverty, and a very slow rate of population growth. In part this state of affairs was a consequence of the heavy losses Salta had incurred during its battles with Spanish forces, from which it had never fully recovered. In part it was also a consequence of the great changes occurring in Buenos Aires and in the newly formed confederacy's relationship to the world economy. Let me explore the two factors separately below.

The war with Spain had devastated the provincial economy. Perhaps no other province in the confederacy had been so affected by the war. Not only had trade with the Upper Peru been interrupted by the war, destroying the elite's principle source of revenue, but also the Salteno strategy of battle itself had destroyed many of its resources. Virtually every Spanish invasion had been repelled by a well perfected strategy of attrition; Spanish advances were met with a slow and almost nonresistant retreat by patriotic forces and the destruction of all key resources in the enemy's path.[23]

Facing starvation, harassed constantly by ephemeral patriotic guerrilla forces, the Spanish had time and again been forced to retreat to the highlands of Upper Peru despite not having suffered any definitive defeats.[24] Güemes perfected this tactic and even used it to subdue Confederacy forces, led by General Rondeau, sent against him in 1815. Extraordinarily successful in military terms, this tactic had the disadvantage of creating irrecoverable losses for Salta's population.

The destruction of the province's productive capacity also contributed to its impoverishment. The war had been financed primarily through heavy taxation of the wealthy. During the early years of the revolt the application of forced levies were limited primarily to Spanish merchants and sympathizers; patriots were given the "option" of making voluntary donations. Later, as the war effort consumed more resources, even patriotic families had been taxed heavily. The imposition of the fuero gaucho, described in the previous section, proved to be the capstone of Güemes' taxation policy, for it struck at the heart of the source of wealth of landowning families.[25] Landowners complained bitterly to Güemes that the very essence of their possessions were being confiscated by the policy (Haigh 1964). War induced poverty and unfavorable policies dictated by Güemes' administration led to a condition of desperation for many of Salta's elites, among both merchants and landowners. Ultimately these policies had contributed to the formation of a group opposed to Güemes, and may have helped create the conditions for his

assassination. For many, the losses incurred during the war were never recovered, despite promises of government restitution.[26] By the time of Güemes' death, much of the oligarchy was begging for an end to hostilities with the Spanish, irregardless of the compromises which this might require.

With the overwhelming consequences of the war, it is not surprising that the first major political act Güemes' successor, Juan Antonio Fernandez Cornejo, was to perform was the signing of a peace treaty with Spanish forces. In essence, the treaty guaranteed the end of Spanish invasions into the province in exchange for the ceding of the Upper Peru to Spanish control; thus the colonial system which had been so important to Salta's prosperity was irrevocably broken apart. While this did end direct hostilities, it also ensured the collapse of Salta's economy, for it severed permanently the trade routes upon which Salta had built its wealth during the 18th century. That the Salteno elite would have acquiesced to such a costly compromise indicates the severity of the economic problems the province was facing, but it may also indicate a somewhat deluded localist perception many Saltenos seemed to have had that perhaps Buenos Aires would exercise pressure to reunify the colonial territory and thus prevent Salta's marginalization. As will be seen below, this localist delusion failed to recognize the great changes in Buenos Aires' own orientation, which had little room for a reunified viceregal territory. Ironically Güemes himself had almost certainly understood the importance for Salta of

maintaining the unity of the previous colonial territory, and expressed as much in his support of the Patria Grande concept underlying both Bolivar's and San Martin's military campaigns. It is also evident that he did not trust Buenos Aires to support this position (see Ramos 1981).

As noted above, independence brought about fundamental changes in the role that Salta played within the national context, greatly diminishing its influence within the fledgling confederacy, and increasing the province's isolation from the shifted centers of economic and political power, Buenos Aires and the Litoral. Even prior to the cessation of hostilities, Buenos Aires began signalling the new direction it was to take by decreasing its contribution to the war effort in the north. Increasingly the focus of the port city turned outward toward the Atlantic and a newly found freedom to exercise free trade, and the Pampa and Litoral regions close to the city began asserting their power as sources of export wealth. The declining role of the interior provinces during this period is demonstrated in the changes in export figures over the period of a century. As Ferrer (1981:79) notes, in 1750 silver mined in the Upper Peru had constituted 80% of the exports from the Rio de la Plata region; only 20% of the exports that year were products of the land. Most of the silver which was exported filtered down from the mule trade in the Northwest and the province of Cordoba. Non-silver exports were dominated by hides, and approximately 50% of these originated as well in the interior (Ferrer 1981:-

80). In contrast, by 1850 silver had virtually disappeared as an export commodity. Instead, 60 to 70% of the exports were hides, and the rest were primarily "products of the land", such as wool, tesajo and sabo. More importantly, in contrast to the pervious century, only 30% of the exports originated in the interior, and of these 50% came from the Litoral region, not from the more distant provinces. The decline of the interior's role in the export economy can be explained in part by the high costs of transportation from this region and the high profit margins which middlemen tacked onto products that made their way to the port city. Furthermore, many of Buenos Aires's imports competed directly with the same commodities produced in the interior. Ferrer (1981:82) notes that 50% of the products Buenos Aires imported included textiles, beverages, sugar, yerba mate and tobacco, all produced in the provinces of the interior, but obtained more cheaply from Brazil and elsewhere. Thus, provinces such as Salta became increasingly marginalized from the national economy.

The shift of the confederacy's economic center to the Pampas and the Litoral was reflected in the policies dictated by the porteño powerholders. The economic and political decisions made Buenos Aires were increasingly damaging to the economic health of the interior provinces. Even before San Martin's campaign in Peru, Buenos Aires had virtually abandoned the effort at liberating Peru and the Upper Peru, and with little remorse prolonged unnecessarily the closing

of the northern frontiers with Bolivia to trade. Salteños responded to this by increasing their contraband activities (Caro Figueroa 1976). Caught up in their own internal squabbles, the porteños had done little to ameliorate conditions in the provinces bearing the brunt of the war effort, despite insistent pleas for assistance from them. The indifferent demeanor of the porteños continued even after hostilities had ceased, and while the border with Bolivia was allowed to reopen in 1827 (without resuscitating the previously opulent trade), it was closed again ten years later as Rosas declared war on the Mariscal Santa Cruz. To make matters worse, Buenos Aires dragged the already stricken provinces into wars they could little afford. Very soon after Salta signed the armistice with the Spanish, provincial troops were outfitted to contribute to a war against Brazil and Britain for control of Uruguay. Later, as noted above, the Salteños were dragged into an unwanted war that Rosas had declared against the Peruvian-Bolivian alliance. The war was vociferously opposed by many Salteños who were exiled in Bolivia at the time, or who had family and associates who lived there.

Finally, Buenos Aires did little to protect the jurisdictional domain of the provinces. During this period Salta lost both Tarija and access to the Pacific due, according to some local historians, to the selling out of Porteños to anti-nationalistic and foreign forces. The loss of these territories followed the split up of the original colonial

intendency into the provinces of Catamarca, Tucuman, Santiago del Estero and, eventually, Jujuy. The loss of provincial territory severely curtailed the degree of influence the Salteños had in national affairs, although it did provide Salta's oligarchy a much more direct control over its greatly reduced territory and resources.

The redirection of Buenos Aires's focus increased the isolation and marginalization of the interior provinces. Perhaps the most telling effect of Salta's new isolation was the decline of the mule trade. The mule trade was reduced to a trickle, and much of it was in the form of contraband (Cadena de Hessling, 1977). The previously lucrative trade of up to 70,000 mules a year was reduced to a few thousand head of beef cattle and mule. Bolivia, Chile and Peru continued to be the principle buyers of Salteño animals; the southern markets of Buenos Aires, Tucuman, and Santiago were lost to the much cheaper beef available from the Litoral. Meanwhile, Salta's role in this much reduced trade network changed as well; no longer the winterizing center of a complex trade network, it now became the rural producer of these goods. Trade with Bolivia and Peru was reestablished in 1840, but it never attained the levels that it had under colonial rule. For example, according to Cadena de Hessling (1977:76), the export of mules to Bolivia and Chile had decreased to 2247 in 1839, and decreased further to 879 head in 1840, and 490 head in 1841. The sale of beef cattle to the same areas was larger, but nevertheless small: in 1839 1147 head were

exported, 1903 in 1840, and 1388 in 1841. Salta exported on a much smaller scale to neighboring provinces.[27] Other major provincial exports were connected to cattle raising activities, such as hides and leather (1522 hides were exported in 1839, primarily to Buenos Aires and neighboring provinces). Other productive activities, such as sugar and flour milling, small iron works, soap factories, and wineries, aimed primarily at the provincial markets. The principle market for local products became the province itself, and particularly the capital city. Thus, while previously Salta's economic strength had derived from the mercantilist sector, its dominant class found itself forced to resort to a somewhat "primitive" form accumulation based on land tenure.

Meanwhile, encouraged by the free trade policies of Rivadavia, the increased importation of goods from Europe and elsewhere began destroying the markets for certain locally produced goods. Competition with foreign products and the geographical isolation resulting from the difficulties of transportation slowly destroyed many of Salta's artisan activities and commerce. Many of the province's tanneries were closed as a result (Adreani and Sola Alsina, 1982), and textile and other artisan activities suffered as well (Caro Figueroa, 1976). To offset the losses, Salta followed the policy of other provinces by setting up customs houses at the provincial borders, thereby protecting its internal economy. The customs houses had dubious merit; while protecting local producers and merchants, it cut Salta off from trade with other provinces.[28]

A few of Salta's traditional families did continue laboring in commerce, and their general merchandize stores continued to be seen clustered around the central plaza. Among them were Tomas Arias, Victorino Solá, Juan Uriburu, Juan Manuel Aguirre, Guillermo Ormaechea, Manuel Solá, Desiderio Gurruchaga, Norberto Zerda, and others. A number of immigrants also took up commerce: Jose Maria Todd, Juan Bautista Navea, and others had their general stores registered (Corbacho and Torino: n.d.) But trade in Salta involved, for the most part, importing luxury items from Europe, not exporting of locally produced goods. The general lack of purchasing power in the province kept the commercial sector from growing.[29]

Only production aimed entirely at local consumption, and protected from outside competition, survived within the province. This included many of the activities related to the cattle "industry", such shops producing leather goods, local weavers, small ironwork shops. Cadena de Hessling (1977) observes that agriculture itself was severely restricted to almost subsistence levels, and cultivation was limited primarily to the Valles Calchaquies. Andreani and Sola (1982) note that landowners curbed diversified agricultural activities, reemphasizing again cattle raising. For example, San Isidro, the sugar mill and estancia owned by the Cornejo family, reduced its sugar production and reconverted its lands to pasture.

The economic decline in the province led to a relatively

large emigration of people to the litoral area, exacerbating the chronic labor shortage in the province. Consequently, economic stagnation was accompanied by a slowing population growth rate. In 1825 the province of Salta had an estimated 40,000 inhabitants; by 1854 it had only between 74,000 and 80,000, an average annual growth rate of only 2.1 (Corbacho and Torino n.d.:1).[30] Comparatively, the province's population grew much more slowly than did the population in Buenos Aires and the Litoral. In 1800 the northwest provinces held 43% of the population of the Argentine territory; in 1869 this figure had dropped to 26%. The population was unevenly distributed throughout the provincial territory as well: the Valle de Lerma, with the capital city, had the highest concentration, followed by the Valles Calchaquies, which still contained during this period a sizable peasant population. While there are no solid population figures prior to 1869, it is estimated that in 1810 the city of Salta had 7000 inhabitants, thus a mere village, and by 1840 it contained only 14,000 (Corbacho and Torino, n.d.:3).

Impoverishment and marginalization transformed Salta's class structure. The oligarchy became more deeply entrenched in the land; the monopolization of land in the hands of oligarchic families was fiercely pursued during this period, but followed a different pattern than land acquisition in the late 18th century. While land may have actually been concentrated in fewer hands during the colonial period, the importance of land ownership as the mainstay of oligarchic

welfare and power was more important during this period. As the most powerful of Salta's patriarchs disappeared, their vast landholdings, which in many cases had been attained by means of colonial land grants, were split up among their heirs. Nevertheless, such landholdings had often been so vast that even in large families most heirs received large undivided estancias. The heirs of Juan Adrian Cornejo, for example, divided up 10 major estancias scattered around the eastern part of the province, as well as several urban properties. Antonio Figueroa's heirs divided among themselves seven or eight major estancias located in the southern portion of the Valle de Lerma (see Chapter 6). Often only after three or four generations, usually during the second half of the 19th century, is the practice of dividing up estancias common. Even when the largest estates were divided, such as huge feudo of Molinos owned by the Isasmendi family, there was no movement toward the creation small holdings. If anything, the monopolization of land in the hands of the oligarchy became greater during this period, reenforced by new land legislation and through the complete control of the various institutions of the provincial government. In 1836 the Law of Alienation of Public Lands (Ley sobre la enajenación de la tierra pública) was put into effect by Governor Felipe Heredia, and expanded the territory under the control of the landholding elite.[31] Furthermore, the writing of irrigation laws guaranteed the control of the province's waters by these landowners, and thus the control of land (see Cornejo 1983).

The complete control of land by the oligarchy is shown in the few land registration figures available for the period. For example, in the 1939 land registration figures for the Department of Guachipas, with an extension of 2785 square kms, showed a total of 140 property owners (Cadena de Hessling 1977:75).

There was little commercial exploitation of these landholdings; as noted above, what little there was dedicated to cattle raising (Cadena de Hessling 1977). Agricultural production was primarily for internal consumption of the estancia populations, or for the small provincial markets. Agricultural labor was arranged primarily on the basis of land rent or sharecropping. Thus, in most areas of the province during this period the agricultural system resembled the classic "hacienda economy" described by Wolf and Mintz (1957). Absenteeism tended to characterize the landowning class; landowners and their families often lived in an urban setting located in Salta, or even in Buenos Aires, and often pursued "professional" or political careers.

While merchants had previously held the predominant position within Salta's social hierarchy, estancieros now represented the most powerful sector within the elite. The Gurruchagas and Moldes of the late colonial period were replaced by the Puch, Gorriti, Fernandez Cornejo, Saravia, Figueroa, Latorre and Toledo Pimentel families, whose primary attribute was the ownership of great extensions of land. Land was not only their chief economic mainstay; it was their

primary base of power as well. As north-south commerce slackened, the relatively "free" labor force of the late colonial period was replaced by forms of labor which were bound to the rural landholdings sharecropping and other similar arrangements. Although land itself had lost much of the economic value it had attained under the late 18th century boom, but it remained the primary means of raising fighting forces, thus an important source of power for Salta's elites.[32] Economically, other resources were unstable and often less remunerative. Government positions paid little, or were non-remunerative; the monopolization of such positions by family groups often had the primary aim of controlling of the state apparatus. The fiscal budget of the province was extremely small; one quarter of the budget went to the governor's salary alone. During this period the professions were also relatively underdeveloped; the most important of these professions were the military, clergy, and legal professions, followed by medicine. Law degrees, particularly from Cordoba or Chuquisaca, were relatively common among the oligarchy; medical degrees were less so, although they also were held almost completely by members of the oligarchy (see Cornejo 1983, Michel Ortiz 1983).

Economic stagnation and chronic labor shortages greatly changed the relations of production in the province. Labor shortages were not new to the province; the overall the lack of population growth in the region combined with the disappearance of the largest indigenous groups had made this

a recurring problem in Salta's history. The problem had been ameliorated somewhat during the late 18th century as immigration increased the number of workers. As the 18th century progressed the rural labor force became increasingly proletarianized, and the gaucho emerged as the most important element in the province's labor force. The class character of the gaucho is equivocal, partly because the place that the gaucho occupied in the cattle industry changed over time. In essence at the time of his emergence the gaucho in Salta was a rural semi-proletariat, a relatively well paid mule herder and driver, known best for the long mule drives he made north to the mining regions. Gauchos often hired themselves out on a contractual basis, although many also were bound to particular estancieros. By the end of the 18th century the gaucho had largely replaced Salta's peasant population in all areas except the Valles Calchaquies, where cultivation continued be important. The gaucho's mobility and knowledge of the terrain, and his fighting abilities, were irreplaceable to herd owners, and they thus were able to command considerable bargaining power in the payment of their services. Frias (1981) and Caro Figuero (1976) note that gauchos were known to raise or buy considerable herds themselves, which they drove northward along with those they were hired to drive. It is not surprising that Guemes would draw on the gauchos as the core of his guerrilla forces.

Following independence, the gaucho continued to be not only the primary labor force in the province, but the primary

fighting force as well. The gaucho could not be replaced within the province's cattle economy, for emigration had exacerbated the need for a stable labor source. Yet the political inclinations (which may have been radicalized by Guemes) and fighting abilities of the gaucho presented the oligarchy with a dilemma.[33] The power of the gaucho as a fighting force had to be curbed without destroying the gaucho as a source of labor. A number of measures were implemented to curb the independence of the gaucho: labor laws were put into effect which penalized free labor, binding the gauchos to estancias. Gauchos were drafted into the provincial armed forces except when their patron's asked for exemptions. The influence of the state withdrew largely from jurisdiction over rural estates, making it impossible for the rural worker to find representation within the provincial government. And finally, the monopoly of land ownership and the shifting of the economy toward landownership indirectly affected the gaucho, for it removed other sources of work. This was true particularly in regard to trade, for as it dwindled, much of the cattle and mule trade became dominated by landowners, and driving became increasingly part of the semi-proletarian work relations which came to characterize the great estancia. Thus, increasingly when the gaucho was involved in political struggles, it was under the auspices and orders of land owning patron's, not independently nor in their own interests.[34] Despite this fact, only in the Valles Calchaquíes did a share-cropping peasantry survive.

The impoverished condition of the province, and the homogenization of its elite raises the question, then, of why conflict characterizes the political process of this period when, by all accounts, the oligarchy alone controlled all of the major resources of power in the province. At no other time in Salta's history does the oligarchy exercise such complete hegemony, and have such a total autonomy. And yet, between 1821, marking the death of Martin Guemes, and 1864, following the ouster of the Uriburu clan, no less than 19 successful revolts topple provincial governments, and many others take place which are less successful (see synopsis of these revolts in the Appendix). In part, such conflicts reflect an ongoing struggle between various power factions for control of the authoritative resources of the state apparatus. Although institutional mechanisms did exist for the election of governors, and a constitutionally mandated two year terms were set up, revolution was far more common as a way of replacing a government than were the so called legal means of doing so.[35] But the revolts themselves are only the most obvious sign of the depth of strife in the province; during the same period the countryside was itself overrun by armed bands led by small allied groups of <u>estancieros</u> and power brokers. The ineffectiveness of provincial governments to pacify the countryside, and to impose policy revealed the void of power that existed in Salta during this period, despite the oligarchy's domination.

What was the nature of this struggle? First of all,

conflicts were not cosmetic, despite the fact that the oligarchy was able to maintain its hegemony in Salta. Schisms actually ran deep, and often carried severe consequences for participants. Exile, confiscation of property, and even death were often the fate of the losers. The fighting itself usually occurred on a small scale, involving relatively small forces; the forces on opposing sides rarely had more than 500 fighters, and armed clashes often resulted in few casualties. In the revolution of 1831, for example, 200 Colombian llaneros which happened to be passing through the province served as the principle force deposing Salta's governor. The scale of these conflicts was small for a number of reasons. First of all, labor itself was in extremely short supply, and surplus labor forces needed to arm private militias (or the provincial army) were scarce. The impoverishment of the province, and the generally destitute state of the treasury's coffers, made it difficult to recruit and equip troops for organized armed combat. Estancieros relied on their own short supply of tenant farmers and gauchos to build their militias, and funded the efforts out of their own often scarce resources. Lower class urban males were often forcibly conscripted both to private militias and to the state forces through vagrancy laws and other legislation. Ironically, the viability of local governments often depended on being able to muster to its support various of these armed bands.

The principle actors within local struggles were generally members of the oligarchy organized into small

clusters of estancieros or kin-based groups. Local caudillos and estancieros joined the forces each had raised from their own estancias. These clusters of elites were rarely solidified corporate groups; their membership, which tended to be based on kinship ties, fluctuated as political circumstances and the objectives of the conflict changed. For example, the alliance of families built around Guemes disbanded into a number of opposing factions following his death. In turn, the most powerful group to emerge from this divided as the Federalist and Unitarian parties were clearly defined on the national level. Kinship was thus never strong enough in itself to forge lasting solidarity or to express class interests.[36]

The conflicts themselves seem to have stemmed from a number of factors. Among them is the fact that internally the expression of oligarchic power was based on the idiom of kinship, or more precisely, oligarchic power was expressed as the interests of clusters of families, rather as the precise expression of class interests or political factionalism. Corbacho and Torino (n.d.) characterize the civil wars as a series of inter-familial squabbles, struggles by clusters of families to gain the nexus of power within the province. In fact, as mentioned above, most rebellions during this period were organized by oligarchic family groups. The leaders of these groups or alliances were often related through kinship. Three family clusters stand out during this period, the Puch/Gorritis, the Saravias, the and the Uriburu's. Each

group represented a rallying point for related individuals in the oligarchy. The Puch/Gorriti cluster, for example, brought together not only direct members of those two families, but members of the Guemes and Saravia families, who were often directly related to them, as well. The principle actors of this group included such figures as Juan Ignacio, a priest, Jose Ignacio, Jose Francisco and Pachi Gorriti, Dionisio Puch, Napoleon Güemes, the son of the caudillo Martin Güemes, and two member of the Saravia family. All had fought in the revolution against Spain, most at the head of forces they themselves put together, and all had been loyal subordinates to Martin Güemes. The death of Güemes created a split among his followers, which separated this group from a second led by Pablo Latorre, Col. Antonio Vidt, and immediate members of Guemes' family, Macacha Güemes, his sister, and Carmen Puch de Güemes, his widow. The Puch/Gorriti alliance was in 1824 able to wrest control of the provincial government, and following the rise of Rosas, declared their alliance to the Unitario cause. Most were exiled to Bolivia as the Latorre forces recaptured the governor's seat, from where they made sporadic efforts to reestablish their control over the province.

Another family-based alliance formed around Pablo Latorre, Pablo Aleman, and the governor of Santiago del Estero, Ibarra, who was related through marriage to the Saravia family. As with the first group, the key members were owners of extensive estancias in the southeastern part of the

province, including the departments of La Frontera, La Candelaria and Anta. These families were related to the Toledo Pimentel family, owners of the great Estancia de Yatasto located also in the southeast part of the province. Also having fought in the independence wars under Güemes, they represented the more "populist" or "caudillista" side of the Güemes movement, eventually taking up the Federalist cause. Pablo Latorre was assassinated in prison after being overthrown in 1836. Pablo Aleman, his successor and brother-in-law, maintained the somewhat populist profile of the caudillo. The heirs of Latorre's political efforts, Jose Manuel and Manuel Antonio Saravia maintained control of the government from 1844-1853, and were then exiled to the neighboring province of Tucuman, from when they made several failed attempts at recapturing the governorship. Their power within the national structure disappeared, however, with the disappearance of Rosas.

Alliances were built out of regional and kinship ties. The alliances were fragile, since every individual within a cluster had multiple kinship ties and loyalties, and kin-based alliances could be drawn along a number of different lines, none of which were definitively prescriptive. Kin-based alliances thus did not reflect so much the strength of kinship itself, as many historians assume, but rather the inadequacy of kinship to represent class based interests.

Ultimately, the inability of the oligarchy to consolidate itself as a class reflects the fact that kinship based power

prevented the formation of a legitimate political structure. In 1821 a constitution was drawn up, the cabildo was disbanded, and an "electoral system" was set up. Elections were indirect: governors were elected by a legislative assembly. This consulting body was also elected on a regional basis, formalizing a system of control which was already in place, that of the power of landowners. In essence, the system served to protected the oligarchy's control of the provincial government, particularly the landowning elements of the oligarchy. Landowners drew on the ties of patronage they maintained with other classes, including peones and gauchos to enhance their position within the power structure. Those most able to muster troops from among the ranks of their own workers were also among those who were able to impose their power. As Corbacho and Torino (n/d:2) note that the entire political and legal system was set up to protect the oligarchy's position of dominance, and this included the constitution of 1821. Governors generally exercised their power by decree principally, and each was only as strong as his backing, which included his alliances with other members of the oligarchy, and the direct military backing of both state forces and private militias. The system was based on fluctuating alliances, not on overall party structures nor on political-ideological standings. The only structure which continued without serious challenge was the oligarchy itself.

But it failed in a number of crucial areas: it could not prevent local bosses and patrones from exercising personalized

power, for it could not exert control over the rural workers under the control of these bosses. Thus, state authority was never more than what could be backed up by armed forces controlled by those in power. Also, while some state legitimacy was sought, there was a great deal of resistance to supporting the government through taxes; in other words, the lack of state legitimacy made it difficult for the state to find the necessary support for its activities. Each successive party in power saw it as their right to receive compensation for fighting, and this was often paid for by opposing parties. Great abuses occurred in recovering these compensations, such as the cases of the Saravia's and Uriburu's. Taxes were collected primarily from export and import trade activities, not from the land, income or profit. Finally, power in the state was viewed as serving and protecting the interests of those in power, and their allies. This was true especially in how state lands were distributed, contracts for the sale of goods to government forces, and the like. Enemies were outside the law, thus their legal rights to these benefits forfeited.

Thus, the effort at state building by the oligarchy was destined to fail, for the organization of power based on kinship conflicted with the inherent nature of legitimate state power. No provincial government during this period could escape its underlying family base of power. Consequently, no government had the ability to attain the legitimacy necessary to bridge the gaps between various power

factions. Ultimately the failure to establish a state apparatus with an independent existence from any single oligarchic group, and the inability of the state to penetrate into Salta's rural hinterlands and into its lower classes, made conflict the only means to protect family interests and to attain power within the province.

The Oligarchy United: (1862-1930)

During the second half of the 19th century Salta's oligarchy was able finally to consolidate its power within the province due to a number of changes which occurred both nationally and locally. As the civil wars came to an end, a relatively stable peace was established throughout the Argentine territory, with oligarchy fully in control of both the local political structure and the economic resources of the province. More importantly, in consolidating its control the oligarchy had not relinquished its localist hegemony over the province. While factionalism continued to plague the oligarchy, disputes were expressed through and resolved within the context of accepted institutional structures, such as the provincial government, clubs and political parties. The institutionalization of the national constitution of 1853 and the federalization of Buenos Aires in 1880, provided the legal foundations for a stable national, and consequently provincial, government. Thus, this period is often regarded as a period of "oligarchic peace", and is often portrayed in Argentine history as the oligarchic period (Ramos 1981, Dias

de Molina 1972).

Nevertheless, ironically this period marked the beginning of the transformation of regional oligarchies into agrarian bourgeoisie classes, and the penetration of capitalism into the interior. Salta's newly consolidated oligarchy internalized a contradiction, for as it attained the conditions permitting its unification, it also incorporated into itself the conditions which would lead to its disappearance as a class formation, and would permit the emergence of a bourgeoisie from within its ranks. The contradiction was reflected in the internal restructuring of the oligarchy, as the bourgeoisie emerged at the top of the reorganized group and became the clear unifying economic and political force within the dominant class in Salta.

A number of major political events, including the fall of Rosas and the writing of the 1853 constitution, the realization of national unity under Urquiza, the formation of a national military force under Roca and the federalization of Buenos Aires in 1880, permitted the consolidation of a previously divided national territory. National unification was marked politically by the triumph in the provinces of the alliance between conservative and liberal sectors, representing large capitalistic (and pre-capitalist) agricultural production and free-trade interests respectively. This political and economic consolidation was reenforced socially thought the intermarriage of members of the oligarchies in different provinces, and the sharing of

power at the national level (Hollander 1976).

The federalization of Argentina did not signal a break with the developments of the previous period; rather, it represented a certain although somewhat altered continuity with the period of provincial autonomy which had preceded it. The centralization of power in the oligarchy at the national level gave legitimacy, in effect, to the autonomy of local oligarchies in their respective provinces.[37] Thus, as an informant made clear to me, national institutions served the purpose of furthering the interests of the provincial power groups. The case of Robustiano Patron Costas, one of Salta's most important figures around clearly demonstrates this. As president of the National Senate, he was able to gain tax-exempt status and protectionist legislation for his sugar producing empire, at the time Salta's largest industry. Rock (1987) notes that political unification was tantamount to insuring the continuity of power of local oligarchies, and their representation within a national government. Thus, many of Argentina's presidents, vice presidents and ministers were from the interior (see Hollander 1976). Furthermore, under the guidelines of the constitution, representatives to the National Senate were selected by provincial legislative bodies, who were invariably bastions of oligarchic might.

National consolidation brought a marked economic transformation within Argentina. The introduction of foreign, particularly British capital, led to the rapid development of a number of areas in the economy, particularly those in the

export sector. Furthermore, the consolidation of the national territory through the set up of a national communications and transportation system through, particularly, the railroad, led to major economic changes within the interior provinces. As Ferrer (1983) notes, the development of the railroad was rapid; in 1869 only 10 kms. of track had been laid, but by 1914 33,500 kms. of track extended outward in a fan shape from Buenos Aires to most regions in the interior. It arrived in Salta only in 1891, but had arrived in Tucuman by 1880. The railroad was looked on favorably by many economic sectors in the interior, but its effects proved devastating to local economies. Ferrer (1983:146) notes: "Imported products now arrived with ease into the Interior and the competition it represented proved fatal for the precarious local industries." While the railroad proved beneficial to "expansive" economic activities in the interior, such as those receiving protectionist measures from the national government or those with an export orientation, in general the arrival of the train signal the peripheralization within Argentina of the interior provinces. Regional economies became increasingly specialized.

The economic orientation of the interior provinces continued to build precisely on provincial autonomy and on the monopolization of landownership. The railroad permitted the development of a few specialized industries in each region of the country, none in direct competition with the others. These special interests became powerful factors in their own

regions. While oriented toward the national or even international markets, these regionally specialized enterprises did not compete with the economies of other areas within the national territory, and yet as localized activities they receive federal protection as well as local protection. In the provinces of the northwest the specialized capitalistic activities were primarily sugar and tobacco, although a number of other crops also were produced for the larger market (see Solá 1889). Wine was the specialized product of Cuyo, yerba of Misiones, wheat of the Pampa Humeda which included the province of Santa Fe, and cotton and wood from the Chaco. All of these new enterprises existed side by side with traditional forms of production, particularly with cattle.

For the most part, the arrival of the railroad had devastating effects in Salta, as well as in many other provinces. As Caro Figueroa (1976) notes, the railroad destroyed many incipient or small industries, as cheaper products brought in from the outside flooded the local markets. Flour mills, tanneries, shoe manufacturers, weavers, and other small scale producers were driven from production. Dorfman (1927) states: "Incipient artisan activities were swept away by high transportation costs and by technical backwardness. Salta's famous tanneries were reduced to simple storage houses where skins were salted for export, to be tanned elsewhere and later to be brought back as leather goods or other manufactured goods, now with the accumulated costs of transportation both from and to the province and with the

added costs of all the intermediaries which acted in the transaction." The arrival of the railroad also raised the value of land in many parts of the province, putting it outside the reach of incoming immigrants.

In 1881 Miguel Ortiz was elected governor of Salta, after founding Salta's first political party "La Trova." This marked the first time that the oligarchy in Salta found its expression as a true political class. Ironically, the union of this class came not as a result of the ability to come to grips with internecine conflict, but rather with the hardening and strengthening of a state structure whose penetration, although limited, went considerably farther than the previous structures which had preceded it. The strengthening of the state apparatus had been made possible through the writing of a liberal constitution which combined liberal and conservative traditions, and the strengthening of the central government over the national territory. Instrumental in this was the formation of a strong military force, led by Julio A. Roca, a member of the Tucuman oligarchy, destroying alternative military forces and virtually destroying the gaucho as a source of conflict. Thus, regional economies were consolidated into the national and international market. Local production became specialized, as petty commodity production of goods which were introduced by the trade network were destroyed, leaving only production of goods which could be exported. The result was the expansion of capitalist production which, however, left local economies a blend of

capitalist enterprises, which were dominant, and pre-capitalist productive structures. As Rutledge (1977) has noted, these economic systems maintained a complementary relationship; pre-capitalist agriculture in the hinterlands provided much of the labor force for capitalist production in sugar, tobacco, wine and other forms of capitalist production.

Thus, the economic structure of the provincial economy was transformed. The most significant economic activities became capitalist agriculture, particularly sugar, and later tobacco, wine, fruit and other crops. Cattle maintained its traditional hold, and as nitrate mining expanded in northern Chile, the cattle trade expanded as well. The result was the formation of a rural semi-proletariat which worked its own land but which also provided seasonal wage labor contracted for the plantations. The nature of the oligarchy changed as well. New families emerged which gained strength and leadership within the oligarchic group, and a number of older families re-emerged with new power. The new families which emerged were generally combinations of immigrants and traditional families, combining the traditional names with capital which sometimes came from the outside. One family was the Patron Costas, whose leader, Robustiano, became governor, national senator, and presidential candidate. He was the product of the joining of a Catamarca elite family with the important Costas family in Salta, who had raised their level of living through the trade of cattle with Chile. The family became the primary force in Salta with its sugar mill San

Martin del Tabacal, and came to own vast extensions of land not only in sugar areas, but in the mountain areas as well. The Patron Costas family managed to pull together this reformed oligarchy into its economic enterprise, but also into a social group identified by the club that was already mentioned. Another family, the Michel Torinos, which arose from the union of a French immigrant family and a traditional family of the Cafayate and San Carlos area. They became the largest wine producers in the province, and owned extensive areas in the Valles Calchaquies. They also monopolized the mass media in the province, particularly one newspaper, from which the family could espouse its political philosophy and intents. Another family to rise to prominence was Cornejo family, who owned one of the first sugar mills in the province, but whose production took on new meaning following the 1870's. The mill was rapidly modernized, and a different branch of the family took over the mill. Elsewhere, the Overjeros invested in the largest sugar mill in the province of Jujuy, and other Salteno and Jujeno families invested in cane growing as well. Sugar became the primary crop in the province by the first decade of the 20th century.

The strengthening and realignment of the elite class gradually transformed the oligarchy into a capitalist class. Vestiges of the pre-capitalist class remained, and continued to exercise an influence in the makeup of the oligarchy. Nevertheless, the dominance clearly shifted to families directly involved in capitalist production. This dominance

led to the formation of a cohesive group, often united in seeking local policies and class interests. The union allowed the oligarchy to reach extraordinary levels of hegemony and power, for they dominated not only the local political structure, but had access to the national power structure as well. Nevertheless, while powerful, their power was limited as it had not been in the past, for now the state structure was independent of direct oligarchic control.

The transformation of Salta's class structure, however, changed only gradually, almost imperceptibly. Traditional landowners continued to exercise hegemony over the resources and the political structure of the province, and strengthened their position thought the revision of property laws and new vagrancy laws, which secured their land monopoly and restricted the gaucho's possibilities of carrying out political activities. Caro Figueroa notes that control over the land inhibited the immigration into the province that was affecting the rest of the nation: "In Salta, land ownership was as or more exclusive than in the rest of the nation, and overly weak the administrative machinery to absorb the weight of a great tertiary sector (1976:116)." Thus, while in 1912 300,000 immigrants entered the country from Europe, only 2000 (1.5%) arrived in Salta. Landownership patterns were reenforced by the new cattle boom fueled by the opening of nitrate mines in the Atacama region of Norther Chile. An annual average of 18,000 head of cattle were driven in droves over the mountains to the mines (Garrido de Sola 1982), and

Salta's hinterlands and agricultural areas were converted into intensive grazing pastures or alfalfa fields. Emerging from this trade were a number of important individuals who formed the political and economic core of Salta's wealthy elite. They included Miguel Ortiz, Angel Zerda, Vicente Anzoategui, Juan Uriburu, Manuel Antonio Ovejero, Robustiano Patron, and David Michel, all of them later pillars of the emerging agrarian capitalist production in the province.

The development of capitalist sectors of the economy created a new type of tension in the procurement of labor in the province. The traditional haciendas continued to rely on traditional forms of labor exploitation, such as sharecropping. Yet the capitalist sector needed large amounts of seasonal free labor. Several solutions were attempted: in the earliest stages indian labor from the "fronteras" was utilized on the Cornejo sugar estates, but this often proved too small and unreliable. The solution which was most common during the first half of the 20th century was the use of traditional labor on the haciendas to carry out the harvesting of the sugar cane and the work in the tobacco fields. Patron Costas himself bought and came to ownership through marriage of vast extensions of land in the Valles Calchaquies, where traditional forms of labor predominated.[38] The use of Bolivian migrant labor became common, particularly curing the middle of this century, and labor from the city of Salta's informal sector was also utilized.[39] The sugar and tobacco industries were built, however, primarily on the arrangements

mentioned above: the use of peasants for the seasonal harvests. Since the need for labor was seasonal, and most of the zafra took place during the winter months, a degree of complementarity between subsistence agriculture and the harvests of capitalist crops developed (Gatti 1976, Rutledge 1977). The arrangement had a number of benefits for the entrepreneur as well: a steady labor supply could be almost assured, and the numbers of workers well calculated, since the peasants were tenants on the haciendas, and thus had little option but to work on the sugar harvests. The much commented advantage of not having to reproduce the workers' livelihood applied in these cases as well. Kin ties helped supply entrepreneurs with labor from other haciendas as well.

The arrangement resulted in a somewhat ironic situation. This form of capitalist expansion served, at the same time it was expanding, to reinforce traditional landholding patterns and labor arrangements (and thus the traditional base of the oligarchy), particularly in certain geographical regions such as the Valles Calchaquies and other mountain regions. Capitalist development prolonged traditional production arrangements, instead of destroying them in the Salteño context. This unseemly union between capitalist production and non-capitalist labor arrangements influenced the nature of social relations within the capitalist class as well: the importance of the traditional oligarchy was not destroyed, but rather was fused with the incipient capitalist class. Thus, many of Salta's most important families of the early 20th

century represented the fusion of oligarchic and newer capitalistic families: Patron Costas, Michel Torino, and others were such combinations. Thus, the oligarchy internalized within its own constitution the contradictions of the economic system.

The rise and fall of the oligarchy, and the Club 20

The expropriation of the oligarchy's club occurred on August 11, 1950. Not only the building, but the furniture and other elements of the Club were confiscated as well. A vociferous yet surprisingly weak protest emitted from among the ranks of Salta's high society. Curiously, the legislature, with the backing of several of Salta's traditional families, voted for the expropriation, and completed the takeover.

The unstated, yet well known (on all sides), intent of the expropriation was to put an end to the centuries-long rule of Salta's small group of elite families. The expropriation fell easily into the longstanding agenda of the Peronist party. The Peronist platform had always been anti-oligarchic, a group which it considered both undemocratic and a natural ally of foreign imperialism. The act of expropriation was as direct and as it was symbolic; it heralded a direct confrontation between a traditional power group which had monopolized power and wealth in the province for more than a century and a half and a newer populist state, and it symbolized for the popular sector the end of that reign.

The expropriation attacked what formerly had been the nerve center of oligarchic power. For almost a century the Club had represented the dominance and power of the oligarchy in the city, and expressed many elements of the character of the oligarchy. Founded in 1859 by General Rudecindo Alvarado, one of the heroes of the independence wars, several times governor, and married into the local prominent families, the formation of the Club paralleled the unification of regional oligarchies following the downfall of Rosas (Hollander 1976, Ramos 1981). The Club was founded as a means of bringing together the most illustrious men of Salta's population. General Dionisio Puch, Salta's governor in 1856 and 1857, and proponent of the formation of a Club, expressed the need for such an institution as "...the creation of a common meeting center for the pleasure of the cultured society of Salta." (in Corbacho 1978:54) The Club was housed for the first 20 years of its existence in houses or buildings belonging to various families of the oligarchy. Off to a rocky start, the Club became an ever important fixture in Salteño society and politics, reaching a preeminent position by the 1880's. The Club built a theatre and salons on the plaza, where invited artists and local performers read poetry, staged plays or enjoyed concerts of music. A law prohibited other cultural events in the city from taking place at the same time as those happening in the Club.

As with membership in the oligarchy itself, the rules of the Club established that membership was based on lineage or

family background, or as Corbacho states, on the basis of "race". Candidates were voted into the Club by the founding members, using a system of black and white marbles to vote. The vote had to be unanimous to gain membership; the presence of one black marble vote signified a rejection, and was cause of great shame. In the voting process, family position and "linaje" were among the primary criteria for determining the acceptability of the candidate.

However, kinship was not the sole basis for membership; the class-basis of the oligarchy was also present in the form of membership fees. The contradictions between class and kinship criteria became evident almost immediately, as many members of the oligarchy could not meet the high Club payments, and were therefore unable to continue participating in and supporting club activities. This produced an almost continuous crisis in the Club, not only because it excluded members of the oligarchy who no longer participated in a solid class position, but who belonged to some of the most prestigious families of Salta's high society, but also because it meant the opening up of the Club to monied outsiders who could financially sustain it. The contradiction between class and kinship criteria was confronted in a number of ways. Fees were lowered during certain periods, a two tiered payment system was initiated which distinguished between voting members, who paid higher fees, and those who participated in club activities without the vote. Limited and carefully screened recruitment of wealthy immigrants, particularly

mining entrepreneurs and merchants, was permitted. The problem was so great that at one point the requirements of dress, including expensive silk, were ruled out, in order not to embarrass those members who could not afford it. Nevertheless, the tension created by this situation remained. At one point it was so high and embarrassing to impoverished members of the oligarchy that a rival club was created which included among its ranks many of the most traditional families who couldn't afford the Club 20 fees, while the Club 20 became increasingly dominated by the newer immigrant elite. The situation was resolved, by lowering dues and by the intermarriage of immigrants to local families, but the essential and fundamental tension between membership by class and membership through kinship continued throughout the existence of oligarchic dominance.

There is evidence that the vicissitudes of the Club's fortunes may have had another cause as well. Challenging often repeated conventional wisdom, the formation of the Club grew not out of an already established unity among the oligarchy, but just the opposite, a need for the Club came from divisiveness and self-destructive conflict within the oligarchy. Fifty years of internecine conflict had tragic consequences for a number of Salta's families, including not only impoverishment, but exile and imprisonment as well. During the 1850's great effort was made to end conflict and to consolidate and unify power within the oligarchy both at the national and the provincial levels (Ramos 1981). Corbacho

states:

> During almost the whole of the 19th century we see [the oligarchy] face itself in struggles and rivalries, channelled later through the political parties. Before this was to occur the group became impoverished; first due to the wars of independence and then through the long fratricidal conflicts and the rivalries between fractions within the same leading group. (1978:54)

The Club was one of several attempts to create a neutral ground out of which could grow unified policy and action. The Club, however, did not resolve the sources of conflicts and disunity, but rather provided a platform, a meeting ground, where disagreements could be aired and resolved without resorting to armed conflict and to the involvement of the popular classes. In this regard it had a great deal of success, at least during its heyday. At one level, the Club became a clearinghouse for governmental decisions. Caro Figueroa (1976) states that emissaries from other provincial governments and from the national government often went directly to the Club to deliver their messages, rather than the legislature, knowing that those who had to act on these messages could be found there. Conflicts over power sharing and the choosing of governors were also resolved in the Club, and it becomes evident that most governors, legislators and judges during the late 19th century and early 20th century were chosen from within the ranks of the Club.[40] The Club became thus an informal government, paralleling and complementing the functions of actual government institutions.

Nevertheless, the show of unity overlooked, but did not

resolve, internal disputes, and conflict erupted a number of times, jeopardizing the functions of the Club. New expressions of disunity, particularly conflicts between emerging political parties and political tendencies, created a number of crises within the Club, and that disunity was often at fault for the fiscal crises and the drop in membership that the Club periodically faced. Eventually, in the 1890's the Club virtually closed.

A new Club (Nuevo Club 20 de Febrero) was opened a decade later based on a new strategy. Several leading entrepreneurs and powerful figures in the province formed a commission led the drive for a new club. These were among the most powerful of Salta's traditional families (but also the most powerful of its emergent capitalist class): Angel Zerda, Robustiano Patrón Costas, Alberto San Miguel, Santiago M. Lopez, Felix Usandivaras, Adolfo Garcia Pinto, Jose Saravia and Benjamin Zorrilla (Corbacho 1978:64). The new club would have a new basis: while protecting the identity of the club as a dominion of the traditional families, it would allow members of the powerful new bourgeoisie to be integrated into it. These gained membership by buying shares of 1000 pesos (later 1500) in the club. The ownership of shares was a ticket to membership, but monthly quotas were to be paid as well. Traditional families, longstanding members, only had to pay monthly quotas. The rule changes opened the door to a hord of new names on the club's roster, all of recent immigrant origin.[41] More importantly, the new rules represented a major

shift in the oligarchy's definition of itself. In essence the oligarchy was recognizing the gap between the class and kinship elite, and the need to bridge that gap. The bridge was provided by backing the oligarchy's social position with capital, even if much of the capital belonged to outsiders. The change was greater, perhaps, than even the members of the club were aware; the selling of shares signified that the oligarchy recognized for the first time that the class nature of the oligarchy took precedence over its social character.

The arrangement upon which the new club was based provided the long sought-after unity and stability, but at a cost. The character of the club had changed. It now was dominated almost exclusively by a clearly defined capitalist class, and it was the powerful capitalist families within the traditional group which provided the leadership and the policy-making within the club and within the province. Among these were the sugar barons Patron Costas, Overjero, Quintana, Garcia Pinto, Usandivaras, Cornejo; the wine and newspaper barons Torino, and Michel Torino, a number of emerging agriculturalists and the more traditional <u>feudatarios</u>, such as the Zorrillas and Saravias. Robustiano Patron Costas was perhaps the most prominent individual in this group. During the first decades of the 20th century he had built a large sugar empire, the Ingenio Tabacal, owned enormous landholdings, and had occupied the governorship and a place in the national senate for over 20 years. He had also

provided employment opportunities for members of the oligarchy in his numerous enterprises. He was the province's leading capitalist. His family, which included four brothers, formed a veritable dynasty, and had married into the other leading families of the province. In 1930 he was the leading conservative candidate for president of Argentina, running against a failing Radical party.[42] Locally, Patron Costas' brother, Luis, occupied the governor's seat until just prior to the peronist government. Other members and associates of the Patron Costas clan and of the Ingenio had held government posts both at the national and the provincial levels. Patron Costas personally was to save the Club from extinction after the expropriation.

The Club flourished during the first three decades of the century. During the 1930's it suffered the consequences of the collapse of world markets, and only in the 1940's was it able to recuperate somewhat. However, the advent of the Peronist movement and its conflict with the traditional oligarchy made it only a matter of time before a major crisis would occur. The Club was hurt by Peronist policies requiring it to pay municipal and property taxes, and to pay social security and retirement benefits for its employees, neither of which it had ever done. The crisis came to a head in 1950, without, incidently, much surprise. By now the nature of the Argentine state had changed, and it now had to represent, and mediate, the interests of various groups at the national and provincial levels; it could no longer be monopolized by one

group. The Club had been one of the most obvious signatures of this monopolization in Salta, and was therefore the most powerful symbolic target of the populist government. Certainly the symbolism of the expropriation was made particularly clear when the executive branch occupied the building of the old Club.

Perhaps more importantly, the internal reasons for the existence of the Club had ceased as well. Begun as an effort to mediate numerous weakened class interests within the oligarchy, to provide a united defense against outside political and economic forces, to bridge the gap between class and kinship, its original function had largely ceased to exist. The Club had become a class-based institution which served to prop up a dying kinship based group. This change became evident as wealth and economic power became increasingly central to the province's development. It is not surprising, then, that the expropriation of the club received little opposition within both the executive branch and the legislature in Salta, despite the presence in both of several traditional families. The Club no longer represented a defensive mechanism of a disunited elite powerless to the forces of external economic forces. It had been transformed instead into the home of Salta's new unified dominant class; in fact, it provided the social character of this class, couched in terms of tradition. It is possible to say that the transformation of the Club, which had strengthened it, had ironically also provided the seeds to its own

self-destruction, at least in terms of its original charter.

The expropriation went through a prolonged legal process. The Club's directing commission approved the purchase of an old house on located on the central plaza, site of the first 20th of February dance in 1813, after Belgrano's triumph over Spanish forces. Spanish officials, patriot officers and Salta's principle families had intermingled on that occasion, a sign that civility could rule despite enmities. In February of 1951 the government dealt the club its final blow. Carlos Xamena, the interim governor, directed the final confiscation of the Club's properties. The Club was stripped of its legal title, and its furniture and belongings were sold at a public auction. The old building was razed, and in a symbolic gesture, the government's pensioners and retirement fund bank was built at the site.

The Club did not die exactly. In 1955, following Peron's overthrow, the Club was given back its legal status, and the province agreed to return its property. The reoccupation of the Club's former sites proved impractical, and the members of the executive commission decided to look elsewhere. A mansion located on the eastern edge of the city, owned by a leading citizen of the city, Carlos Durand Guasch, was bought by the Club.[43] The distancing from the center of the city, and the province's dominance of much of the central plaza, was symbolic of the oligarchy's acceptance of the mediating role of the state. The Club continues to operate today, with added athletic and entertainment facilities, and more than 800

members (Corbacho 1978:74). But its importance in the life of the city and the province has definitely changed.

Endnotes to Chapter IV

1.Cornejo 1972. It is thus not surprising that class relations are often framed in kinship terms, and manifested materially in fictive kinship terms as well. The very term patron, which is the term of address by a tenant to his landlord, is a kin-based term, relater to the Latin root "pater" or father.

2.The class character of the gaucho is clearly spelled out in many of Argentina's classic gaucho epics, such as Hernandez's (1872) Martin Fierro and Guiraldes' (1926) Don Secundo Sombra. In the typical reconstructionism of Argentina's history, this aspect of the gaucho is overlooked. Even such influential writers such as Martinez Estrada (1933), in his Radiografia de la Pampa, obscure the class character of this group.

3.Hollander (1976) notes that the regional oligarchies were always represented at high levels within the executive branch of the national government. Indeed, the number of presidents, vice-presidents, and ministers from the interior during this period is high. Hollander also notes that political alliances were accompanied by kinship alliances, as intermarriage between members of regional oligarchies became common.

4.Bureaucratization has always served, in Latin America, as a defense mechanism against the imposition of oligarchic power within the state. In effect, bureaucracies develope their own independent interests, making it difficult for a small power elite to penetrate and take over its functions. For this reason military takeovers which tend to favor the oligarchic tendencies in a country are contradictions in terms: as functionaries of the state, they have independent interests which will not completely fit the class agendas of the oligarchies.

5.It is important to note that no determinism in the formation of the oligarchy is intended here; in other words, I am not taking a developmentalist orientation in explaining the rise of the oligarchy. The opposite, in fact, could be said to be true: the conditions laid down during the late 18th century in Salta seem bound toward another entirely different class structure, perhaps more akin to a dependent agrarian capitalist structure which is prevalent on the Pampas today. It was the disruption of the development process which ultimately led to the formation of the oligarchy, and thus it could be said that the formation of the oligarchy represented a revolutionary rather than an evolutionary process.

6.The Arias de Velazquez family is one of the earliest families to survive to present day. According to Cornejo (1934), Francisco Arias de Velazquez was among the founders

of the city of Salta in 1582. Documents demonstrate that he was given in merced (grant) a piece of land immediately to the north of the city of Salta, later forming part of the Hacienda's Castañares and Buena Vista (see Cornejo 1945).

7.The mayorazgo, which was practiced in Spain at this time, was a rule of primogeniture with regard to the inheritance of titles and properties. Simply stated, under the mayorazgo the eldest male in noble families inherited both titles and lands. During the Bourbon period segundones, as non-inheriting sons were known, often travelled to the American continent, not uncommonly with a colonial government appointment, and set up commercial ventures in the colonies. Among the families within this group which had an impact in Salta were the Gurruchagas and the Moldes, and the Gorritis and Puchs.

8.Several of the better known families in Salta came from this category. The core of the Saravia family, for example, resided in Cordoba, and had branched out to a number of cities in the Rio de la Plata region, including Buenos Aires. Jose Domingo Saravia, founder of Salta's family, came from the branch located in Santiago del Estero. The Salta lineage maintains some communication with the branches located in other regions even today. Another family which had an important impact during this period in Salta was Fernandez Cornejo family. At least three brothers arrived in Salta around mid century from Peru, apparently with sufficient wealth and clout to buy enormous extensions of land east of Salta, in the fertile Perico, Campo Santo and La Frontera regions. The principle figure in this family was Juan Adrian, who arrived with a military commission and an appointment in the cabildo, which he exchanged for a piece of land. Juan Adrian was appointed by the Charcas courts to carry out the expulsion of the Jesuits in the Intendency of Salta, which he carried out efficiently. Juan Adrian is an extraordinary figure in Salta during this period; he represents the essence of the province's entrepreneurial elite, combining land owning and mercantile interests. Not only was his amassing of land noteworthy, but his entrepreneurial drive was demonstrated in his exploration of the Rio Bermejo in an effort to find an alternative navigable route to the expensive overland routes between Salta and the Atlantic. The extensive Fernandez Cornejo offspring formed the core of the oligarchy in the early 19th century, and played an enormously influential role in the molding of Salta's class structure. The family's importance waned, however, as the century progressed. The history of this family is discussed more fully in chapter 6.

Among other important families in Salta's early oligarchy which came from a similar background were the Toledo Pimentel clan and the Figueroa family. The founder of the Toledo Pimentel was a descendant of the famous Viceroy of the 16th century, Francisco de Toledo, who was influential in consolidating Spain's control over its South American colonies

and who ordered the founding of the city of Salta (Stern 1982). Antonino de Toledo Pimentel arrived from Cordoba, and had family in Santiago, in the Kingdom of Chile. The founder of the Figueroa family, Antonio de Figueroa, came from Cordoba.

9.There are a number of such cases. Perhaps the most obvious is that of Pedro Jose Saravia, the son of a criollo immigrant from Santiago del Estero who apparently had not amassed great extensions of land (c.f.Haigh 1968). Pedro Jose married Barbara de Tineo, who had inherited the important Hacienda Castañares to north of Salta from her father. The land did not stay in the Saravia family due to the fact that Pedro Jose had no male heirs. Earlier in the century Domingo Severo de Isasmendi, a Spanish immigrant and colonial functionary, married into the old Frias de Aramburú family, and through marriage became the owner of the enormous Hacienda de Molinos in the Calchaqui Valleys. The property was maintained in family hands throughout most of the 19th century (c.f. Gatti 1976). Another similar case was the Torino family, founded by Antonio Viana de Torino, who became owner of the Hacienda Vieja del Rosario in the Lerma valley also through marriage (Cornejo 1945). This pattern was thus very common during this period.

10.Ferrer (1983:40) notes that the northwest, which included Salta, Jujuy, Tucuman, Catamarca, La Rioja and Santiago del Estero, contained 40% of the population of the Viceroyalty during the latter half of the 19th century, underlining the importance of the regional in the inter-regional trade network being described.

11.These may have been identified by generative names, and may have not actually been those groups. The attacks were organized, and were probably not at all haphazard, although they are identified in the history books as being simple barbarous or savage attacks. There is no doubt that for centuries, until the late 19th century, indian areas, both in the Chaco and in the southern Pampas, were built on a raiding economy which attacked merchant caravans and frontier ranches.

12.Mule trade went down tremendously in the 1790's, due to the Tupac Amaru rebellion. Haigh (1968), noting the importance of the mule trade, states that certain merchants were particularly powerful in this trade. The Candioti house of Santa Fe, for example, was purported to ship up to 25,000 mules annually north. Other merchants in Salta were also powerful: the Figueroa's, for example, were able to provide 22,000 head of cattle to the Army of the North in 1814.

13.Information on the Saravia family was obtained largely through personal communication with one of the family members, who has compiled a genealogy of the family.

14.In less cultural terms, the division could be translated into a conflict between localist and non-localist tendencies within the Salteno elite.

15.Frias himself notes, for example, that Martinez de Mollinedo was a Spaniard who contributed greatly to the revolutionary cause. Other Spanish revolutionaries included Marcos de Zorilla, Jose de Gurruchaga, and others. Criollos who took a royalist position included Severo de Isasmendi, the Aramburu family, and the Costas family (See Frias 1981:482). I might note that I have not found a clearly documented account of how the two sides were constituted, and many accounts of the revolutionary period ignore completely who the Salteno realists were. This may be due to a number of factors; many realists, for example, were exiled during the period of conflict, and never returned to form part of Salteno society. Another reason may lie in the complex nature of factionalism in Salta during this period, and the fact that other conflicts soon overshadowed the problem of the realists. Still another reason may lie in the nature of historical reconstructionism itself, which defines Spanish attacks as an external phenomenon, and which only affirms the cohesiveness of Salteno society during this period. This type of historical reconstruction makes the task of discovering the internal nature of conflicts among Salta's dominant elites during this and subsequent periods difficult.

16.Antonio de Castro, for example, became a leading military figure within the Upper Peruvian Spanish forces. Among Salteno career military figures were Martin de Guemes, Pueyrredon, and Pedro Jose de Saravia. Many Saltenos had been active in the militias prior to the break with Spain.

17.This term comes from Whiteford (1981). I believe it is a useful term theoretically, for it describes the condition of agency in situations in which clear class or other interests are not clearly defined, or in which structural factor of Bourdieu's concept of habitus are not clear to actors. Taussig (1987) refers to an analogous ideological condition which he calls "epistemic murk". American cultural anthropology has so long been structurally deterministic that it has failed to note the constraints of peoples and classes, particularly in positions of powerlessness and poverty, which operate on their actions. Thus, the state of agency in this condition is negative, emphasizing decision making whose aim is avoidance of vulnerability. That the significance of Whiteford's term has not been noted, I might add, is somewhat surprising.

18.Needless to say, despite affirmations by local historians as to the republican nature of this and subsequent elections, the methods of selecting governors and government officials resembled very little popular suffrage known today. Only a

small group of prominent male citizens took part in the elections. Among the historians who characterize this election as a truly democratic process is Atilio Cornejo (1938), an apologist for Guemes, and Frias (1981). See Halperin Donghi (1975) for a discussion of the reasons why Buenos Aires viewed with favor the election of Güemes.

19.It should be noted, however, that this same fact could be said of a number of different figures in Salta during this period. The elite group was relatively small, and intermarriage was very common. Large families, such as the Figueroa's and Cornejo's, could be said to have even more direct relations to large numbers of elites. Thus, while Haigh's point is well taken, it doesn't explain why Güemes, as opposed to other figures, arrived at such prominence.

20.The royalists were taxed heavily throughout the war period. A general purge of royalists occurred with the evacuation of the province by Belgrano in 1813. Later taxation was proposed by Rondeau, and by Güemes himself (Haigh 1968). Of course, the royalists were not the sole targets of taxation; the "volunteer" donations, and later the forced levies, which patriotic landowners paid bitterly hurt the province, and may have been one of the causes for Güemes' downfall and the end of Salteño involvement in the war.

21.Rondeau ultimately wins, and Alvear is turned back and made to return to Buenos Aires without taking command of the army. The conflict was more than cosmetic for Salteños; they commit troops to fighting for each side, although even in the province Rondeau loyalist gain the upper hand (Haigh 1968). The fallout from this conflict seems to have minimal within the oligarchy.

22.There are a number of such celebrated cases. One which Cornejo refers to is a conflict between Arias Velazquez and Güemes. At the end of his study, Arias Velazquez is portrayed as having a difficult character, and this is ultimately the tragedy of the conflict. (see Cornejo 1934)

23.Belgrano used this tactic in 1813 when he evacuated both Jujuy and Salta. The inhabitants of the cities were ordered to take all their belongings with them, including their cattle, and to destroy all other sources of food and resources, including their crops. Güemes used the same tactic in his guerrilla warfare.

24.Cornejo (1971) describes the agony of one of Olañeta's invasions of Salta in 1817. Hostilized by an almost unseen enemy which swooped down from the mountains on the narrow troop lines and on the supply line, Olañeta was able to take control of Salta, only to find that he had no food. Expeditions sent out to look for food met with grim fates.

Finally, in desperation, Olañeta organized a major expedition southward in the Valle de Lerma in search of supplies. The weakened and terrorized troops were overcome by Güemes' gauchos in Cerrillos, and their will broken, they fled back to Jujuy and north to the Upper Peru.

25.Caro Figueroa (1976) attributes much greater significance to the fuero gaucho than do traditional historians such as Cornejo (1971). Traditional historians have pointed out that there were antecedents to the fuero gaucho in Salteño colonial history, and that Güemes' law was neither new nor unique. But there is no doubt that much of this argument is at least partially an apologetic for the "gaucho hero". The reactions of the elite to the fuero gaucho, including the formation of the Nueva Patria party opposed to Güemes, and attitudes of many elites following the caudillo's death indicate that there was strong and violent reaction to this, among other, of his policies.

26.A number of patriotic officers, or their widows or children, received military pensions or compensation from the national or provincial governments. However, many complained bitterly that they never received the promised compensation.

27.The relatively small size of the export activities is shown in the city of Salta's consumption of beef. In 1839 1970 head of cattle were butchered for Salta's own consumption; in 1840 2406 were consumed domestically. Salta had at the time a population of approximately 6000 in 1825, perhaps double that in 1440 (Cadena de Hessling n.d.:75).

28.Ferrer (1981:82) notes the double edge to this policy. It is true that border aduanas did protect the internal economies of the provinces, but they also stifled the little trade that existed since all of the provinces established them. More importantly, however, Ferrer also notes that provincial customs houses were almost inevitable, given the fact that there was virtually no market for goods which were produced in the interior provinces anyway, since without a protectionist policy in Buenos Aires, there was no defense against much cheaper imports which competed directly with principle products produced in the provinces.

29.Around 1840 Salta had a relatively small commercial sector. Cadena de Hessling (n.d.:77) lists 5 first class pulperias (eating and socializing establishments), 32 second class and 74 third class pulperias, 3 almacenes (warehouses?), 7 bakeries, 2 quicellerias, 44 general stores, 2 soup stores, a clothing store, and a sugar store.

30.The figures are based on estimates. The first national census was taken in 1869; prior to this date many population figures for Argentina are rough estimates. Ferrer (1981:79)

places the population growth of the northwest provinces between 1800 and 1869 is 1.9%.

31.In 1839 a law was put into effect establishing the minimum size of land grants at 1/2 league on each side, or what was considered a minimum size for an estancia. The law obviously was not designed to put land into the hands of the poorer segments of the population. In effect, many estancieros petitioned for land grants in order to accommodate their growing cattle herds. Among those who received these grants were David Uriburu, in Oran, and several of the Saravia clan, in Anta.

32.Hollander (1976) notes that one estancia, valued at 40,000 pesos around the turn of the century, was only valued at 10,000 pesos fifty years later. The drop in the value of land was due, largely, to the lack of commercial value of land.

33.The degree of class consciousness which the gaucho may have had is a matter of great controversy. 19th century writers, such as Sarmiento (1845) and Hernandez (1872) often portray the gaucho has having a highly developed sense of class consciousness, expressed in rebelliousness, fierce independence, and bitterness. The same literature, however, describes the gaucho's fierce loyalty to caudillo and landlord, a bondage of patronage, which contradicts the image of mature class consciousness. However the question is resolved in future research, there is no doubt that the gaucho presented a threat to the establishment of a legitimized state order in the oligarchy dominated Rio de la Plata region, and thus his power had to be curbed.

34.One question that is raised when analyzing the importance of the gaucho in Salteno politics is why Salta never produced another major caudillo after the death of Güemes. One possible explanation is the fact that labor shortages, and the fall of trade, created a gaucho in Salta which was much more subject to particularly landowners, less independent. Thus, as Salta's economy became more stagnant, the political role of the gaucho may have been curbed.

35.According to the constitution of 1821, governors were elected by the legislative assembly. According to Hollander (1976), in times of general stability this was often the only function of the assembly. It met only rarely during the course of the year, and thus the executive branch represented the whole initiative of the provincial government. This did not mean, however, that the governor had unlimited powers in the local realm; on the contrary, the instability of the government reflects to a large measure the inability of the governor to attain a consensus among the leading families of the province over his policies and positions.

36.In this regard kinship among the elite of Latin America has the same dilemma that any other social entity based on kin ties; and it resolves them in a similar fashion: the formation of groups is based on factors which actually lie outside the actual structure of kin relations. The tension is much more apparent, however, in a group like Salta's oligarchy, for it fails to resolve what the kinship groups consist of. It is my contention that kinship systems always represent a tension in the social life of a group. This is because kinship per se contains no structure for unifying persons, and yet this is precisely its attribute. All kinship systems create social relations between individuals, or precisely, between an individual and his or her relatives. But taken "naturally" kinship systems tend to individualize and separate. On the other side kinship is all inclusive; the saying that all humans are brothers (sic) is true. The mystery of the kinship structure is that out of interpersonal relations it is able to create groups "based" on kinship. What this means is that to do so a selective process occurs, excluding certain persons, including others. This is precisely the dilemma that Fortes (1953) focusses on in his investigation of complementary filiation, for it represents a separation between two types of people (and two social domains), both who are strictly speaking related through kinship, those who belong to the kin group, and those who are related, but are outside of the kin group. All kinship systems, regardless of primitive or modern, create and in some way deal with this dilemma.

37.It should be pointed out the complementary relationship between capitalist agriculturalists and traditional latifundistas is not necessarily a geographical phenomenon, although it was represented as such in its early phases. It took place within the provincial context as well as in the pampas. Patron Costas, owner of the Ingenio San Martin del Tabacal, Salta's largest sugar estate and mill, was part of a rising agricultural bourgeoisie in Salta, and came to dominate both the political and economic life of the province. Others which appeared during the same period were Michel-Torino, Etchart, and a number of tobacco growers. Although these families often married in Salta, and established firm roots in the province, they often moved to Buenos Aires. It symbolically represented what was already occurring.

38.One of these haciendas, Luracatoa, measures over 300,000 hectares (Gatti 1976). Patron Costas obtained this finca primarily through marriage and purchase. Patron Costas also rented the huge Hacienda de Santa Victoria, a traditional feudo populated primarily by subsistence oriented peasants (Rutledge 1977).

39.Whiteford 1981 describes the history of these labor arrangements in detail.

40.Corbacho notes that between 1900 and 1945 nine presidents alone of the club became governors or major national or provincial legislators. They include Angel Zerda (governor 1901-1904), Robustiano Patron Costas (governor 1913-1916, national senator for almost two decades, and presidential candidate in 1930), Abraham Cornejo (governor 1916-1918), Avelino Figueroa (governor 1910-1913, 1930-1932), Alberto San Miguel (municipal intendent for almost two decades), Macedonio Aranda (national deputy and president of the provincial senate), David Saravia Castro (national and provincial senators several times), Ernesto Day (governor delegate 1930), Luis Patron Costas (governor 1940), and Ernesto Araoz (governor 1943) (1978:68). Numerous other members formed the ranks of most of the high government posts in the province.

41.These included Arquati, Barrantes, Bavio, Biorghark, Bracchieri, Caldas, Goñi, Göttling, Gudiño, Herran, Huerta, Leach, Lobo, Gasteaburu, Lozano, Ortelli, Plaza, Riarte, ruiz, Schreiber, Urrestarazu, Vidal, Villa, Bello, Jándula, Lérida, Mendioroz, Puló, Ritquer, Salinas, Klix, and others (Corbacho 1978: 66)

42.His candidacy was usurped by another Salteño, also of a prominent traditional family, General Eugenio Uriburu, who overthrew Irigoyen's Radical government in 1930.

43.It is alleged that Robustiano Patron Costas again provided much of the financing of the purchase and set up of the new club.

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"LA GENTE DECENTE:" A STUDY IN KINSHIP, PROPERTY AND CLASS IN AN ARGENTINE OLIGARCHY

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CHAPTER V

THE INTERPENETRATION OF CLASS AND KINSHIP

Introduction

In this chapter I look at the relationship between class and kinship in the formation of Salta's oligarchy. Oligarchies have existed in a number of areas in the world. Perhaps as a social phenomenon they are is best known in the context of Latin America. As types of elite groups, they have been studied by a number of historians and social scientists in various nations of the region. Chevalier (1963), Stone (1972), Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur (1978), Whiteford (1961), Brading (1978) are a sample of those who have studied the oligarchy or dominant agrarian elite in Latin America. In Argentina they have been studied by Imaz (1970), Sebrelli (1972), Strickon (1965), David (1963), Jauretche (1957), Caro Figueroa (1976), Hollander (1976), and Ramos (1981). The oligarchy has occupied a prominent place in Latin American history, and has often been the focus of attack both from the right and from the left. Its traditional perspectives and its preponderance in Latin American history has been portrayed in the works of such popular writers as Garcia Marquez, Carpentier, Allende, Sabato, Marmol, Vargas Llosa and Carlos Fuentes, among many others; indeed, it is difficult to write about Latin American culture without some reference to this group. Oligarchies have been common in the Mediterranean region as well. The elites described in the works of Pareto

(1968) and Mosca (1939) refer primarily to Italian oligarchies.

Despite the importance of such a group, there is surprisingly little agreement on what the term 'oligarchy' means. The term is loaded with social and political connotations, and generally its use has been too broad to be descriptively useful. Most social scientists have avoided specific reference to the term, and instead have relied on terms such as "elites", dominant classes, "hacendados", or "rancheros". Nevertheless, the term is widely and popularly used within Latin American popular culture, and refer to a group with specific characteristics.

Three criteria are generally involved in the definition of oligarchies. Rarely are the interrelationships between these criteria considered. Oligarchies, first of all, form part of upper or dominant classes. Their class nature is perhaps the least understood aspect of their formation. No doubt the confusion of stratification models (the most popular models for examining oligarchic formations) and marxian class analysis (which attempt to locate class position within specific modes of production) have muddied the clarity of analysis. But the class character of the oligarchy has also been difficult to define because of the intromission of other dimensions, such as kinship and political hegemony, into the definition of oligarchic formations. Thus, class becomes confused with a number of other defining criteria. Nevertheless, despite the difficulties of analysis,

oligarchies have in a fundamental sense acted as economic classes, not only as a power groups. The nature of their economic strength, whether based in land, commerce, mining, or the state, must necessary be included in any definition of the oligarchy, and this is perhaps where many studies such as Pareto and Mosca are weakest. While there is no doubt that oligarchies have certain class characteristics, there are persistent problems in identifying the economic/class based criteria that oligarchies hold in common. Regional oligarchies often are based on more than one kind of economic activity; members may depend on ownership of rural or urban properties, on commercial activities or on the state for the dominant position they occupy within the economic structure. Furthermore, economic criteria alone is not sufficient to define membership in an oligarchy; as Whiteford (1961) notes, there are many impoverished or not so wealthy members of oligarchies in various parts of Latin America who, nevertheless, are included within that group both by insiders and by outsiders. Despite such analytical difficulties, I will argue that the class position of the oligarchy takes precedence to other criteria in the formation of oligarchies.

The second criteria in the definition of the oligarchy is its relationship to the state. Oligarchies are 'by nature' political or power elites. This is the dimension Pareto (1968) and Mosca (1939), Schumpeter (1955), Mills (1956) and others emphasize. In essence those who emphasize this aspect of the oligarchy focus on its distinctiveness in taking

control, as a group, of the state apparatus. The control of the state takes a number of forms, such as direct control through occupation of state offices by its members, or through the 'informal' control of the state through power exercised over those who hold state office. The former is often characterized (by oligarchic historians) as a benevolent oligarchic dictatorship which serves the common interests of both the elite and the masses. In essence the state's role in the context of oligarchic hegemony is as mediator not so much between classes, but rather between factions which may cut across class lines. Many Latin American countries define certain epochs, usually during the second half of the 19th century, as 'oligarchic periods', which were often characterized by the difficult merging of liberal economic policies with conservative political and social ideologies. Such definitions focus on the control of national and regional governments by clearly defined national or regional oligarchies.

A third criteria in the definition of this elite involves reference to specific social characteristics. Oligarchies are recognizable social entities whose members have a degree of self-awareness or self-defined corporate interests. Notions of status, familistic criteria, kinship and other social relations, and social standing are all involved in the social construction of oligarchic identity. Kinship particularly is a fundamental element in the definition of the oligarchy. Whiteford (1964), among others, has defined this aspect as the

most important criteria for defining the traditional elite. Those who emphasize this aspect tend to explain the reproduction of the oligarchies in terms of social reproduction. However, despite its importance, this criteria alone does not adequately account for how the oligarchy reproduces its position of power and dominance in the societies in which they occur.

This chapter explores the interrelationship between these criteria, focussing particularly on the relationship between class position and kinship organization within Salta's oligarchy. It proposes a number of postulates: first, that as a "class," Salta's oligarchy did not reach full maturity in traditional marxists terms, for it did not attain an internally coherent class identity (in its location within a class structure). The failure to establish a clearly defined class identity can be attributed to the peripheral character of Salta's economy, a condition which prevented the economy from developing an internal coherence in the region's class structure. The implication of this proposition is that the class position of Salta's oligarchy was reproduced not solely through a control of the means of production, but also kinship. Thus, the class character of the oligarchy is ambiguously defined.

Second, Salta's oligarchy can be characterized by its control of regional state power. Due to this, through the period of state domination by the oligarchy, state power and penetration into Salta's hinterland remained limited. During

this period the state served to mediate political and economic conflicts among members of the oligarchy. Control of the state apparatus was obtained as a consequence of the structuring of the colonial state.

Third, the oligarchy constituted a group of interrelated families; corporateness was thus defined by kinship. Kinship thus interjected itself in the reproduction of the class position of the oligarchy. This had implications in the economic behavior of the traditional elite. Therefore it follows that kinship has played a central role in the structuring of power and economic dominance in the region.

Its importance derives, I will argue, from its unique place within the type of class society which Salta developed during the 18th and 19th centuries, which permitted it to act as "connecter" between a number of domains important in oligarchic formation.[1] As will be discussed below, class has always been at the center of the existence and character of the oligarchy. However, due to reasons discussed below, the social expression of class relations was never mature in the oligarchy. In other words, it could never be characterized as a defined "class", acting on class interests. Rather, it was kinship which defined and served as the organizational base of the group, and which channelled relations of power and dominance. The oligarchy was first and foremost a group of interrelated families, or as some saw themselves, of <u>linajes</u>, which controlled the political and economic resources of the province. Nevertheless, class also played a fundamental role

underlying social relations in the oligarchy. It provided an underlying logic to the way those relations were worked out and expressed. Class and kinship, it could be stated, interpenetrated each other in the formation of the oligarchy.

The Study of Kinship in Latin America

Despite its importance in traditional anthropology, the study of kinship is not strongly represented as an "area" of study in Latin America. Smith (1984) has noted that kinship studies have been restricted primarily to societies of the region not acculturated into the dominant Spanish or Portuguese cultural traditions. Where ethnographies of peasants, communities or urban populations have included studies of kinship, they have generally focussed on the economic, social or political functions of kinship rather than on the nature of the kinship system itself. As Strickon (1965) has noted, many ethnographic studies that do include an analysis of kinship do so only as part of a focus on larger issues.[2] Often those studies that have included a kinship element have focussed on narrowly defined aspects of the kinship system, such as kin networks, ritual kinship or the domestic unit. Most studies that include kinship deal with groups or communities that fall within one or another class. Often the difference of kinship practice among different classes is dramatic. Yet few studies have focussed on the relationship of kinship and class in Latin America.[3]

The serious lack of kinship studies can be partially

attributed to the need to construct a model appropriate for the Latin American context. The traditional models developed in anthropology, particularly those associated with functionalism and structuralism, have only awkwardly been adapted to Latin America. This is partially due, I think, to the focus in these approaches on kinship-based societies, societies whose political, social and economic organizations revolve around their kinship systems. They also tend to emphasize the corporate nature of kinship, which exists only in limited cases in the Latin American context. In this regard, kinship is not perceived as having a central role of Latin American social structure. Rather, often it is seen to be the unseen, non-institutionalized side of social life.[4]

Kinship studies often are burdened with un-affirmed assumptions as well. They assume, rightly I might add, that kin are in some way a special category of social relation. It is assumed, then, that kinship thus serves as a means to pulling wealth and resources of related individuals together, to create economic alliances, creating particularly strong and unassailable obligations between individuals. They assume, as well, that marriage practices serve to join family fortunes, or, if between cousins, to keep wealth within the confines of the family. They affirm, furthermore, that the 'language' of kinship is used, particularly in the case of the <u>compadrazco</u>, to extends an individual's kin network. Ultimately the assumption is that 'blood is thicker than water'; that in effect kinship relations carry some sort of

inherent commitment between relatives. Such assumptions fail to specify the nature of kin relatedness, and to distinguish between types of kin relations.

Perhaps the weakest point in Latin American kinship studies has been the failure to define the relationship between class and kinship. Kinship obviously serves as a means of maintaining the separation between classes and social status's, and has served to defines class membership, particularly among the higher classes. Kinship is important not only in regard to the control of key social and economic resources, in the recruitment of members into a class, but also in the control of state institutions. Yet the kinship system is common for all classes, and cuts across class lines. Thus, it serves not only to separate, but also to unite classes under a common language. Among other things, this serves to legitimize the use of kinship to separate classes. Strickon (1962) called for studies which focussed on the relationship between kinship practice and class structure, with little response. One area that particularly needs emphasis is the historical development of the kinship system, in the vein of Goody's (1984) work on Western Europe.

The focus on Latin American traditional elites has almost invariably included a kinship component. This isn't due necessarily to a different theoretical construct than that used for the study of other classes, but rather to the inescapability of the importance that kinship plays among these groups. Kinship serves both as a "map" for their social

activity and as an idiom for defining themselves. It is kinship which defines who does and who doesn't belong to the elite group. Kinship defines patterns of property holdings and wealth; it defines family membership and the sharing of group traditions. It patterns the forms of accumulation and loss of wealth. It is central to the notion of power relations, and who shares power. Kinship is a principle component of the notion of history. Invariably those who study oligarchies note the significance kinship relations and practice has among traditional oligarchy. Stone (1959) has studied the genealogical ties connecting all the different generations of power holders and economically significant people in Costa Rica and Central America. Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur (1978, 1981) note that an industrial family in Mexico is organized on the basis of the family networks. Gilbert (1979) notes the kin ties that connect Peruvian power holders, and the way in which wealth is transformed into a corporate property of the family. Zeitlin and Ratcliff (1979), and Balmori and Oppenheimer (1979), among others, note that networks among elites, both capitalists and landholders, are reflections of kinship ties. And Strickon (1965) calls for a study of kinship among the Pampa's land owners as an essential ingredient to understanding land tenure patterns.

The issue of the relationship between class and kinship is particularly relevant in the case of the oligarchy. Despite the essential commonalities between the kinship practices of different classes, kinship seems to play a

greater and a distinctive role among the traditional elite. In contrast to other groups, oligarchies do seem to form a type of descent group, or linages. Strickon (1965) and Gilbert (1979) call these cognatic descent groups. There is also a pattern of corporate extended families among the oligarchies, which rarely occur in other groups. The emphasis on kin connectedness which is ever present in oligarchic discourse is much greater, and they often express their relationship with other classes in paternalistic and kin-related terms as well. Other differences occur as well. For example, ritual kinship seems to cross class lines much more often among non-elites than among elite groups. Ritual kin among the oligarchy are often chosen from among the small and select group, frequently from among immediate relatives. What these features suggest is that kinship practice can only be understood if its relationship to class is analyzed.

The exploration of oligarchic kinship raises the question as well concerning the relationship between capitalism and kinship. Does the penetration of capitalist relations into peripheral areas diminish the role of kinship in its different classes? Many studies, both in Latin America and in Africa, have addressed this issue by looking at the effects of modernization and urbanization (see Carlos and Sellers, 1972). These studies have tended to be functionalistic, and thus tend to view modernization as a process of the breakdown of social institutions. Or they conclude that kinship will be replaced by other institutions which have more specific

functions. Other important studies have countered the conclusions reached by these studies, focussing on networks and kin-based strategies in the context of marginal segments of the population, such as squatters and urban poor (See, for example, Whiteford 1981, and Lomnitz 1978). McKinley (1980) points out, as well, that other institutions cannot replace the idiom of kinship, due to its nature.

Nevertheless, there does seem to be a diminishing of the role of kinship in advanced capitalism, but perhaps not because it is substituted, but rather because it represents an opposition to the logic of practice of capitalism. One could say that kinship binds where capital loosens; kinship is inefficient and non-economic where capital is maximizing; kinship binds time and space, where capital tends to emphasize the immediacy of the transaction. Ironically kinship is nevertheless necessary in capitalism, not only because there is really no other idiom for the reproduction of society, but also because kinship is so comprehensive and encompassing in its social "uses", and is by nature effective as it only can be in binding various social domains. But in advanced capitalism kinship is only part kinship (thus Marx's accusation of it being superstructure), its final expression pseudo-kinship, a moral order with little practical (as in practice) basing. Essentially the point of this is that the emphasis on kinship in the oligarchy demonstrates a fundamental contradiction which is its role as a class within a world capitalist system.

Oligarchy and Class

What kind of class is the Salteño oligarchy? The answer depends on one's conceptual approach. According to Wright (1985), following Marx class analysis has involved the use of two different conceptual approaches, based on the analysis of class structure or, to the contrary, a focus on class formation. The general postulate formulated by Marx that classes are defined by their position within the structure of production, and that there are primarily two types of classes within capitalism, is generally accepted today. Class in this context can be defined as a position within a mode of production; class structure refers to the structural relationship between the two primary classes. Classes from this perspective are polarized, defined in opposition to each other. Class relations have logical trajectories (i.e. their development have a certain predictability) based on the mode of exploitation which they entail.[5] The outcomes are not, however, deterministic, since a number of other variables, such as markets and state involvement, may affect them. In this conceptualization classes do not form groups, nor are there actors; they are structurally defined positions which have logically established historical developments. It is this conceptualization in which analysis of capitalist class relations have normally taken place, and from which class struggle has been seen as a "motor of history."

The other conceptual framework is that of class formation. Class formation has a lower level of analytical

abstraction; it refers to real class actors who join in collective activity based on common interests, economic goals, values, historical conditions. In essence, this type of analysis is concerned with the "social organization" of class. Rather than concern with defining the location in a mode of production of classes, it is interested in the descriptive aspects of the classes being analyzed, and in the historical, social and political aspects which give class formations their peculiarities. Nor are the polarities of classes the focus; thus, the analysis of classes from this perspective tends to lack the structural coherence that the first type of analysis has. Rather, classes may be more than two in any social formation, and have a number of expressions due to the variables which effect them. Thus, there is less concern with the relations between classes than with the nature of relations within classes.

A principle problem, then, in class analysis is bridging the gap between the two perspectives. In other words, the question is how class formations which are visible and definable, and can be studied, relate to structural class properties (Wright 1985 and Smith 1984). Wright partially explores the issue by focussing on exploitation which he sees as being based on control of key assets. Nevertheless, the anthropological task of studying a power elite group in a class-based society, and of defining its position in and the essential elements of the class structure, remains a major problem in the study of classes.

A limitation to Wright's analysis is that, for the most part, it deals capitalism in core areas, and thus doesn't explore the increased complexity of class analysis in peripheral societies. The complexity of analysis is increased in such cases because the mode of production itself, in its development, may be affected by relations to the core. Classes seem to take on different forms, and seem to follow different precepts in peripheral and semi-peripheral zones.[6] In Latin America historically there has been little representation of either a bourgeoisie class or a proletariat. Instead, in many areas one finds landed gentry (hacendados), merchant classes, mining elite in some areas, bureaucratic elite on the side of dominant classes, and peasants, tenants, rural proletarians, petty commodity producers, and the informal sector (or marginal groups) at the lower end of the spectrum. What these classes represent has been a matter of great debate.

The oligarchy of Salta, as I have analyzed it, is clearly on the plain of what Wright calls a class formation. In other words, it is a visible group united by control over political and economic resources, having similar or contiguous interests which are "class based," acting often as a collectivity. Were the interest of this chapter aimed solely at the level of class formation, the analysis would end with the social organizational features and the workings of the oligarchy. However, our interest is in the class basis of the oligarchy.

The question of what class Salta's oligarchy is can only be answered by defining the position it occupies within the class system to which it belongs. However, which is the class system, or mode of production, to which it belongs? Generally such arguments concerning traditional elites in Latin America has centered around the issue of whether they are part of a feudalistic or capitalistic system; in other words, do they represent the dominant class within a feudal mode of production or within a capitalist one?[7] Behind this question is the issue of the underlying logic of its activity as a class. Those who argue for feudalism look specifically at variables associated with feudal characteristics: "feudalistic" land holding patterns, the "bondage" through legal or economic means of agricultural labor to the land, the patron-client relationships joining dominant and exploited classes into a personalistic type of service. Those who have argued for capitalism usually have focussed on the capitalist world system, and the articulation of peripheral and core economic systems. The articulation argument strengthens its position by arguing the historical logic of this relationship in the development of the capitalist world system. Nevertheless the characteristics of class in regional economies are disturbingly different from classes in the capitalist core.

The class nature of Salta's oligarchy, and the logic of its class-based activities, can perhaps best be explored by beginning with a number of relevant postulates. First, from

the time of its colonial origins Salta has belonged and formed an integral part of a larger capitalist world system, and therefore, the development of its economy has responded to a large measure to the needs and exigencies of that world system. In previous chapters it has been demonstrated, in fact, that the stages of development of Salta's economy, and the interests of members of the oligarchy, have responded almost directly to exigencies and opportunities placed on the local economy by outside economic centers such as Potosí, Buenos Aires, and Britain.

Second, although it has belonged to a capitalist world system, Salta has not, until this century, been characterized by the domination of capitalist relations of production. The classes which emerged in Salta periphery, by virtue of their relationship to the core, have had "incomplete" or "immature" class relations.[8] By this I mean that the internal dynamics of Salta's classes were not representative of a complete system, but rather a dependent one. In simpler terms, the class systems in the periphery could not persist and reproduce themselves on their own; they are dependent on the international markets, finance, resources, for their reproduction. Consequently, class oppositions in Salta have lacked the contradictory symbiosis (dialectical relationship) that exists 'logically' between capital and labor. Likewise, class formations have failed to consolidate their 'class' nature, which would permit them to act in terms of class interests. Salta's history thus has historically represented

the struggle, without realization, for a class definition of actors in the oligarchy, due to impotence in the relationship to outside determinants.

Third, the oligarchy has thus represented both the struggle for a class-based definition and a negation of that definition. It represented essentially a struggle over its class impotence in its own region. Many class tendencies emerged at different periods, but due to the incomplete nature of the periphery, none gained complete hegemony either within the oligarchy or within the economic system, and all were vulnerable to the markets and the hegemonic structures of the core. Consequently, Salta's peripheral economy was historically fraught with internecine conflict between members of the dominant classes, who attempt to gain local economic hegemony to protect their reproduction, but which were incapable of creating a complete position of class hegemony.[9]

Fourth, the oligarchy is Salta was a class formation whose eventual collective identity was not based on the logic of class exploitation, but rather on a combination of a number of variables, not only class position, but also kinship and control over the state apparatus. Classes gain hegemony through non-class institutions, namely through the state, and through the formation of defined upper class groups. These groups are able to arrive at a degree of consensus with international capital and therefore exist as appendages of it. They are not, however, capitalistic themselves. It must be emphasized, however, that the groups which emerge are not

classes, but rather power and social elites operating under the logic of a different set of rules, making class dominance itself a state that doesn't exist. Nevertheless, as a collective it represented the mediation of these three variables. Each of these variables has a "logic of its own potentialities," which often entered into contradiction with the logic of the other variables. The three also interpenetrated each other. The key actor, nevertheless, remained class.

Note that this perspective differs markedly from efforts to define specific '3rd world' modes of production. One of the characteristics which is so notable among the oligarchy is its lack of class-defined polarities. While the oligarchy separates itself from, and emphasizes symbols which exclude other classes, it often serves not as an opposer of the classes it exploits, but rather as a collective representation of those classes and as an ally. Relations between individuals of different classes likewise have often not been oppositional, but rather have been expressed in terms of alliance and paternalism. Historically the interests of many members of the oligarchy and those of working and peasant groups were often contiguous, and the oligarchy were often seen as initiators in establishing and defending those interests. This didn't mean that the oligarchy did not exploit the underclasses; rather, that class formation among underclasses lacked, at a structural level, complete class identity.

This perspective thus necessitates the analysis of the three factors most important in the class formation of the oligarchy. My primary interest is in kinship; I will, however, briefly discuss the other two characteristics crucial for understanding the oligarchy.

Class Formation in Salta

Salta's economy has traditionally represented a peripheral area in the development of the world economy (Wallerstein 1976). During the colonial phase it constituted a hinterland to the Potosi mining economy. Later this was followed by a dependence on the Litoral region and on the incipient world capitalist economy, dominated by Britain during the 19th century. Salta's peripheral character was reflected in its class structure. The inability to form an internal coherence in the accumulation process made it impossible for a dominant class to consolidate control over a hegemonic mode of production. Consequently, a number of economic structures existed simultaneously, sometimes in a complementary relationship, sometimes in a conflictual one. The fragmentation and factionalism precluded the formation of a solidified class. Factions shifted, alliances changed within the formation, the world economy's periods of expansion and contraction deeply affected class interests in the region.

Ironically, then, the formation of a 'hegemonic class power,' the oligarchy, arose in this context. The oligarchy

was principally a class-oriented formation which lacked internal class cohesion, but which was able to establish both state and socioeconomic power over the province. The oligarchy tended to be isolationist, protecting itself against the fluctuations of the world economy. The internal structure of the oligarchy was sufficiently flexible to allow dominant class interests to emerge internally without the destruction of the whole.

The oligarchy formed a kinship group, a nucleus of families. They weren't, as popular myth would have it, always the same members; a number of families have disappeared from the 'oligarchic' scene, while outsiders have been recruited into it as well. At the heart of kinship relations was the collective control over resources and property. Kinship and property represented the juncture of class position and social formation. Property, particularly land, represented commoditized objects, owned individually, within a capitalistic framework. Nevertheless, property, at the same time, represented non-capitalistic resources of status of corporate kin groups, enslaving the commodity, decommoditizing it. This provided a base for the corporate nature of the oligarchic kin network and family. Land, as all material property, was thus contradictory; it was both commodity and corporate family resource. This determined both how it was utilized and its traditional nature. One could say that the means of production themselves failed to consolidate the position of classes within a mode of production; ie: they remained

underdeveloped. Exploited classes within the production process (peasants, seasonal labor - which also represents an undeveloped class position, since it fails to become an entirely proletarian entity - etc.) remained undeveloped as well. Thus traditional vertical relations between classes often covered over the relations of production. Kinship thus served as the medium both for the reproduction of the Salteño dominant classes and, in a contradictory sense, as the basis for a non-class social formation representing the social group.

The oligarchy in Salta emerged in the late 18th century as a social formation in which various incomplete class fragmentations occurred among the dominant groups. The traditional power elite which emerged was not a class, but rather the result of political and social arrangements which permitted the group to dominate. However, due to the non-class or incomplete class nature of their dominance, the nature of their power was not based entirely on the logic of class accumulation, but rather on the coherence of principles which structured their formation. These principles often contradicted class dominance, and were often "non-economic" in their behavior. Thus, class dominance contained its own internal contradictions.

The State and the Oligarchy

The pattern of state control had a somewhat different trajectory of progression than did the structure of class

formation among Salta's oligarchy. Since the conquest elites had always controlled the reigns of power in the province; in other words, government was never representative. Nevertheless, even in its early stages the system of colonial government could not be called feudal, but rather, was republican in nature with the crown at the pinnacle of a complex political/jural bureaucratic structure. Throughout the colonial period the crown refused to grant noble titles to the colonists, despite strong and constant pleas on the part of Americans to do so; this assured the crown's continued control over the colonies.[10] It might be mentioned as well that Spain's nobility and merchant (Sevillan) classes became increasingly involved in colonial affairs, particularly during the Bourbon reforms. The crown increasingly appointed members of noble families (usually not the title holders themselves, but rather segundones, non-inheriting siblings or relatives) to colonial posts. While this practice did not have the effect of creating a competing noble hierarchy in the colonies, it did bring increasing economic pressure on the crown. The consequences of the practice at a local level was an increasing level of tension and discord between the criollo or American born colonialists, long established in the region, and the Spanish immigrant elite. The discord was normally political, rather than social. Most immigrant families, in fact, married very readily into the criollo elite families with no hesitation, and many of Salta's most important linages originated from these unions.

Thus, during the late colonial period (18th century) the criollo elite did not have control over the most important bureaucratic positions. Governors, members of the audiencias, and other provincial and viceroyal positions were appointed by the crown, and since it often selected from among Spanish families (or these bought the positions), a source of conflict in the province emerged. Local criollo elites, in contrast, controlled the cabildo, a city or municipal branch of government which represented the interests of landowners and merchants of the region. Cabildo positions were elective (or in some cases bought); the electorate consisted of prominent members of the community, generally large landowners, and generally it was from among these that the cabildo was filled.

The war of independence, which in its early stages provided at least tacitly the possibility of reform for the crown, eventually was fought around this issue. The city and province was divided between 'loyalists' and 'patriots'. The cabildo, as could be expected, stood 100% on the patriotic side, and assumed legislative power over the province as soon as the last Spanish governor was ousted. Local criollo elites began controlling the reigns of power.

The abolition of Spanish power immediately brought to the fore a simmering issue, that of local autonomy as opposed to a centralized form of control within the Rio de la Plata region. Due to the dependent nature of the provinces there was a tendency within local elites toward the support of both

positions. The previous Spanish intendencies began splitting up into individual provinces as each local elite, through its cabildo, established autonomous control over its own territory. By 1815 the Intendencia of Salta had split into Catamarca, La Rioja, Santiago del Estero, Tucuman and Salta. Only Jujuy remained within the province, ultimately splitting off in 1835. However, the expression of local autonomy proved dangerous, particularly in Salta, which was left to battle the Spanish on its own. Later autonomy placed the province in an all the more vulnerable position as Buenos Aires increasingly controlled the cards, namely the port and the only exit for trade, essential for the province's economic survival. The liberals which had vociferously insisted on revolt against Spain were gradually replaced by the conservative centralizing force of Rosas. Rosas imposed the domination of Buenos Aires over the interior provinces, effectively destroying the autonomy of the regional elites without defining the autonomy issue. The wealth produced in the provinces was increasingly drawn into the coffers of the port city.

During this period civil war reigned in Salta, as it did in all the provinces. The provincial government was in shambles. Governors were named and replaced with frequently and almost at whim. Nevertheless, all governors and other power holders were members of the local patrician families. The province was autonomist in sentiment (as a source of protectionism), but the threat of intervention from Buenos Aires, or from Rosas's famous lieutenants such as Quiroga and

Urquiza, virtually incapacitated each government. Only local allies of the Rosas regime survived in power (many opponents were exiled to Bolivia, or even killed), but ran against the sentiments and economic logic of the local elite. Conflicts led to warfare among ambiguously defined factions, leading ultimately to the split not only between families, but within many as well.

The fall of Rosas, carried out by former allies Urquiza and Mitre, led to the eventual consolidation of the nation. The consolidation, however, was of a peculiar nature; it was based on the consolidation at the national level of the local oligarchies (see Hollander 1976). This period, between 1816 and 1910, is known in Argentina as the 'oligarchic period'. A national government with its various federal branches was established, and each province placed its representatives in it, selected from among their local oligarchies. Buenos Aires was federalized, thereby allowing (ideally) the provinces to share in some of its benefits. With the federalization regional grievances thus had a national airing.

At a local level the oligarchy gained full control over the state apparatus, and the consolidation at a national level led to a diminution of conflict at a local level. The provincial government became a mediator between conflicting factions within the oligarchy. The state served to support many impoverished members of the oligarchy as well. Other symbols of consolidation emerged, such as economic associations, political parties, and the 20th of February

Club. An unstated (as far as I know) rule underlying this period allowed for intra-oligarchic conflict and accommodation, but never at the expense of bringing other segments of the population into contact with state power.

Ironically, the consolidation of oligarchic state power ultimately led to a breakdown of control over the state. By the beginning of the 20th century the state, both at the provincial and national levels, began taking on its own identity. The increased penetration of capitalism in the nation's capital and elsewhere resulted in a greater degree of class consciousness among workers, and a call for government representation. The great European immigration of this period spurred that demand as immigrants demanded government services and protection. Trade unions and populist political parties were grew, and demanded a place in the government structure. The expansion of the governments tax base and of its redistributive programs brought it into contact with segments of the population it had previously ignored. Finally, in 1912 the Saenz Peña law establishing general suffrage laid the basis for the election of the Radical Party in 1915, and the eventual destruction of oligarchic monopoly control over the state.

In Salta oligarchic control was disbanded more slowly. It wasn't until the victory of the Peronist party in 1945 that control of the state was effectively wrested from the oligarchy. The government marked the event symbolically by expropriating the 20th of February Club, and locating the

executive office in its French Colonial mansion on the plaza. Other houses and buildings of prominent personages and historical figures were taken over and government agencies established in them. The colonial city was thus transformed; government offices took over the center of the city, always the stronghold of the eminent families, and pushed these members out to the outskirts. The old cabildo, the prime historical symbol of oligarchic power, was taken over by the state, and transformed into a museum. The state, in effect, began taking on the role of redistributer of resources, and mediator between classes, associated with capitalist societies. In effect, oligarchic control of the state had ended, and with it one of the principle ingredients for oligarchic domination.

The Family as Unit

As noted in the characterization of the oligarchy, kinship was the primary idiom through which oligarchic identity was expressed and oligarchic domination reproduced. The oligarchy constituted a group of families which shared power and controlled the province's resources during more than a century. These families were interrelated through kin ties. More importantly, kinship was recognized by the oligarchy itself (and by other classes), and by its remnants today, as being the primary identifying feature of the group. The rules of kinship membership were accepted internally by all in this elite. The primary unit of oligarchic kinship was

the family.

Throughout the history of Salta's oligarchy prominent figures acted not as individuals, nor as representatives of class interests, but rather as members of one or another family. The location of historically significant individuals among the oligarchy has always been the family. Individuals, particularly those which have historically stood out, thus have represented not only themselves, but their families as well; they were in essence collective representations of all of the members of their families. Families have represented the primary unit of cohesion, not only socially, but politically and economically as well.

Perhaps the first, most elementary, question an ethnographer might raise is how many families have constituted the oligarchy at any point in time. It is, after all, necessary to be able to identify the subjects of one's study. The question, straightforward and empirical, is difficult to answer (and creates a real ethnographic dilemma), since no one agrees on the criteria to be used for identifying those who belong to this elite. Methods of identification differ among historians. Haigh (1968), basing his criteria on an account of an English traveler of the period, identifies the seven most prominent families at the time of the independence wars. Frias (1981), in contrast, identifies more than 25 families during the same period. Cornejo's (1972) Genealogias, which tends to be genealogically inclusive, names a much larger list of persons related to the primary families, not differen-

tiating between those in the 'inner' group and those on its fringes. Caro Figueroa (1976) is much less inclusive, trying to make a point that only a few families control most of the resources and much of the political power in the province. Other indicators, such as the list of members of the 20th of February Club, might be much smaller. Interviews with members of prominent families brought varied responses as well. Thus this researcher faced the first problem involved in studying the oligarchy: who was he studying?

Why is it so difficult to identify the families that belong to this exclusive group? There are a number of reasons. First, families themselves are somewhat difficult to define, because their constitutions change constantly. Furthermore, each adult individual normally belongs to two or three different families at one time (father's family, mother's family, and the person's own family with his or her offspring). Thus, it is difficult to pin down a number of families in this context.

A second reason is that various members include different families when enumerating the elite. "Fringe" members, particularly impoverished "gente culta," tend to be more inclusive in their counting than those located closer to the prominent core. The lack of clear cut group boundaries demonstrates that it is not one single criteria which serves to define membership within the oligarchy.

Perhaps the most important reason is the context in which the family is defined. It isn't families themselves which are

the focus of attention, but rather the connectedness that they provide, not only in regard to extended social relationships, but to other domains of social significance as well. The family is of little significance as an isolated unit among the oligarchy; numbers of families thus has no meaning. In fact, the 'family' literally and figuratively dies out when it fails to maintain its connectedness not only with other families, but also with other domains. This can best be illustrated by demonstrating how one historian, a prominent Salteño genealogist, uses the concept of family in a number of different ways:

> "The Gurruchaga, Cornejo, etc., families, patriots; the Gorostiaga, Aramburus, etc. royalists." (Cornejo 1971, my translation)[11]

> "...Juana Manuela Gorriti (so closely related to the Guemes family, not only through her father's ties of friendship, but also through familial relationships, since her sister Da, Juana Maria Gorriti was married to Gral. D. Manuel de Puch, brother of Da. Carmen Puch, Gral Guemes's wife. (Cornejo 1971:154)[12]

> "...I have become wedded the 10th of this month with Dona Maria del Carmen Puch, legitimate daughter of, and from the legitimate matrimony of, graduated Lieutenant Don Domingo Puch and Dona Dorotea de la Vega Velarde, from among the principle and most ancient families in this city." (letter of Martin Güemes to Rondeau, 10 July 1815, quoted in Cornejo 1971, p. 166)[13]

The first sentence refers to families who took different sides in the independence movement. The families which are mentioned are regarded as actors (just as individuals would be regarded as actors) within the context of political contention; families as units take political positions.

Families here are simply defined as those who share a common last name. Although in reality few families have had such a degree of cohesion in the political arena, here it is assumed that the solidarity of the domestic realm is reproduced in the political realm. Thus, political stances and organization are associated with family loyalties. The second sentence is a short genealogy. The person to which it refers, a member of an established landowning family in Salta, is said to be related to the <u>family of Güemes</u>. The reference is curious because in fact the person identified with the family of Güemes does not share his name, and in strict terms is not related to him, but only indirectly to his wife. But families are social entities which a person can be related to, and all family relationships are valid 'kin connections.' Persons, in essence, are <u>related to families</u>. Güemes is a person of great historical and social significance in Salta; relationship to him through genealogical or family ties is highly valued. But Güemes also died young, and had only two surviving sons, and as a result there are few direct genealogical connections in Salta. Many members of Salta's oligarchy are related to Güemes's <u>family</u> (see Haigh 1968). Family thus serves to connect socially significant individuals to other members of the oligarchy through genealogical and kin ties. 'Families', as defined in this context, have their own genealogical identities, just as individuals do.

The final quote describes an <u>ancient</u> family in Salta. How can a family be ancient? Here family is used to connect

actors to a historical domain; families are articulated with historical time, and are in this context synonymous with linaje. Families are entities which bring the past, and make it significant, to the present. Family provides the connection between the immediate context of social action in a kinship context and the past. In essence, here the past has significance in defining the social location of those who have a kinship connection with that family. Families provide the means of appropriating and incorporating time into the constitution of oligarchic power.

Thus, in terms of local meanings the use of the concept of 'family' designates the context of connectedness that the user is interested in establishing, whether it be in relationship to time, genealogical and historical connectedness, or economic and political identity. Within the oligarchy the family is never treated as an isolated phenomenon; it exists only by virtue of its ability to act as bridge between socially significant domains or spheres. In strict terms, then, there are no countable 'families'; families connect the individual or the kin group with a larger social order. This social order is based on power maintenance and economic domination; thus, in its essence the family serves as a medium for maintaining the oligarchy's position within society.

At the heart of all families lie the immediacy of kin or genealogical relationships, based partially in biological and marriage relationships. These relationships ultimately

mediate the connectedness of social persons.

Marriage

In the working out of kinship practices, marriage represents, perhaps, the key point in the long standing consequences for the individual and his or her family. Thus it isn't surprising then that a great deal of effort and time is dedicated by families to courtship and marriage oriented activities, particularly by parents for their children. At the heart of the issue isn't only the material direction, or class standing, to which marriage leads, but also the destiny of the family's patrimony, both symbolic and material. The marriage act in this sense constitutes a sort of teleological transaction in which there is collective interest, one which brings together the past, represented by family and genealogical history, and the future, which is the potential that every marriage entails. Marriage thus has a transcendental significance, for it is a juncture in which "family fortunes" are at stake.

At the same time, marriage constitutes a domestic act of creating a new household or domestic unit. Marriages are not arranged, and as far as I have been able to discern, never have been among the families of Salta's elite. There are tales in the folklore of the elite of such arrangements, by the parents of young ladies too young to wield their independence; usually these tales have tragic endings, in effect condemning the parents' act, and providing a moral of

domestic love. There are also many tales of children's rebellion against parental restraints, such as the case of the only male Tineo heir, who married a widow, the mother of Salta's principle hero Martin Güemes, who was consequently unable to have children. Frias (1976) tells of how Francisco Tineo's parents even sent him to Spain to break the romance, but were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, marriages are based on romantic love, and the accounts of ideal unions based on deep romantic relationships abound. Heroism and romance are often associated. Martin Güemes, already mentioned, is not only the local hero, but the prototype of honorable filial love.[14] His untimely assassination at a young age was followed in a few months by the death of his young wife, also a member of the local oligarchy, who died, local accounts tell us, of a broken heart (muerta por amor). Marriages of romantic love are based on courtship and the mutual consent of the marrying individuals. The fact that marriage is based on free consent may be related to the nature of bilateral kinship, since there is no corporate group system (i.e. such as a relationship between lineages or clans) which in effect directs marriage choices. But probably more importantly, the emphasis on romantic love is certainly an outcome in part of the fact that just as marriage outcomes must be "appropriate" to family status and patrimony, it must also result in the making of a successful and lasting unit in the domestic realm. Romantic love helps to "assure" this by ensuring that the long association of the couple in courtship will cement the

relationship between potential spouses.

Thus marriage is a kinship act which has consequences that repercut in at least two different domains, that of the public and class standing of the family, the family line and its patrimony, and on the other hand, it also involves the creation of a new domestic unit, hence it is an elective act. The actions of the two domains may come in conflict with each other. There are numerous tales of romances between members of the oligarchy and outsiders, and of family efforts at severing such unions or potential unions. Frias, for example, tells us of the tragic disappearance of the Tejada family, not only as a consequence of the loss of their lands, but also due to unfortunate marriages. One daughter marries well and is widowed with no offspring. Another marries with an Italian, moving to that country with her husband. The only son marries a common girl, with some indignity, and disappears into the mountains, supposedly en route to Chile's mining towns. These tales speak metaphorically of the underlying fear of all families, that of disappearing. The act of marrying outside of the family rank or class is considered throwing away a family's patrimony. This has happened among landowning elites become "sedentized" in particular areas, losing contact with the more widespread provincial elite.[15] Marriage to outsiders runs a similar risk, although the entrance of new wealth into the family may require it. Most of the largest lineages, in fact, were the result of the marriage of immigrants to persons, usually women, of the local traditional elite.

Nevertheless, numerous cases speak of the risks of such marriages. I was told of one case in which the marriage of a woman from a traditional local family to a high ranking member of an oligarchy in another provincial capital failed when the immigrant fell into serious financial difficulties. The woman's brothers offered to help solvent their brother-in-law's debts on the condition that the marriage be dissolved.

In other cases "appropriate" marriages may end in domestic failure. These seem to be less frequent in the histories of prominent families, although this may be due to the fact that such failures are not broadcast. Until recently, separations are not legalized (not coincidentally, until recently there was no divorce law in Argentina), and while the domestic realm may be destroyed, the familial may in fact be guaranteed through the legal recognition of the family unit.

How, then, do families work to ensure that marriages "appropriate" to both domains, that of the domestic unit and the unit of "connectedness", are made? Primarily by defining and tightly controlling the space of social interaction for children and young people. Domestic space is created for social interaction between members of opposite sexes to get to know each other and ultimately to court. It wa very common (and remains so) for parties, teas, and other social events to be planned at the large homes of members of local oligarchies. Some events included only single sex groups;

peer association and pressure also helped to assure the appropriate choice for marriage. Outsiders were clearly restricted, or their invitation to such events very carefully monitored. During summer months elaborate vacation plans included invited guests to summer homes of fincas for long stay-overs. Patron Costas, for example, tells of friends and relatives that spent the summer months on their estancia, hunting, riding horseback, attending local festivals, etc. In the public domain, separation from other classes and segments of the population was likely closely controlled and monitored. Evening strolls in the plaza by young maidens of the "gente decente" took place within fences which kept others out, and which were closely policed and watched by the male members of the families, who often watched from the balconies of their club on the edge of the plaza. Elaborate parties, receptions, artistic events were planned by parents, their guests carefully chosen. Oligarchic families also created, financed and staffed schools for their children, ensuring in the educational process separation between classes.[16] Often these were religious schools, tying church functions to the moral outcomes of family happenings. Not last were the clubs, particularly the Club 20 de Febrero. These were exclusive clubs, meant to permit entrance and association of only select families.[17] The club, in its heyday, was a bastion of male social and political activities (Corbacho 1978). But its principle date, the "fiesta del 20", was its one principle activity, and during certain years its only activity. The

central focus of the dance was the "coming out" of the young ladies of society, resplendent in their ball dresses of latest or most expensive fashion, dancing with the young men of high society under the watchful eyes of peers, parents, relations and reporters. The dances were observed by the "plebe" living in the city as well, who often lined up at the gates or doors of the club to observe the young ladies descending from their carriages; but they were watchers only, not participants. Accounts of the parties were written up in local newspapers, suggestive remarks by reporters commented on beauty of the females and their dresses, the "guapo" image of young males, and the hints of interactions among them. Parents were given only small mention; the evening belonged to the young. The date is not of little significance; the historical date connected with the greatest of Salta traditions, and a date closely honored by traditional families.

Perhaps the most important tool guaranteeing and influencing marriage decisions were the "dote". The dote represented the direct incursion of the patrimonial realm into domestic affairs. The family of the bride could ensure, through the dote, that a domestic union would work by literally providing material means for the creation of such a union.

Family Relations

The core corporate entity in the oligarchy is the family. The cohesion of the family as defined above is

somewhat of an enigma. As Strickon (1962) notes, in a bilateral system there is no structural basis for the formation of corporate cognatic kin groups. Corporate kin groups do not occur among most other classes in Latin American societies. What then provides for this characteristic among the oligarchy?

The answer is related to property. The oligarchic family, as opposed to those of other classes, is "propertied." In other words, family doesn't merely reproduce kin relations; it must also reproduce the class and status position of the family. Property, or patrimony, is the basis of the class position of the family; it implicitly includes not only wealth, but the means of production necessary for accumulation as well. Thus, the handling of property as a corporate and continuous possession of the family is fundamental in how kinship works. The juxtaposition of kinship and property places a strong emphasis on the notion of continuity within families. Kinship is the basis of that continuity; continuity, however, refers not only to the reproduction of the family but also of its position within elite society. Thus, kinship and property are inextricably linked.

There is, however, an inherent contradiction in this juxtaposition, for kinship does not serve as a perfect medium for the reproduction of class and status position. The rules governing kin reproduction in fact not only unite property but divide it as well. Family relationships are based upon prin-

ciples of unity and division.[18] The family has, in effect, a contradictory nature, torn between solidarity and division. The individual in the family is likewise torn between dissociation and commitment. This dichotomy lies at the heart of oligarchic life, and can be seen both in the economic and political activities of families throughout the oligarchy's history.

The above point can be illustrated by looking at specific relationships in the family. One way in which can be done is looking at testaments (wills). Testaments are summaries, composites of people's lives, and encapsulate the set of relationships which make up the most important members of a person's significant others, as well as how wealth flows in such relationships. The sources of a person's wealth and the distribution of wealth along kinship lines are expressed in it. The documents also reflect of the fact that wealth is ultimately the property of the individual, not of the corporate group, but that nevertheless there is a corporate interest in patrimony. The document is about a person, not about a group. And yet the group of significant others is included in the text.

Unlike networks, families in the strictest sense are relatively small, defined by relationship to the self, and the flow of experiences and resources between those involved. The significant others which belong to a person's family, and the nature of the relationships, are carefully recorded in the testament. Each testament is different, individualized, and

yet there are also patterns common to all testaments of the oligarchy. The following is an example of a testament.

Manuela de Figueroa y Toledo Pimentel wrote her will in 1821. She was the daughter of Antonio de Figueroa, a prominent landowner in the southern part of the Valle de Lerma during the latter half of the 18th century, and patriarch of one of Salta's most important families. Her mother, Maria de Toledo Pimentel, belonged to another major landowning family whose holdings were located in what was known as the Frontera, in the southeastern part of the province. Her life spanned a period which included Salta's golden age, when the commerce of mules and other goods created incredible fortunes in the city, and the time of conflict initiated in the war between Spain and her southern colonies. Manuela's father was deeply involved in the trade of mules with the mines of Upper Peru and with Peru itself. It is clear from the testament that Manuela also had investments in the mule trade, which her children carried out for her. Manuela was married to, and survived, Apolinario Javier de Usandivaras, who was perhaps a Spaniard or immediate descendant of a Spaniard. Their union produced six children; one died in childhood. Four of these married into important and wealthy families in Salta, including one, Maria Josefa, who married the owner of the sugar complex in Campo Santo, Jose Antonio Fernandez Cornejo. Manuela and her family lived in Salta.

Manuela's will contains the following persons: she was, she stated, the legitimate daughter of the legitimate marriage

of Antonio de Figueroa and Maria Toledo de Pimentel. She continues that she was married to and widowed by Apolinario Javier de Usandivaras, and they had as children Maria Josefa, Maria Ines, Baltazar, Juan Jose, Rafael, Maria del Rosario, who died in infancy, and Damiana. She stated that her husband had left her virtually nothing after his death, due to bad business deals; he left her an inheritance of 1000 pesos, which he received from his parents, which were barely what she had invested in the marriage through her dote (dowry). As inheritance from each of her parents she received a share of the house they had inhabited in Salta; her share was worth 1000 pesos. However, the house remains undivided among her siblings, and therefore she has not received her share yet. This share will be passed on to her heirs. She also received from her father 1500 pesos as mejoras (an extra amount which can be up to one fifth of the total inheritance) in the store located on the corner, as well 2000 pesos in mejoras given to his granddaughters (500 pesos apiece), which include Manuela's four daughters. Of those Manuela has distributed 500 pesos to her son-in-law, Jose Antonio Fernandez Cornejo (husband of Maria Josefa) in the form of a string of pearls, worth 300 pesos, and a mulata slave, worth 200 pesos. This should be entered into the inheritance calculations. Likewise, she has handed over the tienda to her son-in-law Miguel Araoz, husband of daughter Maria Ines, which is worth 1600 pesos, as well as 200 pesos, the worth of the slave Manuel. The rest of what was received should be calculated into the inheritance. To

her son-in-law Pedro Araoz, husband of Damiana, she has given a slave called Maria de Jesus, worth 300 pesos, which should also be calculated into the inheritance. Other items such as dinnerware and clothes should not be calculated, since such items are of poor quality and have little value. The other daughters also received dinner ware and other items when they were married; these should be included into the calculations of inheritance as well. Manuela paid for the studies of her son Juan Jose at the University of Cordoba; she declares that these should not be taken into consideration either in calculating the inheritance. She declares that she sold a slave to Idelfonso Muñecas in Peru for 400 pesos, which she never received. This should be collected and added to her possessions. Likewise a slave called Francisco fled while in the custody of her son Baltazar; should he be found he should be added to the pool of her possessions. She declares that her son-in-law had received 40 head of fertile cows (de poder) from Jose Arias, and that Arias had more than that amount. She states that in the years 1809-1810 she sent 100 mules to Peru with those being driven by her son-in-law Miguel Araoz, and that from that (after expenses) she should be counted as having 1000 pesos from the transaction. She declares that apart from the house she was living in, the slaves Abelino, Benito, Catalina, Maria Manuela, Juana and Benita, which are being held by her sons Juan Jose, Rafael and Baltazar, 7000 pesos they received from her son-in-law Miguel Araoz (from 600 onzas of gold made from the sale of mules and other

transactions, including imports from Europe and agua ardiente. She declares that it is her will that her three sons, Rafael, Juan Jose, and Baltazar each receive 500 pesos from the quinto or tercio of her goods, so that this way they remain equal in the inheritance of their antepasados (ancestors) with "that which my daughters received from their maternal grandfather Antonio de Figueroa." Finally, she names all five children as heirs, and as her albaceas her brother Jose Gabriel de Figueroa, her sons-in-law and sons Jose Antonio Fernandez Cornejo, Baltazar and Rafael de Usandivaras.

Manuela's testamento is not extraordinary, and could be said to be fairly representative of the will of any member of the oligarchy. Her will differs in the amount and kind of wealth or patrimony she leaves to her children, where that wealth was derived from, and the specific individuals involved in the will. It also differs in certain respects with the will of a male. However, its individuality (uniqueness) is one of its key ingredients, for the individual is never absorbed into, nor displaced by, collectivity. Both symbolic and material patrimony (what one inherits from one's ascendants) is both collective and individual in the case of the oligarchy, but ultimately its reproduction occurs only through individuals, individuals, that is, within sets of relationships. Thus, every will that we can find will be as individualistic as Manuela's, but all likewise will operate under the same logic which makes it work, and which provides kinship continuity with its dichotomy.

We can now examine the nature of each set of relationships involved in Manuela's family. I would like to suggest that there are two primary sets of relationships. The first is the parent/offspring and marriage set; the second the parent/offspring and sibling set. Notice that in each there is a vertical relationship, which I will argue takes precedence within the set, as well as a horizontal relationship. Let us examine each set.

The parent/offspring relationship is given high priority in Manuela's will. The names of both parents are spelled out in detail. Her parents are the source of legitimate ascendancy, and are the crucial genealogical connectors between Manuela and past relations or family members. Manuela receives inheritance individually from each of her parents, as well as a dote (the dote, it can be argued, is a form of inheritance. See Cornejo 1977). Each parent contributes not only his/her wealth to Manuela, but also all the family and genealogical connections and traditions which they themselves have. This will be invaluable to Manuela in practice as a member of the oligarchy, for it will provide her with family connections which will help her economically and politically, and will be deeply influential in getting a spouse and maintaining position within the elite.

The second relationship expressed is marriage. This relationship, while of great importance, is nevertheless transcended by the parent/offspring relationship.[19] Corporateness in the institution of marriage is ultimately

realized in the offspring; the offspring joins in his or her person the patrimonies of two different families which his or her parents belong to. In essence, in this relational set the offspring, as individual, represents in his or her person the corporate entity of the family. One could say that the vertical relationship defines the horizontal. Notice, for example, that Manuela's spouse is only (and hardly) mentioned (not with a great deal of passion expressed either, bless his soul); neither of his parents nor any member of his family is mentioned. This, by the way, is almost invariable the rule.[20] This is so because marriage does not incorporate, strictly at least, the one spouse into the other's family. The individual brings his or her own family background and patrimony into the marriage, and that individual property never becomes joint or collective property of that marriage. Not that a spouse doesn't provide one with some wealth (he didn't, in Manuela's case); material resources created by marriage come in the form of inheritance, dote, and the creation of joint property over time. But within the oligarchy (and according to law) material wealth originally owned by one or another spouse is always owned individually, just as family background is.[21] It ultimately is united <u>only</u> in the offspring. Thus, the offspring represent of the synthesis of marriage; or stated in another way, the offspring is the corporate representation of the marriage. These resources, while belonging to the individual, have as ultimate purpose the offspring, a measure of power over the marriage. Corporateness in this sense is

embedded in the individual offspring: he (she) represents a synthesis of relational flows which involve not only material wealth, but family traditions, genealogical connections, and the like. Obviously this creates a certain amount of tension in practice in family relations. In a very real sense the arrival of offspring negates that it is love and commitment that holds the marriage together, because it is readily clear that the offspring are the ultimate synthesizers of relational ties of marriage.

From this perspective marriage is a major step, yes, in creating a new familial unit, but the act of marriage (which has as its purpose procreation) takes away the privilege of the parent, placing it on the child. The child is really the focus of the familial relational set. It might be added that this may be the reason for the legal and ritual value of marriage, since it ultimately defines the status of the offspring, nothing more. Notice in the relationship the accountability of parents to offspring which this creates.

The relational set described above is represented in Figure 1.

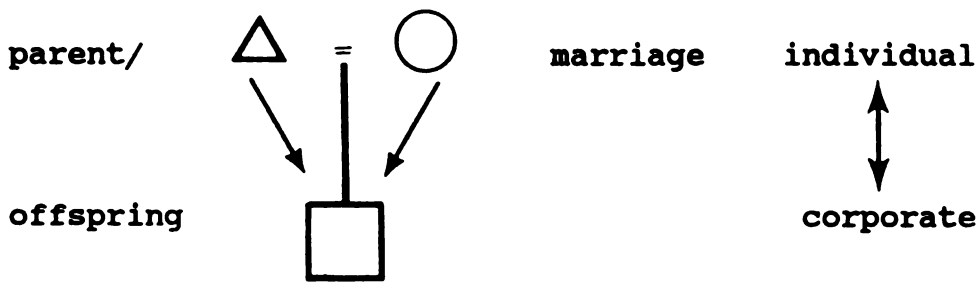


Figure 1: Marriage relational set

The second relational set is that of the parent and off-

spring relationship and the sibbling relationship. The vertical again defines the nature of the horizontal, but in this case the direction is the reverse. As noted above, the offspring are the heirs of all that was created in the family. They inherit family traditions and histories from each of their parents. Each child has an inherent and legal right to all the parental patrimony, both symbolic and material. Notice that each of the children are carefully detailed, and their "economic relationship" spelled out, with their mother. In this sense the (singular) parent is the corporate representation of all of the offspring, since he or she is the source of identity and patrimony. The siblings in a family are joined through the parental synthesis. The parent, from this perspective, becomes the individual invested with a corporate identity for all ascendants.[22]

The problem involved in this corporate family structure is, of course, that while symbolic patrimony is equally the property of each descendant, and the presence of other siblings does not lessen what each receives, this is not the case with material patrimony. Wealth, or material possessions, must be divided equally between each of the siblings. Thus, ironically, the corporate identity of the parent becomes also the point of division. That divisiveness is a very possible outcome is clearly on the minds of parents, as demonstrated in Manuela's will. She carefully spells out what each of the heirs have been given, whether slaves, jewels, or real estate, so that the each of the heirs knows

what he or she is entitled to. The point of this exercise is that each of the offspring are entitled to the entirety of the parental patrimony, divided along equal lines. This entitlement begins at birth, not at the death of the parent. Son Juan Jose, for example, was supported by his mother through his university education; the cost of this had to be specifically excused by his mother in the testamento, or it would be included as part of his inheritance that he had already received. Likewise, the dotes of the daughters are specified, for these are a type of advance on their inheritance. Ultimately, whether figuratively or in actuality, the ascendant is inherently connected to material wealth until death, when wealth is divided among the heirs. There is literally no way of dispossessing of oneself from this association; one cannot give the wealth away, it belongs to the offspring. Thus, the ascendant represents the corporate interest of each of the heirs, particularly in regard to material wealth.

We can thus see in this relational set both the basis for the corporate character of the family and the principle of division. What unites siblings, again, is the vertical relationship; it is thus not surprising that inheritance battles occur frequently, and that all sense of unity is often lost with the death of the parent (inheritance is discussed more fully below). This relational set is represented in Figure 2.

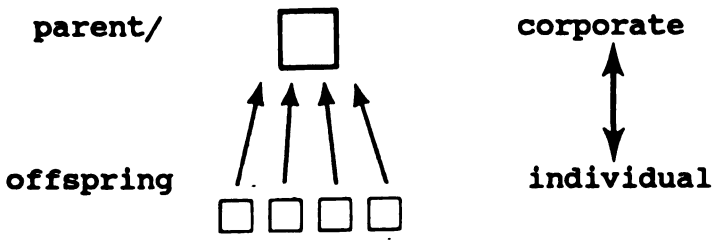


Figure 2: Sibling relational set

Large families are not uncommon among oligarchic families. This seems to go against the logic of inheritance, since it means that the portion inherited by each child is proportionately smaller. However, from another perspective large families make a great deal of sense. The greater the number of heirs, the greater the "presence" of the ascendant within oligarchic society, for all offspring of a family ultimately locate their identities in him or her. It is not surprising, from this perspective, that the most important of Salta's oligarchic families have been the large ones.

From the above discussion one can see a dual direction of corporateness and divisiveness occurring at the same time. There is both the synthesis of the offspring; and a synthesis of the ascendant. Both family syntheses create a level of corporateness embodied in individuals with a "corporatizing" role within the set of relationships which is the family. Nevertheless they also contain seeds of division which eventually can take place, and do within the life-cycles of families. These are marriage, in which division occurs generally with the death of one of the spouses; the relation is inherently unstable because it finds its synthesis in

offspring, but represents bringing together of divided unrelated interests. Husband's corporate interests pull between offspring and his or her own family; the joining is in the offspring, but this is always counterbalanced against the identities of each of their families. On the other side is the divisive yet unified relationship between siblings: they have a common identity in the parent, and yet each is an individualized inheritance. In terms of material wealth this becomes a point of divisiveness, because the gain of each is the loss for the others. Action in inheritance procedures is not normally this gloomy; harmony (as many parents beg of their children in their wills) may be maintained until the principle of fairness is violated by one of the heirs.

The pattern of corporateness/divisiveness within the family can be seen in Figure 3.

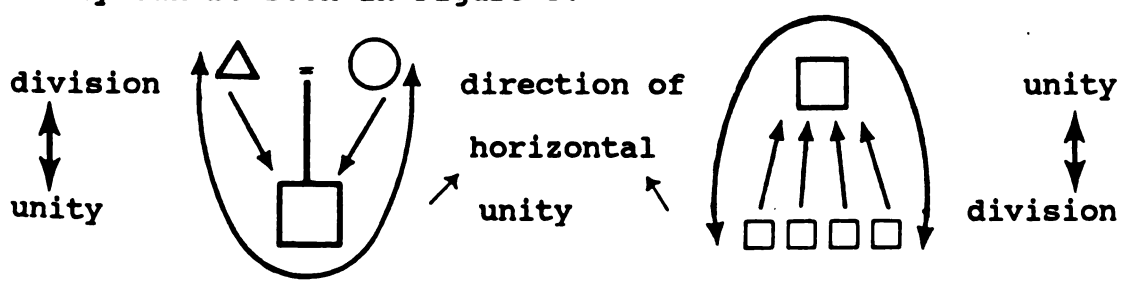


Figure 3: Corporateness/divisiveness in the family

Thus, brothers may split away, take different economic routes, have opposite political affiliations, while sharing a common familial background. It is <u>not</u> true that family loyalty is always first; but there is an underlying theme of family loyalty in all political transactions. And it is for

this reason that outsiders doubt political motives when members of the oligarchy have joined opposite political parties, encompassing all political positions. Yet, in interviewing them, it is not at all surprising to find that sincere political philosophies differ within the same families.

How does this relate to the issue of class? Class position is reproduced through the same set of relationships, but the relational set tends to hinder class reproduction, for corporateness and divisiveness work against direct reproduction of class position of the family. Only individuals have a class position, not families. This is because it submits capital to the same requirements to which all other forms of corporate wealth are submitted. Capital, whether land, goods, property, is divided in the process of inheritance, weakening an individual's position. There are a number of strategies to avoid this, but normally wealth is divided. At the same time, the corporateness embodied in the ascendant freezes capital, for the heirs have a stake in it, and thus the ascendant is not free to utilize it as he will. Rather, it will likely be transformed into non-capital, such as land which has traditional value rather than economic value.

Economic Implications of Relational Sets

There are a number of implications of relational sets to the economic behavior of oligarchic families. First, just as

relational sets unify and divide symbolic patrimony, they also unify and divide its material forms. The way in which relational sets divide and unify economic resources contributes to directing the uses of wealth, and the logic with which economic activities are performed. In cases where economic resources are also capital, such as land, they are transformed by relational sets, and become a contradictory form of patrimony.

Relational sets unify wealth, just as they unify families, on the vertical plane. In the first set, wealth is ultimately and legally united in the offspring. The offspring receives, indeed, is participant of, the material patrimonies of both parents, while neither spouse can claim rights to the patrimony, either symbolic or material, of the other spouse. Thus, Manuela specifies what she received from her husband as inheritance, but not what her children received from him. Legally she receives 50% of the value of the inheritance; the offspring receive the other 50%. Lest the reader take this as a right on the part of a partner to the patrimony of the spouse, I only have to note that this wealth is for the well-keeping of the widow or widower, but that wealth ultimately will be inherited by the offspring. The proof of this point comes in cases of second marriages, where the wealth obtained through inheritance of a spouse is designated to the offspring of that specific marriage. A famous long-drawn out case illustrates this. Casimira Cornejo, a widow of who had married into the Figueroa family, decided to

marry in second matrimony Thomas Fernandez. There is no substantive reason for this not to occur, and yet Casimira's offspring attempted to prevent the marriage for fear of losing their inheritance from their father. Evidently they had little confidence in Thomas's personal integrity, and thought the marriage from his perspective was completely interested. The fears sparked a legal suit after the marriage had taken place. Other examples are a suit between Petrona Figueroa, married to Juan Jose Fernandez Cornejo, and owner of a large estancia and sugar mill, and her sons, who opposed her marriage to a second pretender. Such cases are particularly strong when minor children are involved, and the spouse is guardian to the patrimony they have inherited.

Thus, marriage itself in principle never binds the wealth of two families, although figuratively it may. It is actually the offspring that provides this consolidation. In this regard, it might be useful to be reminded that wills are individual documents, for both male and female, and represent the accounting of individual properties. Again, in Manuela's will it is important to note that she accounts for nothing of her husband's patrimony, except that which she receives; she does not, as mentioned above, mention what the children received from her spouse. Nor does she discuss what her husband inherited from his ascendants. Thus, the will clearly demonstrates that marriage itself does not incorporate wealth, and in fact that wealth never loses its individual quality. The offspring as an individual represents the unification of

the symbolic and material patrimonies of both families to which his or her parents belong.

In the second relational set it is the upward direction which unifies wealth. The accounting of different gifts and expenses received by Manuela's children demonstrate that material patrimonies are corporate property long before the ascendant owner dies. In this case all individual wealth must be accounted for due to its corporate nature. Wealth is thus incorporated only as individual property; its corporate character is lost as soon as the owner dies, because it thus must be divided and the process begins anew. It is of note, again, that Manuela mentions nothing of her siblings, other than Juan Jose, although she had six. Juan Jose, Salta's bishop, is mentioned only as (albacea); there is no mention of corporate properties. One general mention of siblings is made in regard to a house that was inherited jointly, which has not yet been divided. There is no shared material patrimony between siblings, other than what they share through the ascendant. Thus, if there is joint economic or political activity among siblings, it is not based on corporate property, and distinction is maintained between siblings in regard to property rights. On a more negative side, the possibility of rupture of family relations over inherited property is a serious threat. Thus, the fact that property has a corporate quality in this relational set provides the setting for division and fragmentation within the family.

There are a number of implications to this pattern.

First, the definition of economic resources as patrimony, which contains both an individual and a corporate character, is important in understanding the economic activities of oligarchic families. Economic resources in a family may have a dual character, acting as both capital and as patrimony. Capital is invariably owned individually, and it is always individual interests which are a stake in the use of capital. Corporateness of capital is expressed in terms of common interests in capital ventures; but the interest is always individual. Capital is also a certain kind of wealth, distinguishable from commodities and use-values.

Patrimony, in contrast, is wealth embedded in the kinship system. Its corporateness lies not in common interests of accumulation, but rather in kinship principles (of the reproduction of kin relations). It is patrimony because it invests individuals determined by kin relatedness to rights in it. Its basis lies in kinship continuity, as do all forms of patrimony. Patrimony makes no distinctions between forms of wealth; all forms are listed in a common monetary value. Thus, capital, commodities, and non-commodity values (uses-values) are all listed according to a common monetary standard, and division of wealth is based on that standard, not on cumulative potential. All wealth held by an individual within the oligarchy is patrimony; not all is capital. This is particularly true of land, although other business interests apply as well.

As noted in the first section, capital is the basis for

the reproduction of the class position of the family. Thus, it is necessary for maintaining the economic, and the social, position of the family. However, its dual character as patrimony may neutralize its qualities as capital, and creates a dilemma for the use of wealth. It must be remembered that the patrimonial restrictions occur not only at the transference of wealth (on the occasions of death and marriage), but during the entire lives of oligarchic members. Relational sets have the effect of binding two generations in lifelong corporateness. Thus, in effect kinship practice consists of strategies to overcome this dilemma, in which patrimony and capital can be united in the reproduction of the class position of the oligarchy.

Land is a case in point. It has traditionally been the most important resource that the oligarchy has for creating wealth, and is thus the basis for its class position. As patrimony, however, it is given no preferential treatment in the division of wealth. In effect, each generation potentially destroys the basis for family and individual class position. Several solutions may accrue, all which deal with the contradiction, but which cannot resolve the contradiction. Land may be divided, for example, despite the fact that this may be detrimental to the individual and corporate interests of the heirs. In cases where it isn't divided, land may be assigned to one or another of the heirs, while other material patrimony which is not capital (use-value) may be distributed to other heirs (this in effect

gives one or more siblings the potential to reproduce their class position, while it leaves the others to resolve this problem through other means). The actual, not the potential value or accumulative capacity, of patrimony is used in the dividing process, so that one sibbling may in fact receive that which permits him or her to reproduce his or her class position, while other siblings are not able to reproduce it with what they receive. As patrimony, capital is also somewhat paralyzed in its uses, because although individual, the social pressures put on it mean that the individual is not free to do what he or she wills with it. Consequently, land has always been a favorite investment, for it has (with land rent) its in built, although inefficient, organization of accumulation, with little or no risk. It is also an appropriate form of patrimony, for it can be sustained visibly over many generations.

It might be noted that the definition of wealth as capital destroys the basis of patrimony, and begins the process of forming classes which are visibly incorporated on the basis of class interest. The rights precluded in the kinship system are annulled, and the logic of wealth is based on the logic of capital accumulation. The basis of the corporate family is thus annulled.

Inheritance

Inheritance is the moment which perhaps is most crucial in the tension between economic gain and family identity. The

moment of inheritance is fraught with tension, as all the heirs have a stake in the outcome. Inheritance thus reveals the tension between the domestic realm of social cohesion and the class realm of economic logic of capital. This, despite clear rules spelling out how inheritance takes place (in fact, the rules are a product of the tension). As noted above, inheritance permeates family relationships long before the holder of wealth dies or relinquishes his or her patrimony. Family members are tied to the ascending parent or grandparent because of dependence on the patrimony of the family. Often greater wealth creates greater dependency (thus greater domestic cohesiveness), since wealth contributes to the social standing of individuals. In fact, it is also true that from birth individuals partake in the benefits of the patrimony which is not yet theirs, and this partaking is emphasized throughout the growing up period (in schools, churches, and privileges that they are given). As noted above, patrimony is not only the basis of family standing, but has the dual function of being capital as well which reproduces class position.

Legally, inheritance is patterned on the basis of relationship closeness. Traditionally the order of priority is as follows: spouse inherits one half of wealth, and each of the direct descendants inherits an equal portion of the other half. All patrimony is valued in common money terms (which included during different historical periods reales, Bolivian pesos, Chilean currency, and Argentine pesos, and

silver). In straightforward cases few problems arise in the distribution of inherited wealth, and heirs generally agree upon the will. While each heir receives a set amount of value, the specific nature of what he or she receives can vary. Some heirs may receive land, others houses, others currency, slaves, clothes, cattle, credit, furniture, or other household items. At times one heir may receive land, and a co-heir the cattle or livestock on the land. What one heir receives over another may be a source of in-family conflict.

Problems caused by inheritance may arise in a variety of ways, no matter how carefully the inheritance is divided. Generally there are two areas in which difficulties occur: in the partition of the inheritance itself, and in the nature of relationships contested in the inheritance process. It's best to deal with each separately. In regard to the partition of the inheritance, debates may arise within the family regarding how the patrimony should be divided. This may occur despite the arrangements the will (testamento) makes. Heirs may be dissatisfied with the fairness of the distribution, particularly in regard to the kinds of objects being partitioned. Heirs may also be dissatisfied with the assessment process, normally carried out by the albaceas, or in rare cases, by a judge. The more common problems, however, are related to more complex situations, and may be one reason that inheritance cases may take years, even generations, before they are resolved. In one case, for example, the inheritance for each heir was stipulated and carried out, but

the process of implementation was hotly contested. In this case, all siblings in a family accused one brother of receiving assets through the sale of patrimony of the father without distributing it, and failing to participate in the payment of debts and funeral costs. He was particularly accused of seizing a piece of land which belonged, according to their argument, to all the heirs. The brother replied that in fact he had rescued the joint patrimony, including the land, with his own wealth, and that it therefore corresponded to him. In other cases, heirs could not decide amicably what to do with land they had inherited jointly (indivisa); often some wanted to partition it, while others wanted to maintain its joint undivided state. In many cases the land was sold as one piece, and the assets of the sale distributed to each heir.[23] At other times the usufruct of patrimony before the inheritance process often led to later conflict, as an heir refused to vacate a house or leave a plot of land long ago attached to. The importance of the role of the albaceas can be seen here: they had to be respected by all the heirs, by creditors and debtors to the estate as well, and often by the state. They had to be close enough to the heirs to be of confidence, but at the same time not too close to be partisan. Thus, albaceas were chosen with great care by the testor.

The second kind of difficulty was due to irregularities or indefinitions in patterns of kin relationships. These fall into a number of categories. The lack of legitimate

descendants or ascendants leaves the heirs undefined. And natural children may also be a source of conflict, although they were allotted only up to a fifth of the inheritance.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen that the oligarchy is a particular social phenomenon located in a specific time and space framework, with a unique internal organization concerned with the control of power and the reproduction of an incomplete class position. Within this framework Salta's oligarquia arose as a dominant class within a peripheral capitalist economy, intent on controlling its level of vulnerability. In its early stages, the oligarchy was torn by internal strife resulting partly from changes in the world system it was powerless to control. The oligarchy was eventually able to consolidate its hold on power by cementing its control of the state both regionally, and by forming part of a national oligarchy. The basis of its consolidation was kinship; however, while providing the basis for consolidation, it also reflected and contributed to the internally fragmentary character of the group. Consequently, the oligarchy was inherently a weak structure, always threatened by the 'class tendencies' of consolidation.

Salta's oligarchy eventually encountered its demise in the formation of a capitalist class structure in the region. Several elements characterized this development: the formation of class based groups recognizing common class

interests, including workers, both rural and urban, peasants, agricultural capitalists, industrial capitalists and the state employees. This occurred at the national level first, and only eventually reached Salta around the middle of the 20th century. Second, the state began performing its characteristically traditional role within the liberal capitalist state, that of mediator between antagonistic class-based groups, and as legitimizer of dominant groups. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the distancing of capital from kinship relations occurred. Thus, while vestiges of kin relatedness continue to exist, the formation of corporations has tied the reproduction of capital less to kin relations. Consequently, the reproduction of class position in no longer dependent on the kinship system.

Endnotes to Chapter V

1.The notion that kinship is fundamentally a native philosophy which connects important social domains is well developed by McKinley (1982), and particularly by Fortes (1943), in his discussion of complementary filiation. The definition used here differs a bit from their usage, primarily in the domains it is seen to connect. Nevertheless, the difference may be excused, I think, because I am dealing with a class-based society, in which kinship relations cannot be abstracted out of the nature of class relations. And this is important, because a fundamental dilemma of class society is that class penetrates all aspects of social existence, and therefore is connected to other domains of social life.

2.Carlos and Sellers (1972) are representative of this. While theirs is perhaps the most comprehensive overview of kinship studies in Latin America, the issue they are actually concerned with is whether kin relations break down with modernization.

3.Strickon (1960) carried out an exploratory analysis of the relationship between kinship practice and class structure, and called for studies which focussed more specifically on the issue by rasing a number of pertinent questions. Nevertheless, as far as I know no studies of this type have emerged.

4.Often kinship is treated as an "informal" aspect of social relations, opposed to more institutional aspects. For example, kinship is often treated as the informal network base among capitalists and bureaucrats, tying together governmental, economic and other institutions. A corollary to this is that this type of relationship lies beyond state legislation, and is thus the primary means that elite kinship groups can take over the primary institutions of power in any state.

5.Again, in the case of capitalism, exploitation is based on the purchase by the capitalist of the labor of the worker at a lower value than the worth of the worker's labor power.

6.These terms are best known from Wallerstein's (1976, 1981) work. These refer to areas which have been incorporated into the world capitalist system, but which cannot be said to have specifically capitalist relations of production.

7.The Frank - Dos Santos debate deals indirectly with this question; indirectly, because neither deal specifically with the nature of the classes in dependent economies.

8.Wallerstein (1981) notes that classes are not restricted to the confines of state territoriality; rather, capitalist classes are extending throughout the world as capitalists and proletarians. The process of the penetration of capitalist relations of production are gradual; thus, while capitalism as a system affects and transforms the relations of production in peripheral societies, these may not immediately represent specifically capitalist relations.

9.It might be noted that this explanatory framework also includes a corollary, which is that interclass conflict is not going to develope to the degree it will in capitalism, because class polarization is not as clearly and systematically defined.

10.One particularly famous case in Salta was that of the Isasmendi family. According to local historians, the founder of the Isasmendi family, an encomendero and owner of the major part of the Valle Calchaqui, offered to pay for his title, or to renounce to all privileges in exchange for it. His wish was never granted.

11."La familias Gurruchaga, Cornejo, etc., patriotas; las familias Gorostiaga, Aramburu's, etc. realistas.

12."...Juana Manuela Gorriti (tan ligada a la <u>familia de Güemes</u>, no solamente por los vínculos de amistad de su padre, sino también por los familiares, pues su hermana Da. Juana Maria Gorriti eras casada con el Gral. D. Manuel de Puch, hermano de Da. Carmen Puch, la esposa del Gral. Güemes..."

13."...he contraido matrimonio el dia 10 del corriente con Doña Maria del Carmen Puch, hija legítima, y de matrimonio legítimo del Teniente graduado Don Domingo Puch, y de Doña Dorotea de la Vega Velarde, <u>de las principales y mas antiguas familias</u> de este Pueblo."

14.It should also be noted that other versions of his life circulate in the popular folklore of the province. Güemes is said to have had his love trysts with local women from the "plebe". One version even states that he was assassinated by the jealous husband of one such lover. Historically there is little evidence to sustain such a theory; no matter, Güemes remains a moral example to the oligarchy of high filial standards.

15.Among such cases are the Saravias of Anta, descended from the large Saravia Arias trunk. A family member explains that they marry "people of the area". Many local-level elites of the province's towns and villages may in fact have been a product of the same phenomenon. It might be mentioned that localization of elite families is in fact always a danger.

The oligarchy, landed as they are, are usually associated with a region, and the tension of localization is always present. Loss of contact and association with the oligarchy centered in Salta means the loss of provincial influence.

16.Some of the most well known matrons in the history of Salta were teachers, directors of schools, and founders of schools. Among these were Jacoba Saravia.

17.Membership was determined by votes, and has been described as a terrorizing process by outsiders. Members had to be approved unanimously, and votes were carried out by the use of marbles. White marbles assigned approval, one black one was sufficient for rejection. In oral tradition families who have been rejected are often referred to as "bolitas negras".

18.In a unilineal system division of property is neutralized by emphasizing one or another line, and by the establishment of complimentary filiation. In non-unilineal systems other rules provide a similar effect. For example, the mayorazgo system in feudal Spain placed the unity of property in the eldest son.

19.Gudeman (1976, 1978) and Hoops (1980) describe the transcendance of the parent/offspring relationship to the affinal one in regard to ritual kinship in Latin America. In the compadrazgo, while the compadre relationship may have more practical importance in social relationships, the key to the relational complex is the relationship between natural parents and offspring, and spiritual parents and spiritual offspring. Ultimately the whole complex revolves structurally around the principle of natural and spiritual descent. I would like to suggest that the compadrazgo serves as a ritual model for the natural family in Latin America. Thus, the marriage relationship is never truly complete until it is 'synthesized' in the offspring.

20.The exception is when the spouse comes from a much more important family, or perhaps a much wealthier one, than one's own. Most immigrants married into oligarchic families will refer much more often to their spouse's families than to their own; it is almost as if they had been adopted into that family.

21.The last point should be emphasized. A person never actually receives his or her spouse's symbolic patrimony through marriage. Manuela (quite obviously) will not, through the marriage act, become a descendant of her husbands family. Only their children receive the family backgrounds of both.

22.In this regard, I visited a vacationing oligarchic family at a local Salteño resort town. The center of the family gathering was the grandmother, a feisty and strong willed

elderly woman who spent much of her time in Buenos Aires. Around her were gathered all her children and their spouses, and her grandchildren. The scene of a hen and her chicks prompted me to ask what brought this type of recurrent family gathering. A daughter answered that she still held all the wealth, all her children remained largely dependent both literally and figuratively on her. A final note can be added to the anecdote: the synthesizing role of the parent is not restricted to two generations, but may encompass three and even four generations. The will of Manuela Figueroa testifies to the fact that this structure emphasizes continuity between generations, as many as are alive at the same time. The dote left by the maternal grandfather for his granddaughters clearly indicates this point.

23.In many cases the testor qualified in his or her will that land could not be divided. This meant that only with the consent of all of the heirs could a piece of land be divided. This was often a source of jeopardy to the livelihood of some heirs, since the piece of land they would receive was too small for the production of a well founded income. It also meant that the symbolic patrimonial value of the inheritance would go down.

CHAPTER VI

PROPERTY AND CLASS: THE DYNAMICS OF ACCUMULATION

Introduction

The value that Salta's oligarchy places on land has a long tradition. In the past the primary source of wealth and power for this group came from landownership. Many families trace their "roots" back to a specific estancia or set of landholdings, acquired and held by an important ancestor. The pattern for holding a particular piece of land, whether urban or rural, in the family over several generations is not as common as might be thought, however, despite the popular assumption that such is the case. There are several reasons for this: first if all, continuity of family patrimony through a male line is physically difficult, since daughters have always had the same inheritance rights as sons, and this inheritance involves bringing another family name and another family interest into family patrimony. Thus, when Cornejo (1945) states that the Uriburu house remained in the same family for seven generations over two hundred years, he simply means that its various owners gained possession of the property through inheritance or by means of their kinship relations, not by recurring to the market. Strictly speaking, the family name changed a number of times during the course of ownership, and thus there is a question as to whether ownership actually remained in the family. As noted in the previous chapter, Cornejo's description of the Uriburu family

is understandable, given that the character of the "family" is somewhat amorphous.

Second, properties themselves are complex phenomena, and like families, amorphous; they are social constructs which can't be reduced to any type of spatially or economically "real" unit. At what point in time do properties attain the status of a property? Economically speaking, one buys and sells a portion of space, its value determined by its productive potential and its commodity value; but this definition of property is immediate, and does not determine what will happen to that space in the future. Over a long period of time properties in Salta are in fact subdivided due to inheritance, sale, or for whatever purpose. Other units of land are put together from various purchases of land, creating out of numerous properties one. Even units which have been passed on to heirs undivided often suffer from division, as the families of the heirs seek strategies which will benefit each individually or will benefit heirs. Thus, in strict terms, properties do not remain in the hands of a family over numerous generations, because these properties are not stable entities. As noted in the following paragraph, A few exceptions can be found. But it might be noted that even property names change, as ownership patterns in the landscape shift. These characteristics of landownership are true of urban as well as rural properties; all are subject to selling and buying, division and redefinition. Indeed, one could say that properties "exist" in as much as they are "thought" or

constructed socially, often as past phenomenon, no longer existent in the present.

As I mentioned above, there are a few cases in which families can be said to have owned one property over several generations. The Cornejo's, for example, have owned the Estancia San Isidro for over two hundred years, but not continuously, nor has the same "branch" of the family always held possession. Furthermore, nor is this the only property that members of the family have owned; it is only one of many that have been bought, owned and sold by various members of the family. Likewise, a Jujeno family, the Fernandez Camperos, have owned Santa Victoria for even longer, but again, only one segment of the family continues to own the land (Rutledge 1971, Cornejo 1945). In short, strictly speaking properties don't remain in the hands of families for two primary reasons relating to the units being cited: neither families (as we have seen in the last chapter) nor properties are strictly speaking any type of "real" unit over space and time, but rather social constructs. That they aren't more clearly defined is part of the subject of this chapter. I'd like to argue in the chapter that properties in Salta derive their social identities from the realm of kinship, genealogies, to be more specific, but that the commodity nature of property never allows land to become wholly enveloped by the kinship realm. Thus, properties never attain that status of being "family holdings".

Despite the amorphous nature of both families and

properties, the emphasis on landownership as an identifying symbol of oligarchic membership continues today, and although the tendency is weakening, vestiges of "semi-feudal" landowning arrangements can still be found (and are desired) in the region. Time and again Saltenos informed me that descendants of the oligarchic families continue to invest in land, often at considerable cost and risk, often subsidizing landownership with professional salaries. There is no doubt that economic rationale can be found for some of this investment activity; investment in real estate has often been one of the few stable investment opportunities in a regional economy which is volatile and has few other income-producing and value-holding resources. What is more interesting, however, is why land has so long been associated with the oligarchy and oligarchic power.

To look at this we must be concerned not with what land is (it is both a physical object and a space which can be utilized to produce value), but rather, what it represents for the oligarchy; how it is perceived. The perception of land seems to encompass two different, sometimes contradictory behaviors. On one hand, the treatment of land as a family patrimony, to be held onto and kept in the family; the provisioning of lands with their own genealogies, the connecting of the history of land ownership with significant historical events and personages. In other words, land in this regard is <u>not</u> simply perceived as a commodity, with its value determined by a supply and demand market, but rather it

is seen as something analogous to the family, passing from one generation to the next, couched in the idiom of kinship.

On the other hand, land is also inevitably treated as a commodity, an economic object. Land is never without its market value, and is in fact, always potentially convertible to capital; this is no little source of tension in families whose members have an interest in the land. Even when lands remain in "family hands" over a number of generations, its commoditized value cannot be escaped; lands receive, in the valuation of inheritance, an evaluation based on their commodity value. But throughout Salta's history, land has been bought and sold; it was always alienable from any specific ownership. For most of Salta's history a healthy real estate market was in place, particularly during economic booms, such as those that occurred during the later 18th century and the second half of the 19th century, propelled by the explosion of export of beef to the northern Chilean mines.

Land is of course, not only a commodity, but also a producer of surplus value, or a potential producer of wealth; this characteristic affects its treatment in both realms. In straightforward Marxist terms, land has always been not only an object of exchange, but also a means of production, the principle source of value in a largely agricultural economy.[1] During most of Salta's history, land and fluctuating trade were the primary means of support for oligarchic families; ownership of land was the primary class backbone of oligarchic power. This fact was never lost on the oligarchy itself.

Land ownership was not only a source of wealth, but also the base of family position in Salta's class system, a class position which ideally was pass down from one generation to the next. Curiously, traditionally in Salta assessed value of land was rarely determined by its production (income) potential. A number of reasons exist for this. It was, first of all, difficult to assess the potential wealth producing value of land, particularly in cases of distribution of inheritances. Such a speculatory approach to determining values could very well increase the likelihood of friction and conflict among heirs dividing up the assets of an inheritance.[2] Thus, in the division of an inheritance the value of lands were determined by their sale value, not their potential productive value. In this context, urban lands were normally assessed at a higher rate than rural lands, because of the expenditures (mejoras) which had been invested in urban properties. Second, in an economy so dependent on outside determinants, it has been virtually impossible to assess the potential wealth producing value of land, since market conditions has determined whether or not wealth was realized from production on the land. Finally, immobile values (land) were kept distinct from mobile values (cattle, processed sugar or sugar cane, etc.) in the division of inheritances, and the latter could be allocated separately from the land. Again, mobile assets were valued according to the prices they were thought to command at the marketplace. Notice, however, that other important assets in the production of value, which are

not directly marketable, are not figured into the assessment of value; primarily, labor availability. Most lands were sold with an established "captive" labor force on the land, which accompanied the land. Patron Costas (1980) notes this in the family's sale of the Estancia El Rey; all workers passed to the "employment" of the new owners. In short, the value of lands is determined by the exchange value, not by the potential productive value. The point is important, because it is obvious that heirs receiving land inherit an income producing property; those inheriting an urban property, or other possessions such as clothes, furniture, and the like, are not as fortunate. Nevertheless, no distinction in the actual "productive value" of things is made.

In exploring the issues that I have laid out, I would like to suggest that the perception of land has, for the oligarchy, a dual nature: it is a commodity, occupying a place accorded to it by a capitalist world economy, but it has also is a social entity closely identified socially with oligarchic families themselves, couched in the idiom of kinship. As a commodity land has, as Appadurai (1984) notes of other commodities, a social identity; it has developed a social personhood which has, if not a biography (see Kopytoff 1984), a genealogy. Property is in essence a bridge between the temporal and familial domain and the political economic dimension of the oligarchy. I want to explore this dual character in the chapter.

Patterns of Land Tenure in Salta

As was noted in the introduction of the thesis, the dispute over the feudal, semi-feudal, peripheral (semi-peripheral) or capitalist nature of the hacienda has been at the forefront of the treatment of land and of the relations of production in the Latin American countryside. Underlying the entire debate is the question of whether land is primarily a commodity (it is always recognized as a means of production), or an object of possession lying outside of market relations. Those who argue that land within the oligarchic economy is not is a commodity point to the tendency of the oligarchy to monopolize land in order to remove it from market forces and constraints. They point to the holding and concentration of lands in the hands of a few families (technically not correct, although socially recognized as such). Most importantly, they note the distinctly non-capitalistic relations of production which occur on the hacienda (see Bauer 1979, Wolf and Mintz 1957): non-free labor, the lack of investment capital, the absentee character of the landowner, the mixture of subsistence and market oriented strategies on the land itself, and the like. On the other side, various theories have pointed out that the hacienda was established by a capitalist system (if incipient) (Frank 1967), operates functionally within a world capitalist market (Wallerstein 1981), and is a commodity with defined economic value. The debate applies, of course, to Salta's oligarchy. I would like to argue, to begin with, that land

in Salta has always been a commodity. The question of whether land was commoditized is rather straight-forward, and can be answered by looking at the records and patterns of land ownership, which I will do generally here, and in terms of the activities of a specific family later.

Records of land transactions are not sufficiently abundant prior to the 1860's to provide a complete account of land ownership patterns. In 1860's a land registry office was set up in the province, and titles to land began to be recorded by the provincial government. However, the accounting of landownership was not carried out systematically, and for many years only transactions which involved the buying and selling of land, or where properties were in dispute (i.e. disputes over inheritance) were recorded, to providing new owners with greater legal weight in the land claims. Thus, many properties which passed on to new owners through inheritance were not recorded in the registry, and their titles were held by their owners privately. Later more strict controls led eventually to the recording of all immobile properties (real estate), yet even today many properties have not been legally mensured. In my research I made use of these resources, and also sought testaments and other archival documentation, including a valuable document which was compiled by one of the first employees of the land registry office and as a manuscript bears his name, Aimo. I should also mention the difficulty of compiling complete information even including the documents

mentioned above; the historical archives were often found to be incomplete, raided by various interested parties over the course of its existence.[3]

The nature of land ownership in Salta has historically maintained certain characteristics. From early on in the colonization process, land was concentrated in large holdings, often called estancias or fincas, not uncommonly over 25,000 hectares.[4] All were originally given as land grants by the Spanish crown, distributed by colonial governors, lieutenant governors, judges and other high officials. The earliest grants in Salta were in the Valles Calchaquies and the Valle de Lerma, and other adjacent areas; only in the 19th century were the Frontera regions adjudicated and populated. Many of the early colonial land grants were 4 square leagues, approximately 25 square kilometers, not a small holding (see Cornejo 1945). Later mercedes by the national government were a bit more modest, the size limited to 1 league by 1/2 league; this was nevertheless large. The small holding, or minifundia, has always been rare in Salta, although much of the poor rural population traditionally practiced subsistence agriculture, particularly in areas such as the Valles Calchaquies, but usually on rented plots under sharecropping arrangements. The small holding has become more common in these areas today, and in other areas as well, as large landholdings become subdivided.

Sola (1889) provides the earliest catastro summary in the province in 1889 (see Table 8). The figures are not precise,

Table 8: Average property size by department in 1889:[1]

	properties	owners	area[2] (km2)	size (km2)	population
Capital	1735	1625	1730	1.06	15000
city					7550
Cerrillos	325	314	525	1.67	5650
Chicoana	332	275	970	3.53	8800
R. de Lerma	378	347	4520	13.02	13830
La Vina	213	192	2140	11.14	3380
Guachipas	176	131	1910	14.58	3750
Cafayate	197	187	1820	9.73	3711
San Carlos	196	195	2370	12.09	7770
Molinos	303	275	2690	9.78	6930
Cachi	298	196	2370	12.09	5530
La Poma/Payogasta	39	33	5200	157.57	4300
La Caldera	132	123	1440	11.71	1690
Campo Santo	158	151	2210	14.63	4200
Iruya	132	62	3610	58.22	3490
Santa Victoria	69	69	3940	57.10	3940
Anta[3]	405	322	22990	71.40	5440
Rivadavia	235	151	25740	170.46	3700
Metan	303	302	6140	20.33	7200
R. de la Frontera	579	491	5780	11.77	8200
Oran	644	381	12883	33.81	5950
La Candelaria[4]			1260		1809
Los Andes[5]			25205		n/a
Total	6867	5822	155368	35.39	(average)

[1]Compiled primarily from Sola (1889): Memorias Descriptivas de Salta, a government document, and from the 1869 Census.

[2]These are contemporary measurements. Sola's measurements are inaccurate.

[3]In 1889 the province held approximately 1.8 million hectares of public lands in Anta, 2 million in Rivadavia, and one million in Oran (Sola 1889:189).

[4]No information was available on Candelaria.

[5]The Dept. of Los Andes was a national territory until the late 1950's, when it became on of Salta's departamentos. Thus, no figures are available at the time of the Sola publication. However, it should be noted that today the Dept. of Los Andes has one of the highest concentrations of land in Salta, and indeed, in the country. The Tribuno (n.d.) also noted that the largest landholding in Argentina is held in this department, including several hundred thousand hectares.

and have the great weakness of not making a distinction between rural and urban properties. Were these included, estimates of average size of property would be much greater, since urban property owners made up a larger part of the entire owning population. Nevertheless, even without this distinction, it is possible to appreciate the concentration of landholding which occurred. The urban proportion of the population was particularly large in the Capital, Cerrillos, Rosario de Lerma, Campo Santo, Metan, Rosario de la Frontera and Oran departments, which had substantial urban populations. Most other departments had smaller urban centers as well. Today, subdivision has lessened the average property size in most departments, particularly the most populous ones. Other areas, particularly in the Valles Calchaquies, Santa Victoria and Iruya, continue to be dominated by the extensive latifundia. The Valle de Lerma has perhaps suffered the greatest subdivision; nevertheless, it by no means approximates minifundismo which characterizes some areas of Latin America.

Subdivision of properties seems to have occurred in spurts, although gradually, but it was the "natural" tendency. The primary forces behind subdivision were related to kinship, not the market; properties were often subdivided to accommodate multiple heirs unwilling to maintain the unity of the land or to part with their rights to the land in favor of another fellow heir.[5] This tendency was vociferously lamented by several colonial families, who begged that the crown permit

the establishment of the mayorazgo in the colonies. This system, common in feudal Spain, made the elder male heir holder of family title and patrimonies, and thus prevented division of properties.[6] No family in the La Plata territories was granted that privilege. The degree to which land was subdivided depended on family circumstances, such as the number of children, the marriages of heirs and their independent holdings (through the dote), and the patterns of family property usufruct and land occupation by heirs prior to the death of the owner. At times, even in large families major subdivisions could be avoided by distributing land to members of the family most in need of it, while other heirs took their share of the inheritance in the form of urban properties, cash or other commodities. It was also not uncommon for heirs to receive "rights" to a property, with the purpose of avoiding the necessity for division; however, in most cases such arrangements eventually broke down as the interested parties (spouses, children, and the like) increased and lay claim to those rights.

Market forces, in contrast, seem to have played only a minor role in land subdivision until the late 19th century. This can be explained partially by the fact that rural land was generally by itself relatively inexpensive, and that purchasers from the oligarchy seem to have preferred to buy entire units of land rather than subunits. In general production on landholdings was inefficiently, and therefore they needed to be large in order to generate an income

adequate for the oligarchic family to maintain their position of status within the local elite. Furthermore, while land itself was relatively abundant, and the population of the province was small, and labor was scarce, and thus often land acquisition was the only means to appropriating a labor force which was by custom "bound" to the property. If anything, the tendency was for families with sufficient capital to increase the amount of land they acquired, thus often uniting formerly distinct units into larger territorial holdings. This was true particularly of immigrants into the province: the Patron Costas, the Flemmings, the Durands, the Michell Torinos, for example, as late as the early part of this century. This pattern changed as the production of commercial crops for the larger national and international markets increased, and the mode of production on the land change.

The most common use of land in Salta throughout its history has been cattle raising and wintering. The cultivation of alfalfa, closely associated with cattle raising, has also been widespread, but limited to areas with irrigation resources (Valles Calchaquies and the Valle de Lerma, principally). The cattle trade led to the creation of a particular productive structure in Salta, the <u>estancia</u>. Production was carried out in most cases by sharecropping herders, known locally as <u>puesteros</u>. Each <u>puestero</u> on an <u>estancia</u> cared for the <u>estancia's</u> herd located in one of the corners of the vast territories which made up the property. The <u>puestero</u> was able as well to graze his own herd on the

estancia's property, renting grazing rights from the landowner. In many cases the puestero was permitted to farm small plots for his family's own subsistence needs. The estancia was normally run by an administrator, who oversaw the everyday activities on the land. Administrators lived on the estancia, in contrast to the owner, who often spent more time in the capital than on his rural properties. Administrators were often drawn from particularly able and loyal gauchos, but it was also common to make the position available to disenfranchized members of the oligarchy (see, for example, Patron Costas 1980). Under the administrator were capataces, often in charge of specific activities or of segments of the puesteros. While administrators controlled the productive activities on the estancia, purchase and sale of cattle, as well as other market transactions, were invariably controlled by the landowner.

In certain areas of the province, particularly in the mountain valleys, sharecroppers cultivated many basic crops such as maize, wheat and potatoes, which reached the city markets.[7] Commercial crops such as sugar cane, coffee, grapes, and tobacco never reached a scale of significance until this century. These crops have eventually changed the nature of production in most of the province, the value of land, and the role of the landowner in Salta.

Patterns of family ownership

Traditionally the primary aim of oligarchic families in regard to the acquisition of land was to create a family "patrimony" (or base of wealth) capable of economically sustaining the family position. Land, in essence, was the means of establishing and maintaining a class position, but one that could be reproduced through the family. The key notion behind property ownership was its generational continuity: land could serve as a class base for not only the original owner, but for generations after. This notion of course supported the view that families were somehow corporate groups both horizontally and more importantly, vertically across various generations. The very essence of this perspective conflicted with the reality of what landownership was all about. Property was a "capitalized" commodity, and always had been one; in other words, it was owned specifically by individuals, and it had a market value. With few exceptions, property within a family was attained through purchase. Inheritance, so closely associated with the patrimonial character of property, essentially divided families and highlighted the commodity character of the property that it was transferring by means of a kinship based, not a market based, process. Thus, the most fundamental kinship act, inheritance, highlighted in the central moment of the "kinship act", that property could not be captivated by kinship, but instead that it was a commodity. Of course, the opposite was true as well, for every time property was

sold, or faced foreclosure, the implications for the kinship group, the heirs, was highlighted. Thus, it is not surprising that sales of land were often hotly contested in the courts by affected family members of the person who sold the land. Likewise, proof of any purchase of land lay demonstrating the validity of the purchase by tracing the genealogical roots or connections to the property and through it demonstrating the validity of the transference of ownership. Thus, land could escape neither its commodity character nor the fact that it was embedded into the kinship system. Consequently, in practice landownership was paradoxical, for the means of attaining land was through its character as a commodity, and yet the ultimate aim was decommoditize land in order for it to sustain the family identity and class position. In actual practice, the dual character of landownership (commoditization and a non-commoditized family patrimony) often expressed itself during the inheritance process, as a struggle within families to hold onto the property unit, on the one hand, even when it is not economically feasible to do so, and, on the other hand, to divide up the lands between heirs or to sell them. The struggle manifests itself in each family, and at each generational transition, differently; consequently, the property history of every family within the oligarchy varies a great deal.

How families accumulate and maintain land is related to specific family circumstances, as well as to larger political economic conditions during any given period. Few of the

traditional families have managed to hold onto traditional properties over the course of its entire generational history. In other words, the cases are very rare indeed in Salta in which one "family" has held onto one property every since its arrival into the area. Patterns of landownership over a number of generations depended upon a number of variables, such as the nature of the landholdings themselves (i.e., are they one legal holding or multiple holdings), the composition of the family at each generation (more simply put, how many children or heirs are involved), and the economic standing of the family, and of its individual family members. Family circumstances are dependent on multiple dynamic processes, which can shift from one moment to the next. For example, the economic standing of family members at the time of an inheritance is determined in part by the financial condition of heirs at the time of inheritance, and on whether the inheritance complements already acquired wealth, or is the only wealth individuals have; these factors will influence how land is handled and appropriated. Obviously, the corporate family identity tied up in a set of properties requires that the family not recur to the market to sell its properties, nor that it acquire property through the market, for lands thus acquired are properties of individuals and their heirs, and don't extend laterally the coheirs of the family patrimony.[8]

It is common, by the way, to find the properties of relatives clustered in specific areas; this is because very large landholdings were often concentrated in one area by the

ancestor who originally purchase the land. This is true of a number of families: the Toledo's around San Jose de Metan, the Cornejo's in Campo Santo, the Figueroa's in the southern part of the Valle de Lerma, the Patron Costas' in Tabacal, and the Michell Torinos in Cafayate. But this clustering often breaks up in two or three generations. Other families whose ancestors possess such large concentrations of land are not characterized by the clustering; thus, families like the Guemes', the Saravia's, and the Uriburu's have less of a tendency to cluster in a given region.

As mentioned above, the pattern of landownership is unique to each family; thus an overall pattern is difficult to assemble given the varieties of experiences and family histories which exist in Salta. I'd like to explore the case of one family, however, the Cornejo family. The family is perhaps not representative of oligarchic families (but no family is); it was, and continues to be, particularly large, with many members and connected to virtually all the other major families in Salta. It is perhaps not representative of the oligarchy as well because one of the branches of the family established one of the first truly capitalistic enterprises in the province, the Ingenio San Isidro, and was able to make the transition to a capitalist ownership pattern. Nevertheless, the family represents a good example because of its relationship to so many other families, and because its members were faced with many of the conflicts inherent in property ownership. The Cornejo family is often cited as one

of Salta's most illustrious and historically significant families, located at the heart of all of Salta's major genealogies. The family has also played a significant political role in provincial history; many members or relatives through marriage have held governor's chair, legislative chairs at the provincial and the national level, have occupied judicial and ministerial positions both nationally and locally. Perhaps the most unique feature of the Cornejo family was the nature of how it was founded, and the early and extensive composition of its holdings.

The Cornejo family (originally known as the Fernandez Cornejo family) did not have one Salteno patriarch, but rather, three. The most important was Juan Adrian, described by his descendants as a heroic figure, an explorer and entrepreneur, an aristocrat in the purest tradition, and a pioneer. He is often named as the first to introduce sugar to the Rio de La Plata region (Cornejo 1934). The actual date of his arrival in Salta is not clear, although it was probably during the early 1750's, nor are the resources he had prior to arriving in Salta clearly documented. Evidence suggests that Juan Adrian's father and uncle were powerful merchants, and perhaps colonial officials from Tacna, Peru, probably connected to the mining economy of Potosi. Cornejo (1945) does state that they were large <u>hacendados</u>. It is possible that Juan Adrian was familiar with Salta some time before actually settling in the province; he first purchase land here in 1752, and married in Salta in 1750. Some

confusion exists on these points because Cornejo (1934) states categorically that Juan Adrian settled in the province in 1767, with the express purpose of carrying out the expulsion of the Jesuits. There is no doubt that the relationships with relatives and business associates in Peru and the Upper Peru continued for many years after he moved to Salta. At least two brothers, and perhaps three, were established in the province with him, Pedro Vicente, Antonio, and Tomas (see Cornejo 1945). (Both Antonio and Juan Adrian purchased some of their landholdings from Tomas Cornejo, but there is no evidence that Tomas settled in Salta.)[9] Two of the brothers married into prominent local families; Juan Adrian married Clara de la Corte, who was a member of an important Jujeno family which belonged to the closely knit aristocracy of that city (Haigh 1968).[10] Antonio married Maria Teresa Castellanos y Arias Velazquez in 1751, who traced her ascent to two ancient families in Salta, the Castellanos and the descendants of one the original settlers in the province, the Arias Velazquez family (often cited as being the oldest living family in Salta today). Pedro Vicente, in contrast, married Maria Antonia Arduz, not of a recognized family in Salta at that time, and therefore, perhaps of Peruvian or Upper Peruvian extraction (Leiva n.d.:464) This would explain the fact that Cornejo (1972) does not include Pedro Vicente as one of the Salta founders of the family in his Genealogias, even though Pedro Vicente did own at least urban property in Salta (ABHS: Aimo).

It does seem evident that the Fernandez Cornejo family arrived in Salta with a measure of wealth, with which they were able to purchase their extensive properties. Evidence from various members' wills suggests that the wealth was derived from trade with the mining economy of Potosi, the source of wealth for other immigrant families at the time, including the Figueroas, the Gurruchagas and Moldes, and the Toledo Pimentels. In his will Juan Adrian does not make mention of any dote, which means that he probably did not receive properties from his wife's family. Records show furthermore that most of the land he obtained was purchased from different members of the Salteno and Jujeno elite (see Cornejo 1845). He also may have settled in Salta with already established extensive social and political ties, since his arrival was marked by a government appointments and rapidly attained positions in the local hierarchy and society: he was maestre de campo, a colonel, a member of Salta's cabildo, and he was appointed by the court in Charcas to carry out the expulsion of the Jesuits from the region, a job for which he presumably was compensated.[11]

Juan Adrian's brother, Antonio, also established a position among Salta's elite, and obtained extensive lands as well, but nevertheless he was overshadowed by his brother. His family was more numerous than Juan Adrian's. He established roots in the area known at the time as La Frontera del Rosario, located on the road between Tucuman and Salta. There he purchased several major estancias, including Yatasto

and San Antonio (ABHS: Aimo). Several of his children and grandchildren married Juan Adrian's descendants, binding the two families together, and providing a definitive family identity within Salta's high society. Many Cornejo descendants attained local renown; a number acted in the revolutionary struggles against Spain, others fought in the civil wars on the side of the Unitarios, and a number became governors, national and provincial legislators, and judges.

The extraordinary feature of this family was the amount of land both Juan Adrian and Antonio amassed, and the fact that the properties of each were concentrated respectively in single geographical regions. Juan Adrian's lands stretched across two provinces, from the Perico river to the north in Jujuy, the Siancas river (today Mojotoro) to the south, in the area east of Salta and Jujuy. This fertile valley had been barely populated at the time of their arrival, due to raids carried out by native communities. But the area had abundant irrigation, and was fertile. The reluctance to occupy the region was dispelled by the opportunities afforded by the expansion of the mule trade, which no doubt the Fernandez Cornejo's were involved in.[12] The expulsion of the Jesuits, whose missions had served as guardian forts on the frontier, was accompanied by an increase of military expeditions into the Chaco, several of which were led by the Cornejo's themselves. Thus, the threat of attack was somewhat mollified.

Juan Adrian attained his properties through a number of

means. Most of his properties were purchased, although he exchanged the central holding, San Isidro, by exchanging it for his title. Estancia Nueva (El Rey), a vast landholding, and now a national park, to the east of his Estancia San Isidro, was granted to Juan Adrian by the colonial government; the neighboring Estancia Cuesta was obtained in the same manner. He owned a number of urban properties in Salta as well. In all, Juan Adrian left a large fortune to his heirs, adding up to more than 33,000 pesos in 1800 (ABHS: Protocolos).

Juan Adrian divided his vast holdings between seven children. At the time of his death his properties included a house in the city of Salta, and a number of estancias, as well as other several debts owed him by relatives and other members of Salta's elite.[13] Partition did not necessitate that most landholdings be themselves divided, since several estancias or land units were involved. Only one land holding, Los Lapachos, was left to more than one heir; three children had acciones (rights) in the land. The central holding, San Isidro, was inherited by Jose Antonio, perhaps the most prominent of Juan Adrian's sons. He also received the Estancias Nueva and Cuesta (together the properties were valued at $5523 pesos). Estancia La Vina went originally to his son Gaspar, valued at $4521 pesos. Juan Jose was given a part of the Estancia El Lapacho. Maria Ignacia Cornejo de Goyechea (married to Lorenzo de Goyechea) became the owner of Las Lanzas, more formally known as Estancia San Lorenzo de Las

Lanzas. Maria Mercedes Cornejo de Figueroa, who married Apolinar Figueroa, son of patriarch Antonio de Figueroa, also inherited part of the Estancia El Lapacho, whose total value was measured at 9000 pesos, each heir receiving 3000 pesos. Maria Mercedes represented one of the fusions between the Figueroa and the Cornejo families. Melchora Cornejo also inherited part of the Estancia El Lapacho; she was single at the time, but later married Tomas Fernandez.[14] Francisco Maria Fernandez Cornejo inherited another of the central landholdings of Juan Adrian, the Estancia Campo Santo. The first generation of Juan Adrian's descendants thus continued to be associated with the Campo Santo area.

Perhaps the most successful of Juan Adrian's sons was Jose Antonio. Born in 1765, at an early age he became a captain of the militia that his father commanded. He moved rapidly through military ranks, including the command of a frontier fort. He also accompanied his father on several of his major exploratory voyages, such as the one down the Bermejo River in 1790, sharing, it seems, his father's entrepreneurial zeal. In 1810 he became a voting member of the of the cabildo (as Alcalde de 2do voto), and very soon afterwards became deeply involved in the revolutionary effort, acting as a revolutionary military commander, and in 1814, as military governor of the province. His prominent position led to his "election" in 1821, to the governorship, but he was rapidly deposed by a pro-Guemes (who was his nephew) faction. He was elected again to the governorship in 1834 as an

Unitario, and was again deposed, this time by Felipe Heredia, a Federalist. He was never exiled from Salta, however, as were many of his fellow party members, nor were his lands confiscated. This may be in part due to the fact that his family was related to both sides of the civil war factions. His son Mariano was married to Presentacion Latorre, daughter of Pablo Latorre, who deposed him in 1821 and who later became a leader in the Federalist cause in Salta. His nieces Juana Josefa and Juana Manuela (daughters of his brother Juan Jose) were married to Alejandro and Felipe Heredia respectively, who were also respectively Tucuman's and Salta's Federalist governors. Thus, despite political conflict between family members, Jose Antonio may have represented one of the key mediating figures between factions in Salta because of his kinship ties, sparing him many of the hardships others suffered during that period. He died in 1850 at the age of 85.

Jose Antonio married Maria Josefa de Usandivaras y Figueroa, grand-daughter of Antonio Figueroa, and Jose Antonio's niece by marriage (daughter of his sister-in-law's brother). The marriage produced twelve children, including one hijo natural (son born out of wedlock), and a son that died in infancy. Among the heirs, seven were male, and three female. At the time of his death, Jose Antonio continued to own the Estancia Nueva and the Estancia Cuesta, and San Isidro. He had also purchased a number of properties, including the Estancia Piquete de San Bernardo, bought in 1839

from heirs of the Sardina family, and Estancia Cienaga de Cachipampa, or Hornillos, purchased in 1842 from Melchora Corte, both located in the Campo Santo area (ABHS: Aimo A202, and Cornejo 1945:112). The inheritance presents us with some of the classic difficulties associated with inheritance within oligarchic families. Despite the extensivenes of his holdings, there were insufficient properties to be distributed equally to all heirs. According to valuation of his possessions carried out following his death, Jose Antonio owned $57014 pesos in assets at the time of his death, against $11603 which he owed in debts of various kinds, including debts to various sons and relatives (ABHS 1851, Expediente Judicial 13). His holdings were thus quite extensive. Among the lands and most valuable assets he held were included a house inherited from his father in the center of Salta (valued at $4500 pesos), two urban properties (valued at $250 each), a pulperia (store) rented to Manuel Tejada y Funez ($1376), the Hacienda San Isidro ($3060) which he had received from his father, the house on the hacienda ($2000), the Estancias Concepcion and Piquete de San Lorenzo ($4500 and $450 respectively), a piece of land in Campo Santo ($500), two pieces of land called Seibalito and Corral Quemado, ($100 and $50 respectively), Estancia El Palmar in Oran ($80), and cattle and 2009 head of cattle, 507 head of cattle under two years of age, 673 head under one year, 336 bulls, and 186 mares, all valued at $10271 pesos. Other valuable assets included the sugar processing equipment, and housing quarters

for workers. The partition of his goods were as follows: his wife, Maria Josefa Usandivaras, was given the house on the plaza in Salta, and the value of the fruit trees located on the Hacienda San Isidro, valued a total of $7329 pesos.[15] Gregorio Antonio received 1/3 of the rights to San Isidro, and rights to debts owed to his father, for a total valued at $7895 pesos. Telesforo also received moneys owed to his father, as well as cattle, and the larger part of Estancia de la Concepcion (located in Anta), for a total of $6936 pesos. Mariano received moneys owed to his father as well, and some cattle, and the smaller part of Estancia de la Concepcion for a total of $9222 pesos. Juan Nepomuceno received a third of the Hacienda San Isidro, and also other inheritance in forms similar to his brothers mentioned above, for a total of $4473. Domingo received primarily cash, moneys owed and cattle, and the Estancia del Piquete, for a total of $4231. Cornelia Cornejo de Figueroa received a similar amount in a similar fashion, except that she received the pulperia mentioned above, and rights to be paid by heirs of San Isidro. Agueda Cornejo de Saravia received one of the properties in the city of Salta, the property in Campo Santo, and moneys the heirs of San Isidro had to reimburse her. Adrian received a third of Hacienda San Isidro, as well as other species already mentioned ($4231). And Josefa received some moneys from the heirs of San Isidro ($3163 from that property, no small sum), for a total of $4231. One son, Francisco Benito, had already died, and the nine heirs decided to make a donation of $1000

to his widow, Juana Lopez, to be put toward their daughter, Urbana. The will makes no mention of Estancia Nueva, but according to Cornejo (in Patron Costas 1980) it was inherited by Telesforo.

Not all of Jose Antonio's children are equally successful. Gregorio Antonio and Adrian sold their rights to the Estancia San Isidro to their brother, Juan (ABHS: Aimo). Few records remain regarding property of Adrian. Gregorio Antonio, who married Melchora Figueroa y Goyechea, a member of the Figueroa family and Gregorio's second cousin, bought Estancia Betania, located in the Frontera del Rosario region, where many of Antonio's descendants continued to own properties (ABHS: Aimo). Melchora established the town of Rosario de la Frontera. Juan, in contrast, seems to have benefited greatly from the end of the civil wars in the province, and from the opening up of the Bolivian markets for Argentine beef during the 1860's and 1870's. He rapidly expands his holdings in the Campo Santo area. He also invests heavily in the sugar industry in the north, not only at San Isidro, but also in the new sugar mills at San Pedro and Ledesma, in the province of Jujuy. These enterprises were owned by Salteno families, among them the brothers Querubin and Sixto Ovejero, founders of the San Martin Sugar Mill, and Miguel Francisco Araoz, cofounder of San Pedro and Juan's brother in law. He purchased new bleaching and pressing machinery from England, and was active in the promotion of the sugar industry in Argentine agricultural expositions.

Nevertheless, sugar remained a relatively small activity until the end of his life. Juan married Azucena Araos y Usandivaras, and after her death, Hortensia Valdes y Gorostiaga, both members of established Salteno families. He died in 1880 following an accident in his sugar mill, in which his legs were severed.

Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain Juan's will, so it has been impossible to reconstruct the properties which he passed on to his children. He did buy two estancias, Pampa Larga and Chacon, in 1854 from Bailona Costas and Antonio de la Lema, and he bought another large property (1/2 league in length) from Felix Martinez in 1855 (Cornejo 1945:115). He also purchased from Melchora Corte the Estancia Hornillos (also known as Cienaga de Cachipampa). All these properties were located in Campo Santo, and apparently bordered San Isidro, thus extending the size of the holdings he already possessed. Either he or his heirs lost the Ingenio San Isidro, perhaps due to mismanagement, and that the mill and its lands were bought by Pedro F. Cornejo, a member of another branch of the family.[16] In 1883 the enterprise became a corporation, so that succession would no longer directly affect the production unit nor the working capital invested in it. His children, Julio Cornejo and Mercedes Cornejo de Figueroa, and their children and grandchildren own the company's stock today (Cornejo 1934:119). Juan had one child that lived from his first marriage, who owned the Finca Bordo de la Ovejeria in the Metan area, most probably purchased from

Juan's brother, Adrian (ABHS: ABHS: Aimo). He also had 10 children by his second marriage (Cornejo 1972). Many of his grandchildren were professionals, particularly medical doctors, engineers and lawyers.

Jose Antonio's other children encountered a variety of circumstances which are not necessary to elaborate here. One son, Telesforo, inherited the large Estancia El Rey. Married in 1843 to Mamerta Castellanos, the daughter of the revolutionary leader Pedro Jose Saravia, the union produced three daughters and three sons. The last daughter, Juana, inherited El Rey. I have yet to determine what the others inherited, but it is evident that the entire Estancia became her property. She married Manuel Araoz y Sola, son of a governor of Salta, Miguel F. Araoz, and their marriage produced five children, four sons (three who remained unmarried) and a daughter. Again, their daughter inherited the Estancia, and it was she who ultimately sold it to a family of English capitalists, the Leaches, who had purchased extensive landholdings in the provinces of Jujuy and Salta, including a sugar plantation, La Esperanza. Elena had married Daniel Patron Costas, who died at a relatively early age (Patron Costas 1980). Evidently his widow and her family were unable to make the Estancia profit, and bank foreclosures forced its sale.

It is not necessary to follow all of Juan Adrian's descendants to obtain a picture of the pattern of landownership in this family. At each generation, and in each

family branch, inheritance, the symbol of family continuity, is also a symbol of division. Variations in the pattern relating to economic factors or to family circumstances do occur. Juan Adrian's daughter Melchora, for example, dies without heirs, and therefore divides her properties between three brothers. This occurs a number of times in the family. Gaspar, another of Juan Adrian's heirs, marries Gertrudis de Medeiros, who inherited the Estancia Lomas de Medeiros (Patron) just west of the capital city; Gaspar is listed as owning that property. Francisco Maria represents a more poignant variation, one not uncommon however. He dies relatively poor (he leaves just over $3000 pesos), despite his inheritance and a donation of land made by the government. His heirs include six natural (illegitimate) children and one legal heir; the natural children are legally unable to inherit more than a third of his possessions (ABHS, Protocolos). After his death his wife, Catalina Feymayor, is sued by the family for infidelity and lack of responsibility in managing the estate of her son (ABHS: Expedientes Judiciales). This case is not entirely unusual. Another interesting case regards Casimira Cornejo, who married twice. The sons of her first husband sue her over their inheritance rights, fearful of greedy intentions by her second husband (ABHS: Expedientes Judiciales)

A number of points can summarize the cases seen above. The transference of land occurs through two primary mechanisms, each operating in a different domain: sale

(purchase) emphasizes the commoditized, alienable, nature of property, and yet is essential in the inheritance process; and inheritance is a process operating in the realm of kinship relations, and emphasizes the inalienable, non-commoditized nature of property.

Were one to follow the property histories of the female heirs as well as those of the male heirs (which would be is necessary were the study is to be complete) one would be confronted immediately with the amorphous character of the family, and the difficulty of drawing boundaries regarding who should and who shouldn't be included in family property histories. Also it is possible to surmise from what has been covered thus far that were all the heirs of any family to get equal amounts of land, properties would by now be miniscule. It is evident that if possible it is held onto by individuals through the course of their lifetime, and then passed on through the process of inheritance to heirs. This is not always possible; Salta's property histories are inundated by cases of foreclosures due to the inability of families to sustain themselves. Circumstances vary in regard to how easily it is to maintain a property within the family; often outside forces are the cause, such as the collapse of a market, or conflict, or other major factors. In the family the death of a spouse, business or other financial failures (Francisco Maria) can lead to these situations. Bernardo Frias speaks of various stories in the local lore about these tragedies; one of these is the Tejada family, whose members

were left impoverished or left the area. Patron Costas attributes the failure of the farm to his father's death. Salta's history is replete with such family tragedies. Inheritance itself may contribute to these failures: too little wealth and resources may be left to members of the family to sustain themselves; without outside sustenance or wealth this may lead to ruin. Women within the oligarchy are particularly vulnerable to these circumstances.

The second thing that is evident is that families do not provide land, with their patrimonial status; this character lies outside the "family itself". Somehow, a corporate character of the family has been extended to land: the principles of kinship which create the family is extended to land, but it is unable to overcome the commodity character of the land. This is what I wish to turn to at the end of the chapter.

The Genealogies of Land

A striking feature of the concept that the oligarchy expresses about land is that landholding have genealogies. Cornejo, for example, notes in his Historia de la Propiedad Inmobiliaria (1945) this very unique characteristic of land, and in his postscript in Patron Costas' (1980) book he calls the chapter "Genealogia de la Estancia el Rey". The placing of land in the realm of kinship and the family, and the equating land with kinship is surprising, perhaps more so because land does not, as we've noted above, resemble families

in their historical trajectories. Property histories do not parallel family histories, primarily because the rules that govern succession and descent in the family don't apply to land. As we already noted, landholdings are bound to their commodity (and means of production) status, and this is not even escaped when land is maintained within the family. In the process of inheritance, land is evaluated in commodity terms, expressing its alienability even at the moment in which family identity and solidarity are most evident. Of course, lands are also bought and sold, are lost to bankruptcy, and are bought in auctions. What then, is meant by this genealogical perception of land?

Examination of the concept of land genealogies becomes thus fundamental to understanding the importance and treatment of land within the oligarchy. Land, at least when speaking of prestigious large land holdings or important urban properties belonging to the great Salteno families, have in essence their own genealogies. Close readings of these land genealogies reveals that they are parallel to, but not equal to, family genealogies. Simple examples such as the Estancia El Rey demonstrate this. The genealogy begins with Juan Adrian, who is in this case (a rather unusual case) donated land by the colonial government; his son Jose Antonio inherits the land; his son in turn inherits the property without dividing it. The parallel breaks down, however, as Telesforo's daughter, who is married to the Manuel Araoz, inherits the property, and then in turn her daughter, a member

of the Araoz family and married to Daniel Patron Costas, inherits and then loses the property. Thus, the central criteria in land genealogies is land ownership, not kinship connectedness. Other examples are more complex, and may include purchase of land. Estancia El Bordo, for example, is inherited from Juan Adrian, her father. Her daughter, Gabriela Goyechea y Cornejo, inherits the property, and upon her death it becomes the property of her husband, Narciso de Figueroa y Toledo. He sells the property to Magdalena Goyechea de Guemes (the reasons aren't clear); her husband, Napoleon Guemes, inherits the land, and sells it ultimately to Miguel Antonio Figueroa. Lands do change hands; the actual space of any given piece of land expands, contracts and changes over time. Property ownership, whether obtained through the market or outside the market through kinship, serves as a connector and a point of continuity between individuals in the genealogy. In this regard, it is similar to family genealogies; they too serve as a means of connecting individuals and providing family continuity. Both land and family genealogies can be (and are by Cornejo) extended outward to include relatives not directly involved in the genealogy.

A number of points regarding land genealogies are of interest. First of all, upon close analysis, it becomes evident that land genealogies are not necessarily synonymous with histories of properties, and therefore, it is also clear that land genealogies are a particular social construct. As

we've already noted, land genealogies are not synonymous with family histories, since continuity of land within a family is rare.

Second, the genealogies of land seem to begin arbitrarily, at some point in which the land was owned by a socially significant (and significant in regard to kinship position) individual. The genealogy of Estancia El Banado, for example, begins with Antonio Figueroa, who owned it during the latter half of the 18th century. The genealogy of Estancia Castanares begins earlier, and actually has two beginnings, the Castellanos and Martinez de Tineo ownerships; Castanares, most interestingly, received its name from a previous owner, but this is not where the genealogy is begun. The genealogy of Estancia La Vina, furthermore, begins with its acquisition by Juan Adrian Fernandez Cornejo, an acquisition process which was complex, involving purchase, government grants, trade of title for land, and litigation with previous owners. All other land genealogies begin in a similar fashion. In this regard genealogies follow the pattern of kinship-based genealogies: significant ancestors are considered the "trunks" of families. Lands often take on the name of the family that owns them: Castanares, named after one of the owners (not the original owner), Potrero de Diaz, Lomas de Uriburu, are examples. Thus, it is often assumed that lands personify the families that own them, and provide the temporality, in longevity, of family patrimony. In most cases the original owners have been individuals who

arrived physically (in a spatial or territorial sense) and established a family name in the region closely interrelated with families of the same class. Land, like genealogies, has no clear-cut origins (see Foucault 1977), not even mythic ones. Land always existed, and always "belonged" to someone. Since land is spatially defined, and doesn't move, its beginning is defined by significant owners who also have significant connections to the historical consequences of Salteno society.

A third characteristic is that the origins of land genealogies do not, as one can see above, begin through kinship processes. As will be seen below, nor does the continuity of land genealogies necessarily follow the line of family descent. Land which acquires a social identity is, in most cases, purchased as a commodity. Antonio Figueroa, for example, purchased his property of El Banado from a public auction, after it had been confiscated from the expelled Jesuit order (Cornejo 1841:), as did a number of important personalities from that period. Both Martinez de Iriarte and Tineo pulled together their holdings called Castanares through purchase. Juan Adrian Cornejo we have already mentioned. Yet, in terms of actual property histories, the origins of ownership had to begin at the least at the time of grants by the crown to settlers in the region, if not back to the pre-hispanic period. There is no "real" beginning to property. And indeed, Cornejo does in many cases trace landownership back to at least the granting of <u>mercedes</u>, but always under

the recognition that it is a backward focus from a specific beginning point. At times he even discusses pre-hispanic populations. Thus, land which takes on a social identity closely tied to the identity of oligarchic families has as its "birth" commodity exchange. The parallels with family genealogies are not difficult to decipher: the arrival of the family trunk settling in the province, marrying into local families de arraigo, and thus presenting both a continuity and a beginning.

The trajectory of genealogies is also paradigmatic. Cornejo and others seem little concerned with whether properties "descend" in an orthodox manner, through family line, or outside that pattern, through purchase on the market. The energy devoted to "keeping a property in the family" does not seem a concern to the land genealogist. A property does not lose its character when it is alienated from the family which originally owned it. Indeed, other than the Estancia La Vina, no properties recorded by Cornejo (1941) continue to be owned by the members of the family of origin (and as noted above, this property too had been sold by the Cornejo family which had originally owned it, only to be recuperated later by another branch of that same family). His history of Estancia El Banado begins with a note of gratitude to Richard Leach, present owner of the Estancia, who permitted him to inspect previous titles to the land (Cornejo 1941). Other properties likewise are recorded in their commoditized histories. The concern, rather, is to connect the genealogy

to persons of significance, not only historically but also in regard to genealogical connectedness. Thus, regarding Estancia Pampa Grande, Cornejo notes that it was the property of the founder of Salta, Hernando de Lerma, General Alvarez de Arenales, who is connected actually with the foundation of the Uriburu family, the famous (or infamous) Uriburu family, which attempted to gain monopoly control of the provincial government in the 1860's (Revolucion de los Uriburu), and which later produced two Argentine presidents, and finally Indalecio Gomez, a Salteno who attained ministerial positions and prominence in the national government in the 1880's and 1890's. Other genealogical references are connectors between the present and the past; many are hardly described except with reference to who married them, and which children they bore. The connections are important, not the biographic fill ins.

Properties, then have genealogies, because the framework from which they work is kinship. Why? It represents in essence the extension by the oligarchy of the idiom of kinship to the realm of political economy. Property, in essence, is a philosophy, serving as a bridge between the family, its tendency toward corporate identity, its emphasis on continuity, and the political economy of the oligarchy: its economic base, its base of dominance. Property is analogous to the oligarchic family: it has a name, it has a "system or process of descent", it emphasizes continuity in contrast to the immediacy of commoditized entities, and from it the

individual derives both a kinship identity and a class identity. Property, in essence, defines the oligarchic family: it is both a class and a kinship group.

Endnotes to Chapter VI

1.Nor is it strictly a commodity in this regard, since it isn't the product of labor, but rather a natural resource.

2.Jeopardizing, of course, family solidarity, which the process of inheritance was supposed to strengthen. Inheritance is, of course, the "ultimate family act: a process based entirely on claims to family membership. But at the same time the commodity potential of the inheritance is realized.

3.This fact has an interesting theoretical twist. The raiding of archival materials, particularly in regard to land records, can be attributed to motivations which go beyond the interest in antiquities. It signals the lack of state penetration and control in the political economy of the province. Proof of ownership of land, in essence, could only be had by proving "right of succession", whether land was purchased or inherited. Thus, control of documents which "proved" this right guaranteed a persons legal ownership of the land. Until the setting up of the land registry office, there were no impartial measures of land transactions, the role the state would later play. Even after the land registry was set up, it would take years before many properties were registered.

4.As noted in chapter 3, colonial properties were of three types, distinguished by size and proximity to urban centers. These types were solares, or urban properties, quintas, or smaller farm-size properties surrounding the city, and estancias, the rural land grants.

5.This problem derives from the fact that ownership of land is ultimately held by individuals, not groups. It is therefore a conflict between individual interests and the interests of the corporate family. This was discussed more fully in the former chapter.

6.Gatti (1976), and Cornejo (1941) note, for example, that Isasmendi requested that the crown grant him a title and the mayorazgo. Buechler (1982) notes that in the Upper Peru a number of Potosino families did establish the mayorazgo.

7.Sola (1889:80) notes that sharecropping varied as well in terms of closeness of the landholding to the ferias (markets) or to the urban centers, the types of vegetation which occurred on the property, and the extension of the property. One way in which sharecropping differed was the days of obligation (dias de obligacion) of work which sharecroppers had to perform for the landowner.

8. This point was made, of course, in the previous chapter. But it is worthwhile elaborating on it. In speaking of "corporate family identities", we must necessarily speak of extended families. As noted, it is only through the mediating role of the parent that siblings in families have a corporate identity; this cannot be created by recurring to horizontal kinship ties. The point is important in the case of land, since it means that any land purchased by any individual will belong to the individual and his or her heirs; these do not those figured laterally except in extraordinary situations. Once an individual recurs to the market, the corporate strength is broken, and a new one, of course, is created, at least in regard to that particular piece of land.

9.Cornejo (1945:99) notes that Juan Adrian bought Estancia La Vina from Tomas Fernandez Cornejo in 1758. He notes was well (pp. 89) that this property was rented during Juan Adrian's lifetime to Juan Ortiz, also a member of Salta's elite. Antonio Cornejo bought the Estancia El Naranjo from Tomas in 1776.

10.Cornejo, for example, in his Genealogias de Salta, does not mention his name.

11.This may have strengthened his ties with the Salteno elite, for many families were benefitted by the expulsion. Among those were the Costas and Figueroa families, who purchased through public auction extensive land tracts which had belonged to the Jesuit order.

12.Documentation suggests that all three brothers made frequent trips to the Upper Peru, probably to drive and sell mule herds.

13.Among the debtors were his sons-in-law Lorenzo de Goyechea and Juan Antonio Usandivaras. I'm certain that the debts, which were listed in the will, were counted against the inheritance each of their wives received.

14.It should be noted that Cornejo (1941) does not list Melchora in his book Genealogias de Salta; a number of minor inconsistencies like this make the tracing a relationships very difficult.

15.She was entitled to a total of approximately $15000 pesos, but for some reason that I was unable to find explanation for, received only about half of that. It seems that some of that was voluntarily donated to her sons' estates, since each were by rights only to received $4231 pesos, and most received close to double that.

16.A descendant I interviewed told me that Juan's son in law was sent to England to buy machinery. While still in Buenos Aires he lost all the funds that had been entrusted to him in the casino. According to the descendant, this left the family broke, and it was forced to sell the ingenio. The anecdote was told to me in a bittersweet manner; my informant told me that his branch of the family had thus been deprived of its inheritance. It is true the Atilio Cornejo does not trace the descent of this son in law, although the reason he does not do so is not specified.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation explores the historical roots and social composition of a regional oligarchy in northwest Argentina. Salta's oligarchy emerged in the context of particular historical conditions and in a class structure which was located within the periphery of the capitalist world system.[1] Its character, its composition, the nature of class-based practice within the group, the mode of reproduction which provided it continuity were a product of this larger context. Nevertheless, the oligarchy constituted an identifiable social group with its own internal dynamics; in other words, its existence was not limited to filling a space opened by a larger system. Given the character of the oligarchy as a social group which played a role of dominance within a given class structure, it could only be concluded that the attainment and maintenance of power was at the heart of its social practice and constitution. It was, par excellence, a power group; the exercise of power within a particular class structure was at the heart of its social constitution. The exercise of power pervaded its social makeup, its mode of existence and reproduction. The nature of its power, however, was different from the dominant classes in a fully capitalist system. The most salient aspects of its power was that it was <u>hegemonic</u> and <u>localized</u>. By hegemonic is meant that at the local level its power was "absolutist",

shared neither with competing class interests, nor with a state structure which could hinder and limit the exercise of its power. Nevertheless, the power of the oligarchy was vulnerable to outside economic and political circumstances, and the lack of a state structure that could mediate its relations with other classes and with outside economic forces, and which could intervene and resolve internal schisms while permitting the oligarchy hegemony, was ultimately its weakness as well. In one sense the power of the oligarchy was absolute within the territory it claimed, and yet it was significantly powerless to establish its interests within the larger national and international context, and to resolve internal conflict. The internal contradictions in the system eventually led to the oligarchy's demise, as it was unable to establish unified and matured class interests, and proved vulnerable to both internal and external divisive forces. The contradictions in this form of power eventually allowed the penetration and dominance of capitalist relations of production to occur, as a defined capitalist class became the dominant and undisputed force in the province.

The oligarchy has not entirely disappeared as a factor of dominance within Salteno society, despite its eclipse by the arrival of capitalist relations in the province, and in fact it continues to make a deep impression on and flavor the social life of the province. The surnames of the old families continue to dominate the social pages of the local newspaper, street signs and public buildings, and of towns and locations

throughout the province. The Club 20 de Febrero continues is ostentatious existence, now not centrally located, but still a significant social emblem in the city. There exist still clearly ranked privileges which are rooted in name and family history. Schools, clubs, local confiterias, differentiate between sectors of Salta's society, and continue to perpetuate an image of caste-like divisions between Salta's classes. Marriages of the members of oligarchic families still make headline news. The downtown area residentially continues to be dominated by descendants of Salta's patrician families, although many have also gravitated to residential neighborhoods on the outskirts of the city. Perhaps most importantly is the fact that oligarchic-oriented history is still the undisputed universal history in Salta's society, taught as such in all the schools. The consciousness which Salta's society has of its traditional elite is deep; nothing is more telling than the effort a Salteño may make laying claim to an even obscure connection to one of Salta's traditional families. Thus, the traditional oligarchy continues to exist and deeply influence the social life of the city, although as a dominant group it has been transformed and eclipsed by a class system larger than itself.

This fact is interesting, not only because it provides an insight into the historical continuities of Salta's class formation, but also because it is enlightening in regard to the nature of power exercised by the oligarchy. It suggests, in fact, that the nature of power exercised by the oligarchy

was not so much a product of its class position, although this was surely a factor, as that its power was derived from domains other than class-based dominance. Otherwise the penetration of capitalism would have destroyed it, or relegated it to a secondary position. I have suggested in the dissertation that power was exercised in another domain which intersected with class, and that was kinship. It was kinship which both united the oligarchy as a hegemonic group, and which served as the medium for exercising power within Salta's society during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Thus, while the economic dominance of the oligarchy was displaced by the penetration of capitalism, kinship has continued to serve an important role the power structure. The history of the oligarchy illustrates the problem of "class" dominance that has been inherent in oligarchic power.

The oligarchy, emerged from a colonial class structure, following the destruction of the Spanish colonial state. The dominant class which emerged during the beginning of the 19th century, was a hegemonic class formation, one which emphasized local hegemony and control of regional state power, but which was nevertheless inescapably dependent of the larger national and international economic structure. This dependence and subjection to the larger system that created the need for "localized hegemony" rather than "class dominance". The dichotomy, hegemony/dependence, gave the oligarchy its particularly volatile and conflictual character. As a hegemonic class formation it appropriated the regional state

apparatus, to the degree that its own constitution merged and became confused with the provincial government itself. Control of the state apparatus permitted local control of political power, but hindered the ability of the state to mediate between oligarchic factions, which were products of internal schisms and outside economic and political pressures. The volatile character of the oligarchy demonstrated the inability of the oligarchy to resolve internal factions, and ultimately pointed to its weakness, as a regional hegemonic power, within the larger system. It was only with the establishment of a legitimized state structure, both at the national and at the provincial levels, that the state could mediate and minimize conflicts between oligarchic members and families. Ironically, this alienation of state power from direct control of any given faction of the oligarchy permitted the capitalist interests within the oligarchy to gain dominance within the group and within the province, leading eventually to the demise of the oligarchy. It also provided the conditions which permitted the expression of class based interests of rural and urban proletarians and other classes. Thus, class formation within the province became, by the early 20th century, much more clearly defined, and the expression of class interests gained great maturity within the local context. Local hegemony was sacrificed for the stability and more clearly defined class interests that integration with the larger peripheral class structure permitted. The oligarchy, as a social expression, was eclipsed by an agrarian capitalist

class. Nevertheless, it did not disappear entirely, as any Salteño will note emphatically, and still occupies a position within the makeup of provincial society.

Capitalist Penetration and the Oligarchy

In 1983 I attended the funeral of one of Salta's most prominent contemporary personages, Carlos Maria Patron Costas. He was the grandson of the founder of Salta's largest and most important capitalist enterprise, the Ingenio San Martin del Tabacal. He, as his father and his grandfather before him, had played prominent political roles in the province and in the nation. He was a member of one of the most well known and prestigious families of Salta. His great grandfather, Robustiano Patron, had immigrated into the province from Catamarca, and after marrying a member of one of Salta's older and more established families, had formed a new dynasty, the Patron Costas, within the traditional oligarchy. Thus, the great grandson whose funeral I attended lived at the very core, or center, of the remnants traditional elite who persisted in Salta.

The funeral spoke of the prominence of the dead man. Attenders at the funeral were numerous, representing the most prominent of Salta's elite. The governor and members of his administration, as well as the ranking military figures stationed in the area, were in attendance. The funeral was performed at the central altar of Salta's cathedral, an honor given only the most eminent members of local society, and it

was officiated by the Archbishop. Later, the funeral occupied a central place in Salta's only newspaper, a paper which had often spoken critically of the oligarchy.

But more than the deceased's prominence and prestige were displayed at the funeral; it was also a display of symbols representing the continued significance of the oligarchy in Salta. The deceased was dressed in full gaucho regalia, boots, wide pants (bombachas), embroidered jacket, and the traditional poncho traditionally associated with Salta's caudillo Güemes, and particularly with the tragedy of his death.[2] The dress is symbolic of the potential of every oligarchic estanciero to become a caudillo, to defend his own political and family space even against the state. Not only were members of Salta's most traditional oligarchic families present, but a number of peasants and peones (rural workers), sharecroppers and long time employees of the deceased man, stood in the crowd, conspicuous in their ragged clothes and their mestizo features, many also dressed in gaucho clothes. This ironic identification with the subordinate classes, an expression of patronage, is also a traditional oligarchic characteristic. As the ceremony in the cathedral ended, the coffin was placed in a hearse, and escorted to the cemetery by a fortin, a band of gauchos which emulated the bands of gaucho warriors of the past. Their presence spoke of the gauchos who fought in the forces of their patrones or caudillos in the many battles of the 19th century. At the cemetery, the body of the deceased was placed in the family

crypt, located in a prominent location in the cemetery, and speeches of the most prominent members were read. This burial, I was told, was the most illustrious one could hope for in Salta.

The funeral attests to the staying power of the oligarchy and oligarchic tradition in Salta. The association of the deceased with the traditional oligarchy is obvious. But he had also clearly belonged to the capitalist class, a member of the family which owned the largest capitalist enterprise in the province. The funeral in fact illustrates the nature of capitalist penetration into the province. Capitalism neither displaced nor destroyed the oligarchy; rather, it appropriated and incorporated oligarchic social relations into its own reproductive structure in the province. Why is it that capitalism, in its penetration into the region, did not destroy the oligarchy?

That the oligarchy embraced capitalism, even at the cost of loosing local hegemony, isn't surprising. As noted in the preceding chapters, the oligarchy has always been paradoxical, its kinship structure designed to exclude other classes from access to oligarchic membership, and yet porous, penetrable, to entrepreneurs and new sources of wealth, especially those which come from outside of the province. Indeed, the character of the oligarchy included appropriating, or internalizing within its own constitution, new resources or wealth which came into the province. In a sense the oligarchy was, by its very nature, more preoccupied with maintaining its

power than in preserving the social relations of production which provided it with its economic base. This characteristic allowed the oligarchy to maintain local hegemony in the face of changes in the relationship of the region to the larger national and international economic context. The absorption of these new sources of accumulation made the oligarchy vulnerable to being internally transformed, but guaranteed its continued hegemony despite changes in the larger context which it was powerless to stop or influence.

In Salta's case, the emergent capitalist class generally appeared as immigrants brought new sources of wealth, resources, and networks into the province, and married into the oligarchy. The merging of capital and traditional kinship networks within the context of a transformed state provided the context for the success of this new class. The process of capitalist penetration attests to the oligarchy's power to absorb and internalize incipient competing power groups, but also to the indefiniteness of its class character.

The presence of the oligarchy deeply influenced the trajectory of the capitalist penetration in Salta. Oligarchic control of the state apparatus provided capitalist entrepreneurs such as the Patron Costas, Ovejeros, and Michel Torinos great protection in their entrepreneurial activities, and access to resources they would likely have not had the situation been different. Salta's impoverished oligarchy enveloped these new entrepreneurs, and formed clusters around them, dependent on these new sources of wealth. Quickly

capitalist entrepreneurs gained economic and political dominance within the province by drawing on extensive family ties and on the kinship and symbolic resources which had traditionally been the sources of oligarchic power.

While the penetration of capitalism deeply transformed the oligarchy, it also paradoxically preserved its traditional character, reifying it. The traditional family character of the oligarchy was drawn upon as a resource by the emergent capitalist class, subtly but deeply changed in its relationship to the means of production. It was the emergent capitalists who placed emphasis on tradition, invigorated the traditional clubs and associations such as the Club 20 de Febrero, investigated and published family histories and genealogies, and set up programs to preserve the "traditional" colonial flavor of the city. The dualism was expressed materially as well, as many capitalist entrepreneurs purchased traditional haciendas which provided labor and other resources for their plantations (see Gatti 1977 and Whiteford 1981). Capitalism was thus built on the foundation laid by the oligarchy, providing it a distinctive character, progressive yet traditional, entrepreneurial yet conservative.

So the oligarchy remained, now reified, its ownership of past appropriated by a capitalist structure. As a social group the remnants of the oligarchy experienced deep internal differentiation. The family domain, while still important, is no longer the basis for reproduction of the relations of domination. In recent years, new entrepreneurs have emerged

which no longer aspire to belonging to the traditional class, and which directly compete with members of the oligarchic remnant for power and wealth.

Thus, today Salta's capitalist class is closely identified with the traditional oligarchy. Old names merged with new, creating age-old names within the capitalist class. The staying power of this group is amazing; it speaks to the power of this group in its appropriation of the past and of time. It also speaks to the lack of competing power groups which could have served to incorporate and symbolize the capitalist class. The inability of other classes to arise and provide a competing force speaks to the depth of oligarchic roots and hegemony in Salta.

Historical Dimensions, Historical Dilemmas and Kinship Practices:

This study attempts to combine elements of both an ethnographic and a historical analysis. As historical anthropology, it attempts to incorporate a time dimension, or a historical dimension, into the study of a social group. There are, in my opinion, at least two dimensions to historical anthropology. On the one hand this approach must incorporate history, the past, into the study of a social group, in this case the oligarchy, in order to understand the forces that formed and reproduced this group. This is by no means a new concept within anthropology, and, particularly since the 1950's and the impact of Leslie White's

materialistic approach, the need for a historical or diachronic perspective in anthropology has been seen as almost essential. In this sense Salta's oligarchy existed, in more precise terms, from the beginning of the 19th century to the approximately the middle of this century. The oligarchy could be described "objectively" (based on empirical or historical information) as a cluster of families in a regional economy which controlled the major authoritative and allocative resources within the territory in which they exercised hegemony. The task of historical anthropology in this regard is to trace the forces and conditions which led to the formation of this group, the modes of power which permitted the oligarchy to exercise hegemony, and the conditions which ultimately led to the demise of the oligarchy. This has been the primary focus of this study.

But there is another dimension to historical anthropology which, I think, is more difficult for the social analyst; this includes the effort to trace not only how social groups or societies evolve or progress, but also how they incorporate time, or the past or history, into their structure of practice and, in the case of the oligarchy, into the structure and exercise of power. This dimension derives from the realization within anthropology (in relatively recent writers such as Bourdieu 1972, and Fabian 1986) that time itself is a social construct, and that social groups incorporate time into their social constitution and practice.[3] Societies, or groups within societies, construct and define the past and the

time dimension, and incorporate it into their present practices, doing so in different manners. As Giddens (1981) notes, social practice or agency embodies within itself a conceptualization of the social nature of time. This is particularly evident in groups such as the oligarchy, for at the very heart of oligarchic identity lies heart tradition, historicity, the appropriation of the past as part of its constitution of power.

As we have noted, the ability of the oligarchy to appropriate society's past was based on its kinship practices, and the capacity of the kinship system to express and incorporate the past into present practice. Kinship, as Bourdieu (1972) notes, has the ability to bind space and time, and to become, in Gidden's (1981) terms, a "storage container" of the past. Kinship practices in Salta have served as the medium for expressing class relations and defining class power in Salta, and for maintaining a distance between classes. Kinship is a universal idiom in class society; the fundamental structures of kinship generally are shared by all classes, and cut across class lines. It is an idiom accepted by all of society, and thus structures based on this idiom generally are legitimized by it. It is not kinship structures which differentiate classes, but rather kinship practices. Bourdieu (1972) notes that kinship is something people make, and with which they do something. "...it is only when one records these (affinal) relationships as a fait accompli, post festum, as the anthropologist does when he draws up a genealogy, that

one can forget that they are the product of strategies (conscious or unconscious) oriented towards the satisfaction of material and symbolic interests and organized by a reference to a determined set of economic and social conditions (Bourdieu 1972:36)." Thus, while the idiom of kinship is universal, kinship practice differentiate between various classes in Salta, and serve to reproduce each class differently. The particular character of the oligarchic kinship practice is that it binds and incorporates not only the particular histories of various member families, but also it appropriates societies past, as the histories of oligarchic members become society's history. Oligarchic kinship practice embodies time; one only has to look at the importance placed on <u>appellido</u> (surname) and the emphasis within the oligarchy on double surnames to confirm this. It is also obvious in the construction of <u>linajes</u> and genealogies which are pursued so avidly by members of the oligarchy. Thus, since kinship serves as the primary idiom of practice for the oligarchy, and is a dimension in the nature of oligarchic power, it must be concluded that the appropriation of the past is central to the reproduction of relations of power. Time as a social construct is thus expressed in oligarchic kinship practices.

It is this dimension of historical anthropology which needs further pursuit, particularly in the study of ruling groups and elites. But the study of historical constructs presents some difficulties for the ethnographer, who is trained neither to deal with historical documents, nor to deal

with not only a diachronic approach, but more specifically, an approach which took time or history itself as the subject of study. Perhaps anthropology lacks the appropriate tools, both methodologically and conceptually, to incorporate history into its social analysis, or into an ethnographic approach. Historical anthropology must deal not only with the past, but also with each historical moment as a "present," a social moment which provides the context for social action. Is it possible to speak of a historical ethnographic approach in which each historical moment is also a "present"? The question has implications in the study of the oligarchy when, for example, the issue of when the oligarchy recognized itself as an oligarchy, and when dominant families within a class structure ceased to be simply families, and began being a self-conscious power group, is raised. Was it back when the "oligarchy" came into being (in a political economic sense), or relatively recently, when the an emergent capitalist class appropriated the identity of the oligarchy and attempted to reify it? The question doesn't merit further elaboration here; the struggle to incorporation of the historical dimension into my social analysis is evident. The broader issues this raises, such as how does one carry out the ethnographic enterprise in a manner which truly includes a time dimension in it, calls for further exploration. The greater use of historical documentation is perhaps one of the most important implications of this issue. It becomes clear, as one applies an ethnographic approach, that

historical documents represent not only storage containers of information, but storage containers of time. Thus, what historians might normally consider to be secondary sources, historical works written by members of society, become in themselves texts which can be analyzed as containing concepts of the past an of time.

In short, I believe that the merging of the study of time and history into the ethnographic approach continues to be an area of challenge in anthropological methodology, and it merits greater attention and perhaps the development of new conceptual frameworks which allow us to incorporate the time dimension into social analysis.

Endnotes to Chapter VII

1.In other words, the oligarchy is not a universal type of class which emerges during certain stages in the development of capitalism. I would go further, in fact, and state that all class formations are products of very specific historical circumstances, even the capitalist class; the development and "progression" of any given mode of production is not a "given", but is created as well as a product, of human activities within the constraints of a particular context. This aspect of Marx's theory is perhaps overlooked when looking at universalizing characteristics of capitalism. This note is not to say that there isn't an underlying logic, with its consequences, within capitalism, which influence the outcome of class dynamics.

2.The poncho, a tightly woven woolen blanket with an opening in its center, was worn over the shoulders. Ponchos were worn by all gauchos, because of their all purpose function. They served as blankets slept in at night, they provided warmth, and shielded from the rain. They also served as a shield in knife fights. Salta's traditional poncho is red, with black lines; it is believed that Güemes wore a black poncho, which was stained red by his blood at the time of his assassination. Thus, the wearing of the poncho refers not only to the gaucho, but specifically to Güemes and all he stood for.

3.No less important, it also emerges from the recognition that "our historicity"(as social historians), or historical reconstruction, also involves an interpretation which includes a time framework, which governs and molds our interpretation.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Revolutions between 1821 and 1864

The following represents a compilation of the "revolutions" which occurred in Salta during the "Civil War Period". It is important to note that it represents only successful revolts against provincial governors; there were many others who were not successful. The point is that, with the exception of occasional breaks, during this period the Salteno countryside was caught up in an almost constant state of conflict. The period was thus a time of ferment for Salteno society. The list begins with the death of General Guemes, but as was noted in Chapter IV, internal conflict actually begins almost immediately following the May Declaration in 1810. The list includes bits of information about various participants in the revolts, which have been gleaned from a number of sources, but principally from Cornejo (1938). While this list is only a sketch, it should be noted little is written in general on this period, and even less so on the nature of the conflicts which characterize it. Thus, the following list must be recognized as fragmented, and to an extent, an interpretive effort from very sketchy sources.

1821 (June) Following a conspiracy, General Guemes is assassinated by Spanish forces which infiltrated into the Capital. The party opposed to Guemes, the Patria Nueva, assumes power, and its leader Juan Antonio Fernandez Cornejo (Guemes' uncle) is named governor. Cornejo is owner of the estancia Campo Santo, and belongs to one of Salta's largest, wealthiest and best connected families. Cornejo had fought the Spanish under Guemes' command.

1821 (Nov.) Juan Antonio Fernandez Cornejo is overthrown by supporters of the deceased Guemes, belonging to the Patria Vieja political party. Among the instigators of the revolt are Pablo de Latorre, Guemes' sister Macacha, and his widow Carmen Puch de Guemes. de Latorre owns extensive lands in the southeastern department of La Frontera, and the Puch family (who also support the revolt) also own lands in the area (Cadena de Hessling 1977).[1]

1826 General Juan Antonio Alvarez de Arenales, who had been elected governor in 1824, is overthrown immediately after his reelection. Pablo de Latorre is the principle instigator of the revolution. Arenales, a Spaniard by birth, fought in the national forces against Spain, married into the local criollo elite; his wife was Serafina de Hoyos. He owned the extensive Estancia Pampa Grande,

located in the southern extreme of the Valle de Lerma. Jose Ignacio de Gorriti is elected governor, and several of the revolutionaries are executed.[2]

1830 Juan Ignacio de Gorriti, priest and brother of Jose Ignacio, is deposed by a revolt following his reelection. He was first elected in 1829. General Rudecindo Alvarado is named governor. Alvarado is a prominent landowner and military figure; he played an important role in the war against Spain under San Martin, travelling with him to Peru. His extensive lands are located in the department of Guachipas, in the southern part of the Valle de Lerma. The principle instigators of the revolt include Pablo de Latorre, Felipe Ibarra, governor of Santiago del Estero, and Arias, governor of Tucuman.

1831 Alvarado is overthrown, and Francisco de Gurruchaga is named governor. Instigators again include Pablo de Latorre, Jose Francisco de Gorriti, Pachi Gorriti, and Governor of Santiago Ibarra. Ultimately, however, the caudillo from La Rioja, Facundo Quiroga, instigates the revolt by threatening to invade and to intervene in the province. Francisco de Gurruchaga is the son of a Spanish merchant who located in Salta during the late colonial period. The Gurruchaga and Moldes families were Salta's largest merchants during that period, and were known to deal directly with Cadiz rather than with Porteno middlemen. At the outbreak of hostilities in 1810 most of the family's members retreated to Cordoba, but Francisco, along with Col. Estaquio Moldes, remained in Salta and were active in the revolution. It should be noted as well that the two Gorriti's who took part in the revolt belonged to the same family as Juan Ignacio and Jose Ignacio, but nevertheless took different sides in the conflict. It is one of several cases in which families are split by the civil war.

1831 Gurruchaga is overthrown by a revolt, and Pablo de Latorre becomes governor. Before he can assume the seat, Napoleon Guemes (brother of Martin Guemes) usurps the governorship. de Latorre then invades the capital, and deposes Guemes. Col. Pablo Aleman, related through marriage to de Latorre, is named governor on an interim basis. During his tenure the Gorriti, Puch and Guemes families are declared "outside the protection of the law," and are forced into exile in Bolivia, along with many other prominent Salteno families. Aleman was a neighbor <u>estanciero</u> to the Puchs, Gorritis, and Guemes in the department of La Frontera.

1832 A revolt is launched by the emigres from Bolivia. The leadership includes Napoleon Guemes, Domingo de Puch, and Pachi Gorriti. They succeed briefly in subverting de Latorre's troops after being taken prisoner, but ultimately fail after one of their party, a member of the Nadal family, is killed. The survivors flee once again to Bolivia.

1834 A revolt organized in Jujuy and backed by Salta's exiles in Bolivia, overthrows de Latorre, following his unconstitutional reelection. De Latorre is assassinated in prison under very dubious circumstances. Jose Antonio Fernandez Cornejo is named interim governor.

1836 Cornejo is overthrown by invasionary forces from the provinces of Tucuman and Santiago del Estero, under their respective governors, Felipe de Heredia and Ibarra. These acted as allies of the Saravia family. The Saravias own estancias in the departments of La Frontera, La Candelaria and Anta. This branch of the Saravia clan allies itself to the Federalist cause, although many aspects of their government suggest it may have been for convenience. Another branch of the same family, which includes the famous independence heroes Apolinario and Pedro Jose, are strong Unitarios, and are exiled with other non-Rosistas. The genealogical relationship between the two branches is unclear. Alejandro Heredia, brother of Tucuman's governor, is named governor, and Rosas is named supreme protector of the province, legalizing his intervention in internal affairs of the province.[3]

1838 Heredia resigns, as his position becomes untenable, due primarily to opposition from regional powerholders. These include Figueroa, from the department of La Frontera, Reunda from Campo Santo, and Toledo from the department of Metan. Manuel Sola Tineo, described by Cornejo (1938) as a neutral candidate, is named governor. A coalition, called the League of the North, is formed to oppose Rosas, and a number of Salta's Unitarios spur an effort to fortress the province from Rosista intervention. Several prominent families are involved in this effort, including Cornejo, Saravia, Zerda and Ruiz de los Llanos.

1840 Sola abandons office following the collapse of the national Unitarian movement under General Lavalle. Lavalle flees through Salta on his way to exile in Bolivia, but is killed in Jujuy. A large party of

exiles precede him or accompany his remains, including many of Salta's prominent Unitario families. Miguel Otero, a Federalist and an estanciero from La Frontera, assumes the governors chair. The assumption of Otero marks the beginning of a 13 year period of domination by one branch of the Saravia family.

1841 Otero is deposed by a revolution and driven to Bolivia. The principle instigators of the revolt include Gaspar Lopez and Dionisio de Puch. Manuel Antonio Saravia comes to Otero's rescue, and places him back in office. In 1842 Saravia is elected governor.

1844 An invasionary force from Tucuman, led by the Salteno Evaristo de Uriburu, briefly deposes Saravia. Francisco Ortiz briefly takes office as governor. In retaliation, upon regaining office Saravia confiscates the possessions of Uriburu's wife, who is the daughter of General Alvarez de Arenales, including the enormous Ampascachi and Pampa Grande estancias. Uriburu is also listed as a major cattle rancher in Oran, in the northeastern part of the province, and an early promoter of the sugar industry.

1853 Jose Manuel Saravia, who has shared the governorship with his brother in what Cornejo (1983:193) calls a clear case of nepotism, is overthrown by a coalition of forces which invade from Tucuman. The intervention is order by President Urquiza, who commissions Bernardo de Irigoyen to carry it out. The Salteno Pedro de Uriburu leads the coalitionary forces. Tomas Arias is named governor.

1853 Antonino Taboada leads a revolt against Arias, who flees to Jujuy. Roque de Alvarado, governor of Jujuy, then restores Arias to the governorship.

1853 Jose Manuel Saravia invades from Tucuman with the help of that province's governor, Celedonio Gutierrez. The invasion is ultimately defeated by the forces of Aniceto Latorre.[4]

1860 Salta's governor Anselmo Rojo is forced to resign due to his support for the national party of General Bartolome Mitre. Jose Maria Todd is selected to take his place. The underlying conflict is often interpreted by Salteno historians as a local version of the Urquiza-Mitre conflict (see Caro Figueroa 1976).

1861 Jose Maria Todd abandon's office, and Rojo is again named governor.[5] Todd had backed Urquiza's candidacy, so was swept away with the latter's fall.

1864 Juan Nepomuceno Uriburu is overthrown by his nephew Jose Uriburu in a thinly veiled attempt at nepotism. The latter is quickly deposed by provincial forces, and Segundo Diaz de Bedoya is named interim governor.

Endnotes to Appendix

1.As is noted in chapter 4, the Puch family and Pablo Latorre soon part ways. Latorre eventually sides with the Federalist party in Salta, and with Federalist governors in the neighboring provinces of Tucuman and Santiago del Estero. Latorre will be assassinated in prison in 1836. Most of the Puch family, and the Gorriti family, to whom they are related through marriage, side with the Unitarios, and will be exiled to Bolivia during the Federalist reign in Salta of the Saravias. Pachi Gorriti, however, sides with the Federalists, and thus the family splits between brothers. The possessions of the two families are confiscated by the province at the time of their exile, and the two families disappear from Salteno history.

2.Gorriti was the son of a Spanish immigrant who had made a fortune in the mule trade. The Gorriti clan owned extensive lands in the department of La Frontera, and were closely linked through kinship ties to both the Puch and the Guemes families. The Gorriti's fought under Guemes against the Spanish. Jose Ignacio Gorriti was the provincial representative to the confederate congress of Tucuman which signed the declaration of independence in 1816.

3.In order to do this, the provincial constitution had to be revised to allow non-Saltenos to serve as governor. In effect, the revisions permitted any citizen of the Argentine Confederacy to serve as governor.

4.Aniceto is Pablo de Latorre's son, but is an avowed Unitarian. Thus, he defeats a one-time major ally of his father's.

5.Todd is the son of Americans. As he abandons office, he place's the governor's scepter in the arms of Salta's patron saint, the Virgin of the Miracle, rather than relinquishing the office to an opposing party. The event is mentioned at the beginning of chapter 4.

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