



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Faculty of Natural Resources and
Agricultural Sciences

What about women's representation?

– A case study of Bolivian horticulture markets in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the political representation of Bolivian women

Anna Ioannou

What about women's representation?

– A case study of Bolivian horticulture markets in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the political representation of Bolivian women

Anna Ioannou

Supervisor: Örjan Bartholdson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences,
Department of Urban and Rural Development

Examiner: Kjell Hansen, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences,
Department of Urban and Rural Development

Credits: 30 HEC

Level: Second cycle, A2E

Course title: Master thesis in Rural Development and Natural Resource Management

Course code: EX0777

Department: Department of Urban and Rural Development

Programme/education: Rural Development and Natural Resource Management – Master's Programme

Place of publication: Uppsala

Year of publication: 2019

Online publication: <https://stud.epsilon.slu.se>

Keywords: Migration, women's leadership, horticulture markets, Bolivia, Argentina

Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences
Department of Urban and Rural Development

Abstract

This master thesis explores the organization and representation of Bolivian communities in Argentina, as well as the social and political role of Bolivian women. Empirical evidence from a case study of Bolivian communities in two Bolivian horticulture markets outside Buenos Aires, Argentina, reveal how Bolivian women, even though responsible for the main tasks within the markets, are underrepresented in the markets' political sphere. Through nuancing how Bolivian salespersons narrate their social positions in the Argentinean society, in relation to the state and the society at large, and why Bolivian women are underrepresented in leadership positions, this thesis offers a discussion of how discrimination often is enacted by structural positions that turn into but also constrain everyday actions and routines, at the same time as being discriminated can enhance a group's potential to hoard opportunities.

Keywords: migration, women's leadership, horticulture markets, Bolivia, Argentina

Acknowledgements

My deepest gratitude lies with all the people I have spoken to in the Bolivian horticulture markets. Although not mentioned by their real names in this thesis I will always remember them and be inspired by their life stories and their willingness to take of their time to contribute to my research.

I also want to thank everyone who have offered their advice and shared their knowledge in order for me to conduct my research and finalize my thesis. Örjan Bartholdson, Tomas Krotsch, Leopoldo Rodriguez and all of you who, even though not mentioned here, I remember with gratefulness.

A special thank you to Pedro Aboitz, without you this thesis would not have been possible. I am forever thankful for your rich knowledge and experience of Bolivian immigrants and their horticulture markets in the Argentinean context. Your passion and willingness to share inspire!

Finally, on a more personal note, I want to thank my family, my Granit and my friends for giving me love, support, and maybe most importantly; laughter. You have made my field study and the writing of this thesis so much easier!

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Theoretical framework.....	7
<i>Durable inequality, scripts and local knowledge</i>	7
<i>Masculine domination, doxa and symbolic violence</i>	7
<i>Practical consciousness, routinization and structuration</i>	8
Method	8
<i>Qualitative studies and interviews</i>	8
<i>Analyzing the empirical data</i>	10
<i>A reflexive perspective on my position as a researcher</i>	10
Thematic background.....	13
<i>Perceptions preventing women from becoming leaders</i>	13
<i>Bolivian women's relatively weaker contextual knowledge</i>	13
<i>Bolivian immigrants' situation in Argentina</i>	14
Empirical results.....	15
<i>Two Bolivian horticulture markets in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires</i>	15
<i>Becoming a "socio" and the exclusion of Argentineans</i>	17
<i>The role of the president</i>	19
<i>Bolivians' explanations for why women are not elected presidents as often as men</i>	23
Discussion	25
<i>Argentinean authorities' discrimination of Bolivian immigrants</i>	25
<i>Intra-market masculine domination as a consequence of discrimination</i>	27
<i>The importance of local knowledge</i>	29
<i>The potential in being constrained by social structures</i>	31
Conclusion.....	32
References.....	33

Introduction

National borders, except from defining geographical and administrative boundaries, define who is welcome into a country and who is not, and on what conditions (Pizarro, 2016). In turn producing and excluding immigrants (ibid.), giving them the status of foreigners, often associated with weak formal rights and exploitation in the host societies (Benencia & Ataide, 2016; Adhikari, 2001).

Immigrant women risk being multiply discriminated¹, invisible and stigmatized not only due to them being migrants, their class and ethnicity but also as women (Magliano, 2009; Pizarro, 2016). Structural gendered perceptions of women often personate them as caretakers of the children and the household, whilst men are assigned to a more public and political role (Bourdieu, 2001; Mallimaci Barral, 2011; Heilman, 2001). These perceptions and the marginalization of women in the political sphere exists both within and between groups, the latter seen in how Argentinean public officials, beyond their racist discourse of Bolivians in general, describe Bolivian women as weak, passive, dependent and fragile (Magliano, 2009). Such imagined characteristics of a population can also be embraced by the mistreated, as the self-hatred amongst some European Jews (Hobsbawm, 2013), African Americans in the US (Gilroy, 2000) or, as will be seen in this study, Bolivian women's narrations about themselves.

The situation of Bolivian immigrants in Argentina offer an interesting example of how discrimination also can generate potential for a collective identity to grow stronger (Tilly, 1999). Having migrated to Argentina since the early 1900s Bolivians are today one of the largest immigrational communities in the country (García, 2011; Bastia, 2017), during which they have come to dominate some of Argentina's economic sectors, such as the production and commercialization of fresh vegetables and fruits (Benencia, 2011, García & Lemmi, 2009). In the early 2000s more than a third of the people working in the horticulture sector of Buenos Aires were of Bolivian origin² (Benencia, 2011). Their success within the sector however have been parallel with experiences of being exploited by Argentinean citizens and authorities, in turn motivating Bolivians to take collective action and initiate their own alternative breadwinning channels (Pizarro, 2008). New horticulture markets, founded and managed by Bolivian communities, have become one of the most common nodes³ for commercializing horticulture products in the country (Benencia, 2011). These new Bolivian markets

¹ *Discrimination* is in this thesis defined as the intended or unintended negative special treatment of individuals or groups, due to them being connected to certain generalized traits (c.f. Salentin & Heitmeyer, 2018).

² *Bolivian origin* is in this thesis defined as people born in Bolivia or with Bolivian parents (cf. Benencia, 2011).

³ The other two main nodes for commercializing horticulture products being the Central Market of Buenos Aires and the main hub markets (Benencia, 2011).

prove how experiences of discrimination have motivated Bolivian communities to take action and initiate their own sanctuaries within the Argentinean society, in turn enhancing their collective strength against Argentineans and their authorities (Pizarro, 2008).

Originally founded and dominated by male Bolivian immigrants these markets have later on experienced a development of feminization, in which women have taken over the responsibility of the market's main activity; that of selling the horticulture products (Benencia, 2011; Pizarro, 2008). Still this gendered transformation has not occurred in the market's political sphere; the top-management position and the decision-making is still highly dominated by men (cf. the section *Empirical results*; Pizarro, 2008). Proving how the feminization of the Bolivian horticulture markets is not as strong as previous studies make it seem (see for example Benencia, 2011).

Research problem and research question

The aim of this master thesis is to explore why Bolivian women are underrepresented in leadership positions in the associations that organizes and represents the Bolivian horticulture markets in Argentina. This is accomplished through a case study of Bolivian communities in two Bolivian horticulture markets outside Buenos Aires, Argentina, in which I explore how the Bolivian salespersons narrate their social positions, in relation to the Argentinean state and the society, how the markets are organized and represented, as well as social and political roles of Bolivian women. My thesis offers a discussion of how discrimination often is enacted by structural positions that turn into but also constrain everyday actions and routines, at the same time as being discriminated can enhance a group's potential to hoard opportunities. The large Bolivian community in Argentina makes it important to deepen the knowledge of how they narrate their social position in the country. Furthermore, understanding the reasons for why Bolivian women are underrepresented politically can generate a change in how issues of gender are prioritized in relation to ethnicity and class in general but also when dealing with the Argentinean state (Magliano, 2009; Bastia, 2017).

In the next section I intend to present the main theories I have chosen in order to theorize my empirical data. The subsequent section presents the research design of my study, describing how the data was collected and analyzed. Followed by a background presenting previous studies of female leadership and mistreatment of Bolivians in Argentina. I then present my empirical results of how people in Bolivian horticulture markets narrate their social positions, the management of the markets and the role of women. Followed by a discussion in which I elaborate on why women, in spite of being the main sellers, are underrepresented in the market's leadership positions.

Theoretical framework

Durable inequality, scripts and local knowledge

When discussing the treatment of Bolivians in Argentina, as well as how Bolivians counteract in order to deal with the situation, I will elaborate on Charles Tilly's theory of durable inequality (1999). According to Tilly inequalities that last from one social interaction to the next does not correspond to individual traits but rather categorical differences based on gender, ethnicity and other such socially organized groups of distinction (1999). Durable inequalities often have dominating groups that economically and socially exclude or marginalize other groups. Meanwhile those who are excluded or marginalized reproduce these distinctions. (Tilly, 1999). This was seen for example in the categorization and marginalization of African Americans in the US where the racial apartheid politics in the former confederate states excluded African Americans, thus forcing them into a specific category, enhancing their collective African American identity (Blackburn, 2011). The degree of inequality within categorical pairs depends on two things: the level of *local knowledge* participants in the social relations deploy and the *scripts* available for such relations. Local knowledge extends from understandings of a context after long-term residency whilst scripts are rules or routines. Hence, local knowledge gives necessary flexibility within the established limits or scripts. (Tilly, 1999).

Masculine domination, doxa and symbolic violence

In my discussion of the social structures within the Bolivian markets I will draw on Pierre Bourdieu's (2001) theory of the distinction between genders, specifically masculine domination. The creation and maintenance of gender distinctions is a prime example of *doxa*; how we in a specific social formation accept and perceive inequalities as natural, even though they are creations of configurations of actions within human-made formal and informal institutions. The doxa of the masculine domination is an effect of a gentle invisible *symbolic violence* that is exerted through the creation, communication and cognition of specific social structures; in turn creating the distinctions of the dominant (men) and the dominated (women)⁴. Hence the asymmetric structures of symbolic violence need to be recognized and perceived as natural by a majority of both the dominating and dominated, making them reinforce and reproduce these structures through their actions and perceptions. (Bourdieu, 2001). Transforming masculine domination often both needs for the social structures and

⁴ I am aware that there are people who define themselves as neither male nor female. I have in this thesis chosen to solely refer to these two genders as this is done by Bourdieu himself (2001). Note however that I believe most of the arguments I put forward in this thesis are applicable on genders not categorized as male and female.

the very notions of masculinity and femininity to be challenged. The first stage of such acts of emancipation are to turn the gender distinctions from merely being doxic to a discursive level (Giddens, 1984; Lovell, 2003).

Practical consciousness, routinization and structuration

Although Bourdieu (2001) to some extent allow for agents to be creative and modify social structures experienced as doxa, such possibilities are always to some extent limited (Inglis, 2012; Lovell, 2003). This can for example be seen in his emphasis on social structures becoming part of one's embodied disposition (Bourdieu, 2001). Therefore, I will also take help from Giddens (1984) when discussing existing, but also changeable, social structures within the Bolivian markets. In a critique of structuralist scholars Giddens argue for a theory that put an end to the distinguishing of agent and structure (1984). Such a theory of *structuration* makes it possible to analyze how action and structure proceed from and are dependent on each other, understanding social structures as continuous flows of agents' actions that are neither consciously and reflexively motivated nor unconsciously determined by autonomous structures (Giddens, 1986). Rather, in Giddens' theory of structuration social structures originate from the repetition of actions that just "go on" without the agent thinking too much about them or being able to formulate them discursively, in other words actions that occur in an agent's *practical consciousness* (1984). It is the repetitiveness and the *routinization* of such day-to-day, not reflected upon, activities that create the structured properties of social life, at the same time as they are part of reproducing the constraining frameworks that are embodied in normative and coded rules (Giddens, 1984).

Method

Qualitative studies and interviews

To learn how Bolivians narrate their social status in the Argentinean society and why women are underrepresented in the associations organizing and representing Bolivians I have conducted fieldwork in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires, Argentina. As I only had 10 weeks available in the field I narrowed down the study to focus on the highest management position, that of the president, in two Bolivian horticulture markets. These two markets were practically suitable exemplifying cases of Bolivian immigrant communities in Argentina as one of my informants had worked with these markets for several years. In my first visit to the two markets this informant accompanied and

introduced me to the people working there, making it possible for me to conduct the following visits independently.

During my visits to the two markets I interviewed 18 people working there about their family situation, how they came to Argentina, reasons for them to start working in the Bolivian horticulture market, the management of the markets, the presidency and the role of women. I spoke to ten men and eight women of various ages between 22 to 55 years old. All of them were born in Bolivia or had parents born in Bolivia except three of the men who were born in Argentina and had parents born in Argentina. Some of them had a large space, *puesto*, for selling their produce, a fridge and a truck whilst others did not. The first people I spoke to were chosen based on their age, gender and the economic status of their *puesto*. The latter being relevant as people with different socioeconomic status might have divergent perspectives of women's leadership and the management of the market. Subsequently I spoke to people whose characteristics and *puestos* differed from and complemented those of my previous interviewees.

Even though the interviews were conducted in the markets during the mornings, described by the workers themselves as the best time for me to talk with them, the interviews were sometimes interrupted by a customer. These interruptions created a variation in the interviews' duration; the majority lasted for approximately 30 minutes, the longest for almost an hour and the shortest 20 minutes. As I visited the two markets several times it was possible for me to, if necessary, complement previous interviews. Hence some of the shorter interviews have been extended with further information from interviews conducted at a later visit to the market. My understandings retained from these interviews were deepened by participant observations of everyday life within the markets (cf. Oskarsson, 2017c). I also observed a meeting for one of the market's members in which representatives from public institutions and academia also attended.

In order to further triangulate and enrich my understanding of the narratives given by the people working in the Bolivian horticulture markets I spoke to two public officials working in two Argentinean governmental agencies (in line with complementary triangulation as described by Oskarsson, 2017c). As the officials' main area of work was rural development and food security they had frequently met with people from the Bolivian horticulture markets, thus making them suitable informants for me to learn more about the Argentinean authorities' perspective and influence on the management of the Bolivian horticulture markets and Bolivian migration.

As I wanted in-depth narratives from people working in the markets I used the qualitative method of open-ended semi-structured interviews (Oskarsson, 2017b; Silverman, 2015). This method's

adaptability to unexpected findings was helpful as I was not sure what I would learn from the empirical results and wanted to have an inductive perspective on the relationship between theory and data (elaborated below in *A reflexive perspective on my position as a researcher*) (Silverman, 2015).

I used an interpreter during all interviews as I am not fluent in Spanish. In my first visit to the markets the interpreter was born and raised in Argentina, whilst I had a Bolivian interpreter during the rest of my visits. This latter interpreter, born and raised in Bolivia, having a Bolivian Spanish accent and being familiar of Bolivian customs seemingly made the Bolivians in the markets more relaxed and talkative compared to when I had the Argentinean interpreter. Each interview was followed by a small summary by the interpreter, providing an additional perspective as well as richened my understanding of Bolivians working in horticulture markets in Argentina. Especially the summarizes given by the Bolivian interpreter, having experience and knowledge of Bolivian culture and customs, made me aware of hidden meanings in the Bolivian narratives (in line with the importance Hanson (2003) put in understanding the tailored meanings of speech when trying to grasp the world of others).

All summaries and interviews were recorded in order to avoid the unnatural silences caused by too much note taking. Having the empirical data recorded also made it possible for me to re-listen to the interviews and double-check quotes, narratives and uncertainties with my interpreter long after an interview had taken place.

Analyzing the empirical data

The technique of explanation building was used in order to analyze the empirical results. I began examining the similarities and controversies within the data which I later attempted to make sense of by using theoretical concepts that provided the best explanation for what I had perceived in the field (Oskarsson, 2017d; Latour, 2005; Hansen, 2017). It was important to critically scrutinize my pre-understanding and -assumptions (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009), revise the assumptions and examine my empirical data again and again from different explanatory perspectives until I found the best fitting interpretation. Making it so that the final explanation and concepts best agreeing with the empirical data are, to some extent, different than in the beginning of the explanation-building process. (Hansen, 2017; Yin, 2009).

A reflexive perspective on my position as a researcher

It is inevitable that my position as a researcher and being classified as a *gringa* (Western foreigner) affected how people interpreted my presence, responded to my questions and chose to exclude or highlight in their narratives (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998; Silverman, 2015). Using an interpreter for

all my interviews probably enhanced such modification of narratives. Open-ended questions were asked in an attempt to encourage an open and undistorted communication (Silverman, 2015), increasing the interviewees possibilities to elaborate on their perspectives as much as possible and diminishing the risk of them excluding and highlighting their narratives.

Phenomenology inspired me during my field study as I aimed to rely on how people themselves narrate, understand, experience, feel, engage in and make sense of things around them in order to comprehend their perspective (Jackson, 1996). Trying not to substitute people's own narratives with my own pre-field study theoretical knowledge I applied an inductive perspective on the relationship between theory and data (cf. Latour, 2005; Jackson, 1996). This meant that I did not have an already decided upon hypothesis of concepts for the data analysis before having encountered the field (cf. Latour and Woolgar, 1986). For example, if a Bolivian woman during an interview explained that female presidents in the markets have become more common I avoided substituting this with the theoretical concepts of *feminization* or *woman empowerment*. Instead I tried to link such narratives to concepts, other than what was expressed by the interviewees, later on in the research process when conducting the final analysis of the empirical data. This inductive approach made it easier for me to avoid manipulating the narratives for them to fit specific pre-set concepts; instead allowing a search for concepts fit to explain the empirical data. (Latour, 2005; Bryman, 2012).

I further believe, in line with a phenomenological perspective, that we are not fully conscious and self-aware but rather do things semi-consciously (Inglis, 2012; Silverman, 2015; Jackson, 1996). We do things without thinking too much about them, most of our actions are habits and "just happen" (Inglis, 2012). People are therefore generally not aware of everything around them; gender relations, relations of authority and subordination are experienced as natural and unavoidable (ibid.). Hence, attitudes and how we explain life might not always be the same as actions (Jackson, 1996; Silverman, 2015). I therefore chose to complementary triangulate my interviews with observations from a meeting for the members of one of the markets, as well as everyday life within the markets. I found it useful to gather data by observation (Silverman, 2015), allowing for a focus on movements and actions, complementing the exploration of perceptions, experiences and narratives (Hansen, 2003). Thus, even though not fluent in Spanish, it was possible for me to observe what people actually do in the markets; the unpacking and carrying of products, the purchasing and selling, participating in and conducting meetings. These observations have deepened my understanding of the management of the Bolivian markets, complementing my previously described semi-structured interviews with the

people working in the markets and the two public officials (in line with complementary triangulation as described by Oskarsson, 2017c).

Being a researcher, and more importantly human, makes it impossible for me to ever really know “reality” as any person’s interpretation of it is always undertaken from a certain point of view. It is therefore impossible for my research not to be influenced by the constraints of my history, my pre-set theoretical knowledge and the contingencies of my situation. (cf. Jackson, 1996). Being Swedish, woman, a university student, not fluent in Spanish and having spent only ten weeks in the field inevitably affected how I experienced, understood and made sense of my chosen research problem, interviews, transcripts, notes and observations (Inglis, 2012; Mauthner & Doucet, 1998). It has also made me take decisions during interviews about which questions to ask, which issues to follow up and which to ignore, thus shaping my empirical results to follow my own analytical thinking. (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998). Hence, in line with a hermeneutic perspective on interpretations, my preunderstandings of Bolivian immigrants and women leadership, together with my theoretical knowledge, have interacted with what I have seen in the field (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). This has resulted in that I, during the research process, have been going back and forth between my prior and newer understanding (ibid.). Similar to Hansen’s argument that most interpretations of empirical data collected from fieldwork are inspired by previous knowledge gained outside the actual field setting (2003), making past experiences the starting point in the moment of interpretation (Hansen, 2003; Frykman & Gilje, 2003). I therefore don’t claim my conclusions offer a single Truth about Bolivian communities and women leadership as my interpretations are inevitably affected by my own frames of reference (in line with hermeneutics as described by Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Instead I aim to explore, share experiences and ideas, compare results and find common grounds with other scholars in order to critically examine the various realities we generate (cf. Jackson, 1996; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). I hope for my descriptions and interpretations to offer new perspectives and understandings (cf. Latour & Woolgar, 1986; Jackson, 1996; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009), complementing present set of literature and giving inspiration for future studies.

Thematic background

Perceptions preventing women from becoming leaders

Important traits for a leader to possess varies with the values of a society or an organization, the nature of the task and traits of those being led. Nevertheless, some scholars have attempted to summarize characteristics of good leadership. Eagly (2007) for example emphasize the ability to vary between a negotiating, discussing style of leadership to a quicker, more direct decision-making style, depending on what is required in a certain situation. Studying female leaders in the US she found that women have greater difficulties becoming leaders, compared to men, even though they are associated with higher performance in such positions (ibid.). Similarly, Heilman's (2001) literature review point out how gendered stereotypes makes it difficult for women to take over leading roles which previously have been dominated by men. Stressing how perceptions of women as kind, helpful, concerning and sympathetic, whilst men are perceived as aggressive, forceful and independent, make people resist women's authorities as the presumed female traits are not in line with expectations of a leader (ibid.). Because one is only an effective leader if others accept one's leadership such gendered stereotypes create challenges for female leaders that men do not face (Heilman, 2001); women are considered as not tough enough to succeed, incapable of building helpful relationships and being accepted in influential networks (Heilman, 2001). Such presupposed gender barriers to representations have also been seen in migrant societies of Argentina. For example Bastia (2017), having studied immigrant Bolivian, Peruvian and Paraguayan women's leadership in grassroots organizations in the urban areas of Buenos Aires, found a gendered difference in how these people framed women's and men's leadership and political participation. The presented narratives tended to, similar to those in my empirical results below, identify men as leaders and public speakers whilst women were connected to practical, rather than political, tasks of the community (ibid.).

Bolivian women's relatively weaker contextual knowledge

Even though the process of Bolivian immigration to Argentina varies it seems to be mostly men who initiate the migration, often immigrating to an area where they have relatives or friends, and establish themselves before they are followed by their wife, sister, mother or other female kin (Benencia *et al.*, 2016; Mallimaci Barral, 2011). This gives Bolivian women, relative the men, less knowledge and experience of the new context as well as weaker social ties among both the migrants at large and to the society outside the migrant community, as well as less access to information, which in turn can affect their relative ability to yield profits and privileges, both for themselves and their community (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bartholdson, 2017; Timberlake, 2005). When describing the

evolvment of the Bolivian market in Escobar, in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires, Pizarro makes it clear that having contacts and being aware of all the laws in the area is important (2008). Those elected to run the administration of the market in Escobar had been chosen as they were long-term residents of the area and perceived to have strong contextual knowledge (ibid.).

Bolivian immigrants' situation in Argentina

There exists a common sense amongst Argentinians that their ancestors are white, European and different from other Latin Americans. The Argentine immigration policies have historically also been openly xenophobic towards regional immigrants, conceiving them as undesirable foreigners who increase the unemployment index, the number of criminal cases and the health system crisis. Furthermore, the discourse of Argentinean media and public officials have stigmatized Latin American immigrants (Bastia, 2017; Benencia & Ataide, 2016), in which racial classifications of Bolivians are constructed in contrast to the white subject of Spanish/European ancestors (Benencia & Ataide, 2016). This contributes to the exploitation of immigrants, such as formal and informal devaluation of their labor and wages (ibid.). Public officials have also had a specific discourse of female migrants in which they have been perceived as weak, passive, dependent and fragile (Magliano, 2009). Female migrants thus risk becoming multiply affected, invisible and stigmatized not only due to them being migrants, their class and ethnic origin but also as women (Magliano, 2009; Pizarro, 2016).

It was first in 2004 that the Argentinean immigration policy was radically changed and social rights (within health, social security, education, housing) between immigrants and citizens were equated (Pizarro, 2016; Benencia & Ataide, 2016). Despite these formal legal changes exclusion and unequal social relations between citizens and immigrants persists (Benencia & Ataide, 2016; García & Lemmi, 2009). García and Lemmi describe how the exploitation of Bolivians in the Argentinean horticulture sector continue as they do not know their formal rights nor how to enforce them (2009). Pizarro's study of a Bolivian community in Escobar, Argentina, show that marginalized and harassed Bolivians feel that they have not received any support from Argentinean authorities, in turn motivating them to strengthen social bonds and interactions within their own networks (Pizarro, 2009).

Empirical results

Two Bolivian horticulture markets in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires

My first visit to a Bolivian horticulture market was on a Friday morning in early February. It was a small market with approximately 20 sellers in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires, Argentina. During all my visits to this market, let us call it market A, I tendered to enter through the smallest of the three entrances. It was so small that only one hand-pushed trolley could enter at a time, making the two other larger openings, one on each short-end of the rectangular warehouse, highly necessary.

When I visited market A that Friday summer morning the two larger entrances were blocked by trucks from which men were unloading wooden boxes reading "Citricos de Salta", "Frutas de Mendoza" or "Peras de Rio Negro" in bright colors of red, blue and green. The scrambling noise from the hand-pushed trolleys was dampened by a radio playing tunes of reggeaton and bachata. Soon the men had emptied their trucks and all the boxes were stacked on top of each other in the different *puestos*, spaces, of the various family-owned business. The daily supply of fresh fruit and vegetables had arrived and the women were sitting ready by their small cashiers waiting for the first buyer. Hence, the selling could begin.

Customers started to arrive shortly after nine, most of them wanting to buy products to sell in their own horticulture-shops in nearby cities. A tall man with a pony-tail walked through the market with a piece of paper in his hand, supposedly the shopping list. He headed directly for one of the further in *puestos*, seemingly very certain of what and from who he was going to buy. After having bargained with and paid the Bolivian female seller two male workers – who I later learned were the Bolivian woman's husband and son – started to load boxes of fruits and vegetables onto one of the oval trolleys.

After driving for approximately one hour that same afternoon I arrived at another Bolivian horticulture market, market B. Also a warehouse, similar to that of market A, with concrete walls and floors, although more than three times larger in both volume and number of sellers. To avoid being overrun by a *changanín* and his⁵ trolley caution was crucial when walking along the corridors of this market. I could hear the irritation in their voices when shouting at the *gringa* (me) standing in the way of them pushing their trolleys.

⁵ Out of what I have been told, seen and read (Pizarro, 2008), the *changanín* men. However, one must be aware of the possibility that there in some markets exists female *changaníns*.

In one of my visits to the smaller of the two markets, market A, I saw Sara⁶, in her early 20's and one of the youngest sellers, cutting off the rotten parts from yesterday's lettuce. This was an attempt to polish them up for yet another day in the market as Sara's family could not afford a fridge to keep their produce fresh longer, similar to most families in the two markets. Another thing the sellers in the two Bolivian horticulture markets had in common was that most of them were women (in line with Pizarro, 2008; Benencia, 2011).

When talking to the Bolivian men and women about why they started to work in these markets I learnt, in line with Magliano and Mallimaci Barral (2015), how the majority of the women used to work and live somewhere else. Most of them came to the market and its location only after having married someone who was already there. Pablo, a Bolivian in his late 50's, confirmed that it is mainly the women who move after marriage. Perhaps explaining why the *feminization* of the selling in the markets is a relatively new development (as argued by Benencia, 2011), even though women are described as better sellers than men: "Women are not as direct. Men go directly to the customers and ask what they want, women are politer." (Sara, Bolivian in her early 20's). Víctor Hugo, Bolivian in his late 20's, told me that "[w]omen are more in charge of selling because they are more responsible with the money, whilst men do the working and heavy lifting.". Bolivian women were often referred to as in charge of the business in the market at the same time as being head of the households and main caretakers of their children;

"Women are heads of the households because they are more capable at the overall administration. They can manage a business better than a man; they can negotiate prices, sell better, sell a lot and organize everything in the business. Women are capable to manage the business all by themselves and make it grow."⁷

(Frederico, Argentinean in his mid-30's married to a Bolivian woman)

These narratives of who is a suitable seller and who is not are clearly connected to what is socially represented by one's body. In which men are described as straight forward and direct in nature whilst women are soft and passive, revealing the existing *doxa* within the Bolivian communities and their markets (cf. Bourdieu, 2001). This division of male and female traits affect people's perceptions of

⁶ To achieve anonymity the informants are not called by their actual names in the thesis.

⁷ This quote reminds me of what I mentioned earlier in the method's section of how my presence might make interviewees highlight or downplay different aspects of their narratives (cf. Mauthner & Doucet, 1998; Silverman, 2015). Women's strength might have been highlighted in Frederico's narratives, and/or downplayed in others', due to my presence as a woman, *gringa* (western foreigner) or researcher. Such highlighting/downplaying in narratives might be unconscious or conscious. (cf. *ibid*). As phenomenology inspired me during my field study and when conducting my interviews, I have aimed to respect and describe people's narratives, rather than believing I can distinguish such highlighting/downplaying and find an overall "Truth". Instead I have attempted to triangulate the narratives given to me, as I have understood them, to compare my results and find common grounds with other scholars (cf. Jackson, 1996; Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009).

men's and women's ability to succeed in certain tasks, seen in how Sara believe women and their “natural” politeness make them better sellers than men. Or that successful presidents are described with perceived male traits deemed more suitable for external, official, public, dangerous and spectacular acts of representation and honor whilst female traits are deemed as damp and private, suitable for domestic and hidden work (Bourdieu, 2001, and further elaborated in the section *Bolivians' explanations for why women are not elected presidents as often as men*).

Becoming a "socio" and the exclusion of Argentineans

To access a *puesto* and be allowed to sell in market A you must be a *socio*, a member, of that market. Only then can you participate in meetings and decision-making. Formally anyone can become a *socio* but in practice you or your parents have to be born in Bolivia⁸. To participate in meetings and decision-making in market B you also have to be a *socio* although in this market, compared to market A, there are sellers who are not *socios*. These *non-socios* can rent a *puesto* and sell their products but are not allowed to participate in the decision-making or the administration of the market.

The Bolivians described their markets as legacies, to be passed on to future generations and kept within the Bolivian communities. Like previous studies Bolivian experiences of being marginalized and mistreated by Argentineans motivated the creation of market A and B (cf. Pizarro, 2008). These are also the main reasons for excluding non-Bolivians from becoming *socios*;

"Everyone can take part of the [market], principally. But we kind of agree on the fact that Argentineans are problematic, entitled, always want to be right and that they are discriminative against Bolivians. This is why we in the market do not want Argentineans here. Even if principally everyone can be part of it."

(Ana, Bolivian in her early 40's)

"Bolivians used to be very exploited here in Argentina and in the Central Market⁹. (...) As a force we started helping each other. (...) As long as you are from Bolivia it is fine. I like the integration between Bolivians; we have been fighting every day for 15 years to make it better. We want to give a better future to Bolivians, want our kids to have better opportunities."

(Edwardo, Bolivian in his 30's)

⁸ As is true with most Bolivian horticulture markets in Argentina, according to Benencia (2011).

⁹ The Central Market in Buenos Aires is the main official fruit and vegetable marketing center in Buenos Aires and in the country. Read more about the Central Market here: <http://www.mercadocentral.gob.ar>

Drawing on his experience of working with the Bolivian migrant communities the public official Mateo gave a similar description of their situation in Argentina;

"Many Argentines think Bolivians are taking what is [Argentines'] and Bolivians are blamed for things going wrong for Argentines. Many Bolivians therefore start creating their own chains of commerce. (...) In big markets the Bolivians do not win. People try to take advantage of Bolivians".

(Mateo, public official)

These statements show how dividing Argentines and Bolivians into socially organized binary groups justify Bolivians' exclusion of Argentines from the markets, as well as Argentines' negativity towards Bolivians (cf. Tilly, 1999).

Edwardo's quote above reveal how the exploitation of Bolivians have strengthened their collective identity and made it possible for them to hoard the opportunities available in the Bolivian's own chains of commerce; the Bolivian markets (cf. Tilly, 1999). That there exists a strong collective identity within the Bolivian markets is also mentioned by the Argentinean Federico;

"They are all pretty much family in the market; cousins, aunts, brothers, sisters. Javier's wife and my wife are cousins. Javier and Raul are brothers. You bring your family to the market if you manage to have space here. (...) Even though I know them, [the Bolivians in this market], since I was little, having moved to [the location of this market] when I was 12 and lived amongst the fields where Bolivians work, it was still a little bit hard for me to be accepted."

(Federico, Argentinean in his mid-30's married to a Bolivian woman)

Federico's difficulties to be accepted, despite having lived in the same area for several years and being married to a Bolivian, give evidence of the strained relationships between Bolivians and Argentines. It was therefore not surprising to hear of other Argentines' difficulties to get hold of a *puesto* in the Bolivian markets. Tomas, one of the few Argentinean *puesto*-owners in the two markets, described how the president of the market had repeatedly declined his requests for a *puesto*;

"It is a Bolivian market and they have preference for [Bolivians], they are priority. I had a hard time getting a *puesto* in the market. I asked the president [of the market] many times but heard that there were none. I then heard from a Bolivian friend that this person was leaving the market so I went to the president again and, because of the perfect timing, I managed to get this *puesto*."

(Tomas, Argentinean in his early 30's)

Tomas' story can be compared to how Hector, a Bolivian in his mid-20's, got hold of a *puesto* in the same market; "[t]o get a *puesto* you have to ask the secretary of the market if there is one available. If not they put you on a waiting list and they call you when there is one available. (...) This is how we

got this *puesto*, they called us.". Hence, the Bolivian Hector was put on a waiting list after having asked once whilst the Argentinean Tomas was never put on such a list and only managed to get a *puesto* in the market due to perfect timing. These different experiences reveal how Bolivians try to exclude Argentineans from their markets; that these markets are for Bolivians. Whilst the Central Market of Buenos Aires was described by the Argentinean Tomas as a market "where a lot of Argentineans work and [it] is more of an Argentinean market.", in which the Bolivians I spoke to had experienced exploitation¹⁰.

Coming as a Bolivian immigrant to Argentina and experiencing how you are negatively treated by the residents but also by authorities and public institutions, such as the Central Market, makes it clear why you might want to found independent Bolivian communities and markets within the Argentinean society. In line with the Bolivian narratives presented by Pizarro (2008) the founders of market A and B used to sell in the streets but initiated the markets after having experienced harassments, robberies and complaints from locals and authorities. The attempt of the Bolivians to exclude Argentineans from the opportunities and advantages of being a *socio* in the horticulture markets prove how exploited and marginalized groups can, through categorization and the hoarding of opportunities, have the potential to rise (cf. Tilly, 1999). Making a distinction between *socios/non-socios* and Bolivians/Argentineans has allowed for Bolivians to collectively strengthen their livelihoods and representation (cf. *ibid.*). As was expressed by the Bolivian Eduardo during a meeting of *socios* in market B; "[t]he [community] is stronger if we go as a group to the municipality when we have issues". Representing the community when dealing with authorities is also one of the main tasks for the presidents of the Bolivian horticulture markets, as is further described below.

The role of the president

Even though the administration of the two Bolivian horticulture markets vary in size they both have a president, a secretary and an accountant. As already stated in the methods section my study will only focus on the top-management position of these markets – the role of the president.

Being president is described as an unpaid honor position, something all *socios* have to do and as Brenda, a Bolivian in her mid-40's, stressed "[b]eing president is a rotary thing. It is not something to be happy about, it is an obligation.". Accordingly, no one I talked to in the two markets wanted to become president as it is believed to be time consuming and involve a lot of responsibility.

¹⁰ As was described in Eduardo's quote on the previous page.

"The choosing of the president (...) [is] a voting process where we have a box and write down candidates on a piece of paper. [The *socios*] are allowed to write down three people and then we vote out of these people. We do it all in one meeting. (...) It is possible to be chosen more than once but there has to be someone else in between. (...) The commission consists of the president, vice president, secretary and the treasurer. They always make joint decisions. If they have to buy something, build something, hire someone for construction or such the president might make mistakes if he would do this himself. The four people in the commission make decisions and share the responsibility together because people can make mistakes."

(Edwardo, Bolivian in his 30's)

The president's management of authorities

Even though market-related decisions are made jointly by the whole administration the role of the president is described as the key position. Ana, a Bolivian in her early 40's, pointed out the importance of the president to function as a representative for the market when dealing with authorities; "(...) the responsibilities are greater, you have to take care of people's complaints (...) to the municipality or other authorities.". Also mentioned by Pablo, a Bolivian in his late 50's; "[t]he responsibilities of the president are to solve the problems of the community, for example representing the community to the municipality. (...) If there are problems between people in the market [the president] is a part of this as well."

The importance of the president when dealing with authorities was also confirmed by Santiago, a public official working with the Bolivian markets; "[w]hen we go to speak with people in the markets we talk to the president. We search for the highest authority. (...) We get better results talking to them.". Raul, a Bolivian in his mid-40's who used to be president in one of the markets, told me about the importance of having good relationships with the authorities; "[being president] is easy if you get along with the authorities in the area and if you follow the rules". In line with previous studies one's social connections and whom you know, rather than what you know, seems to be important in order to be a successful president (Timberlake, 2005).

"Being president was good, a positive experience. I got to relate to authorities in the municipality. If you handle everything properly you should be fine, you need to be on good terms with the accountant and [a certain agency] that is in charge of controlling food. If you do not follow the rules that they have for the market it is a little bit hard because [this agency] comes three times a year, taking random samples of the produce to analyze and see if everything is ok. If they find any pesticides they ask for the RESPA-number in order to follow up the production, see where it was produced and the markets it has been in. You can do such a follow up only with the RESPA-number. This is hard for us because we buy some products (...) from the Central Market where they did not use to have a lot of RESPA-numbers. We used to get in trouble for it but then we spoke to the authorities and now the Central Market and all the big markets should have RESPA-numbers before [authorities] come and ask [us] for the RESPA-numbers."

(Javier, Bolivian in his late 40's)

Clearly, a president with good relationships with the authorities, being able to negotiate and discuss with them, can ease the everyday lives for the market's management and workers. This was also evident in a story told by Frederico, an Argentinean in his mid-30's married to a Bolivian woman, about when *socios* wanted to add eggs to their supply. Being an animal product meant that the municipality had certain regulations and requests for specific documents. The market's president at the time however refused to administrate the correct papers, in turn risking the whole market being shut down. Eventually the secretary had to step in and negotiate with the municipality for more time to arrange the necessary paperwork. It is no surprise that the mentioned president was not valued as a good leader as he did not manage to fulfill the tasks assigned to him as a president, supporting the importance of leaders to be able to deal with their assigned tasks (cf. Eagly, 2007). Most of the people I spoke to in the two Bolivian horticulture markets stressed the value of a president who can negotiate and make good relations with authorities;

"Being humble, able to apologize for example, when dealing with authorities makes it less difficult dealing with them. You can achieve anything by speaking and being understandable. If you make a mistake [as president] you can always apologize and make it better. Nothing is impossible."

(Brenda, Bolivian in her mid 40's)

The president's management of administrative paperwork

Many of the Bolivians I spoke to expressed the difficulties they have encountered when trying to deal with Argentinean paperwork and bureaucracy:

"When you do not know the paperwork, the authorities and how the market works you are trapped between four walls. (...) For example we had to go to La Plata for paperwork but we did not know this, we did not know where to go, how the process was, where to stay in line or where to leave the papers. It was really hard for us."

(Javier, Bolivian in his late 40's)

Confusion amongst the Bolivians concerning bureaucratic processes was common; the kind and degree of paperwork in Argentina was often described as different and more difficult than that in Bolivia. This was confirmed by the public official Santiago who explained that in Bolivia "they do not use written things as much". Other than not being used to the Argentinean bureaucracy the Bolivians also felt that Argentinean authorities do not have the patience or take the time to explain what needs to be done;

"[A]s Bolivians we do not have the culture of following the rules in terms of the paperwork. Usually authorities have a bad idea about us and behind our backs they will say that we are not following the rules, are not good, are making it difficult etc."

(Brenda, Bolivian in her mid-40's)

Irene, a Bolivian in her early 50's, told me about her fear of municipalities shutting down Bolivian markets for no reason; "[a]uthorities close down markets if neighbors complain. Even if we follow the rules, pay the taxes, the rents and want to work, it is still common that the markets are shut down". Not everyone shared Irene's fear but, instead, claimed that as long as the market's paperwork is in order everything would be fine. Still, it is difficult to forget how Javier, one of the Bolivian workers, responded with a "[w]ho told you this?" when I asked him if it is common that markets are shut down. I believe this reveals the sensitivity and worry surrounding this issue, an impression strengthened by the fear of market shut down expressed in Federico's previous egg-story. Having a president who knows how to negotiate and discuss with the municipality and other authorities when needed is therefore, once again, very important. If someone is not believed to have such a skill this person would probably not be elected president. In line with previous research you choose someone who you expect to be a good and efficient leader, someone you believe can deal with the assigned tasks successfully (Heilman, 2001).

Once again the Bolivian narratives about their relationship with Argentines and the Argentinean state reminds me of Tilly's theory of durable inequality (1999). As seen in Javier's block-quote above the Bolivians have over time learned how to manage the Argentinean bureaucracy and difficult situations, such as the previously described RESPA- and egg-stories. Thus, having lived in a place for a long time seems to enhance one's understanding of the context and its social relations, in turn increasing one's capacity to solve difficult situations, also described by Tilly in his concept of *local knowledge* (1999). When Bolivians describe their weak understanding and management of the Argentinean bureaucracy as a reason for their markets being shut they also reveal how formal regulations or *scripts* (cf. Tilly, 1999), such as those for horticulture markets in Argentina, can determine the level of inequality between two socially differentiated groups such as Argentinean citizens and Bolivian migrant communities (cf. *ibid*).

Bolivians' explanations for why women are not elected presidents as often as men

Since it was founded in the early 2000's market A has only had two female presidents whilst market B have not had any, even though elections are conducted in each market at least every second year. In the following paragraphs I will describe how people in the Bolivian horticulture markets explain why women are not elected presidents as often as men, even though they are deemed responsible enough to take care of the selling in the markets (as already described in the section *Two Bolivian horticulture markets in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires*).

The four Bolivian women that offered an explanation for why female presidents are uncommon pointed to the fact that people believe women lack the necessary qualities to be president. Irene, a Bolivian in her early 50's, explained how "education and experience is needed for the president to be able to handle all the papers. Women are believed not to have this kind of experience and knowledge in the same way as men.". That Irene herself agreed with the structurally gendered perception of men as more experienced and knowledgeable than women prove how these dominating ideas partly endure through the recognition of the dominated (i.e the women) (cf. Bourdieu, 2001). Sara, a Bolivian in her early 20's, believed that values and norms hinders women from becoming presidents; "[u]sually people do not take women in consideration as a potential candidate for president as this person should do administrative work and they do not think women are capable of doing that.". Hence, the lack of female Bolivian presidents in the horticulture markets was explained by the women themselves as caused by Bolivian norms and perceptions of women as not skillful enough to be successful presidents. This is in line with previous studies stating that gendered stereotypes can hinder women

from becoming leaders as a person's presumed capacity to complete tasks is an important factor when choosing leaders (Heilman, 2001; Eagly, 2007).

Two Bolivian men said that there are no formal nor informal obstacles preventing women from becoming president. Instead, four out of the five Bolivian men with an explanation for why it is less common with female presidents in the markets put the "blame" on women, stating that they do not have the courage or will to become presidents. Fernando, Bolivian in his early 40's, explained it as;

"[w]omen do not manifest that much in terms of the administration of the market. Women also do not feel capable of being able to run the market. They do not know how to earn trust, because they are not confident in themselves. Women can be presidents, but I think they do not have the courage."

Women's shyness and unwillingness was also mentioned by Edwardo, a Bolivian in his 30's; "[e]ven though both husbands and wives are *socios* it is usually the men who are involved, (...) maybe the women are shy or not that interested.". Despite the fact that the president is elected jointly by all the market's *socios* the most common male explanation for why women were underrepresented as presidents was that women were unwilling or too shy. Hence, referring to women's underrepresentation as something normal and inevitable, caused by imagined female characteristics rather than objective structures (cf. Bourdieu, 2001). Meanwhile the women believed their underrepresentation was caused by prejudicial assumptions of women amongst all people in the market. Only one of the men acknowledged the possibility that people in the market do not want to give women that much responsibility. I will not elaborate further on women's willingness as a reason for them not becoming presidents as none of the interviewees, men nor women, wanted to be president (as described previously on page 23). Women's supposed shyness however might be an obstacle for them to become presidents and deal with certain presidential tasks, as is further described in the next paragraph.

When summarizing his experiences from the many visits to the Bolivian horticulture markets the public official Santiago explained that eloquent people are preferred as presidents. It could be that someone with good speaking skills and who dares to speak up is believed to have the personality necessary to succeed with presidential tasks. Sara, a Bolivian in her early 20's, also stressed the importance for a president to make oneself heard; "[p]eople normally do not want to pick a woman president. One reason is that when a woman does paperwork she is not taken as seriously as a man. The woman is not heard by the authorities". I have previously mentioned how men believe women are not elected presidents as they are too shy. Perhaps this supposed female shyness also make people perceive women as less capable of dealing with and being heard by the authorities. In relation to this

it was interesting to hear Edwardo's, a Bolivian in his 40's working in market B, description of the current *male* president in market B; "[h]e has a low profile, people trust him for this. He never wanted to take this position [as president] because *he is shy*." (emphasis added). In contrast to Edwardo's own statement (as described in the previous paragraph) about shyness being a reason for women *not* to be presidents it was in the case of the current president, a man, not described as an obstacle for being elected president. Meanwhile the public official Santiago described how this current male president in market B was elected president, despite his shyness, as he was one of the founders of the market. Clearly, whilst a woman's shyness was described as an obstacle for presidency a man's "low profile" was not. Perhaps supporting Bourdieu's claim that men are also affected by what their bodies socially represent, and for a man not to be shamed nor excluded from the world of men they depend on the validation of other men (2001). This, among other things, will be further elaborated in the discussion below.

Discussion

In this section I discuss the Bolivian negative experiences of Argentinean authorities and how this, together with their own prejudicial assumptions of women, contribute to women not being elected presidents of the Bolivian horticulture markets as frequently as men. It will be argued that women are unable to live up to commonly demanded qualities of a leader because of structural constraints; hindered by imaginations and prejudices of what the essence of being a woman entails. I end the discussion on a positive note in which I elaborate on the potential in being constrained by social structures.

Argentinean authorities' discrimination of Bolivian immigrants

My empirical results, together with previous literature, give evidence of how Bolivians in Argentina have been exploited as workers, having weak social rights and lacking support from public institutions as well as being marginalized in public statements and in media (Benencia & Ataide, 2016; Bastia, 2017; Pizarro, 2008; García and Lemmi, 2009). Argentineans' and their authorities' storytelling of Bolivians as dirty and criminals, as described by the public officials Santiago and Mateo, contributes to Bolivians being demarcated and defined as an essential Other, in turn justifying such negative treatment (cf. Tilly, 1999). These narratives make it possible for the authorities to blame Bolivians for processes and issues going wrong in Argentina, such as the lack of jobs or housing, in an attempt to get the sympathies of the voters (i.e. the citizens), at the same time as Bolivians are

highly exploited in the Argentinean horticulture sector (García and Lemmi, 2009; Benencia & Ataide, 2016).

The Argentines can further enhance their dominant position over Bolivians through their control of formal and informal institutions that are used to define relevant regulations and rules (cf. Tilly, 1999). In the empirical results the public official Santiago, but also the Bolivians themselves, expressed that it was the Bolivians' fault that they did not know how to deal with the Argentinean bureaucracy, rather than arguing that the bureaucracy is too overwhelming and confusing for everyone to penetrate and administer. It could be assumed that Argentinean citizens, as long-term residents, have greater local knowledge of the area, in turn allowing for them to be better than the Bolivians at dealing with obstacles of bureaucracy (cf. *ibid.*). The already weak capacity of Bolivians to handle the Argentinean bureaucracy can intensify if Argentines, in their role as public officials, are reluctant to assist Bolivians in their paperwork, as is evident in the empirical results of this study and in previous studies (cf. Pizarro, 2008). Argentines' relatively stronger ability to handle the bureaucracy, being one type of script, and having stronger local knowledge allows for them to take control over their social relations with Bolivians and define the inequalities within these relations (cf. Tilly, 1999); such as an Argentinean public officials' control over who is allowed to be a citizen and who is not, in turn deciding people's civic benefits.

Based on the efforts of Mateo and Santiago, the Argentinean public officials, to cooperate with the two Bolivian horticulture markets I believe that the authorities' mistreatment of Bolivian communities often is unintentional (cf. Tilly, 1999). Nevertheless, after having read previous literature (see section *The Bolivian immigrants' situation in Argentina*) spoken to public officials and people in the Bolivian markets it has become evident that the inequalities between Argentines and Bolivians exists and are durable across different periods in time, social settings and geographical contexts (cf. Tilly, 1999).

I have so far in the discussion attempted to elaborate on the Argentinean authorities' marginalization and stigmatization of Bolivian immigrants. Below I will argue how the Bolivian experiences and perceptions of this inequality, together with their imagined assumptions of Bolivian women, generate ideas of women as incapable of dealing with Argentinean authorities. In turn creating structural barriers for women to become presidents of the Bolivian horticulture markets in Argentina.

Intra-market masculine domination as a consequence of discrimination

Similar to previous studies the narratives presented in my empirical results reveal how presidents of Bolivian horticulture markets are elected based on the person's ability to deal with important tasks, such as managing paperwork or negotiating with the authorities (cf. Heilman, 2001). The Bolivian description of a valuable president as someone who is able to be heard and deal with the authorities is sexually characterized as such traits are more in line with imagined male, rather than female, qualities (cf. Bourdieu, 2001). This is seen in how the saleswoman Sara described women as polite and calm whilst men were assumed to be more direct and pushy, revealing the notion that men possess ideal qualities for being president while the notions of what it entails to be a woman is contrary to such qualities, in turn making Bolivians prefer and select male rather than female presidents (cf. Heilman, 2001; Bourdieu, 2001). The Bolivians' imagined norms and values of how a president ought to be as a person and what is expected of women therefore clashed; effects of symbolic violence made people less willing to choose a female president (cf. Bourdieu, 2001).

Men are also affected by these social structures and the imaginations of symbolic violence. This is, for example, demonstrated by the saleswoman Sara who describe men as less polite and more aggressive than women. Men are also described to be better capable of being heard and dealing with the authorities; a quality which, I believe, requires bravery as authorities and Argentineans are known to have treated Bolivians badly in the past. This is similar to Bourdieu's claim that men are often perceived as more suitable for dangerous and spectacular acts of representation and honor (2001). To avoid shame and being ostracized from the world of men a man's actions must therefore be of bravery and he must dare to speak up publicly, thus opposing what is deemed as feminine (ibid.). Perhaps this is the reason why Edwardo did not describe the shyness of the current male president of market B as a barrier for him to be elected president, even though Edwardo himself, during the same interview, expressed how women were not elected partly because they are too shy. This support of the current president, despite his shyness, might have been Edwardo's unconscious response to his fear, as a man, of being associated with traits regarded as feminine, such as shyness, and consequently excluded from the dominant world of men (cf. ibid.). In turn Edwardo, through his actions, supported the masculine domination and reproduced the already existing social systems within the market, at the same time as he himself was constrained by such structures (cf. Giddens, 1984).

When people in the markets, such as Sara and Edwardo, referred to the Bolivian women as shy this quality seemed to be an imagined "female nature" (cf. Bourdieu, 2001). This perceived "naturalness" of women's shyness prevailed amongst both men and women in the markets, revealing the lack of

reflections concerning where this gendered perception actually originated from. Instead the underlying social structures constructing the differences between sexes, as well as the domination of the perceived masculine, seemed to be experienced as natural, normal and inevitable, without much of a further elaboration other than a part of being a Bolivian woman, hence making it possible to blame women for their underrepresentation as presidents rather than addressing the underlying social structures (cf. *ibid.*).

Learning that women usually are the ones who move after marriage, the main sellers in the markets, caretakers of the households and the children whilst men take part in the politics of the market, attend meetings, are presidents and do the heavy lifting of the horticulture products reveal that the Bolivian horticulture markets, as all social contexts, have distinguished gendered responsibilities and tasks. These day-to-day activities in the markets have become part of people's habits, not reflectively motivated or questioned but rather just happening without much of a thought (cf. Giddens, 1984). When observing the morning-routines of the people in the markets I noticed how the women, without being questioned, stayed by their *puestos* whilst the men went to unload the horticulture goods from the trucks. Similarly, there were several occasions that I saw a woman walking quickly to her *puesto* because a possible buyer was present, even though a male member of the *puesto* was already present. Such distinguished gendered responsibilities and actions seemed to be repeated and unquestioned elements of the day-to-day social activities within the markets, routines constrained by the gendered structures at the same time as they reproduced the socially constructed notions of the feminine and masculine (cf. *ibid.*). Hence, it could be shameful and embarrassing for women, but also men, to act in ways which differ from these gendered imaginations (cf. Bourdieu, 2001). In turn making women unconsciously succumb to the masculine domination (cf. *ibid.*), perhaps explaining why the saleswoman Irene agreed with the perceptions of men as more experienced and knowledgeable than women and therefore more suitable as presidents of the markets.

I have in this section discussed how Bolivians' negative experiences of Argentinean authorities', in combination with the imagined essence of what it means to be a Bolivian woman, create structural barriers for women to become presidents in the Bolivian horticulture markets. I have elaborated on how Bolivians explain women's underrepresentation as presidents, arguing that they are too shy, even though the current, already elected, male president in market B also is described as shy. Below I will elaborate further on Bolivian women's underrepresentation in the public sphere as a cause of social structures, in which I argue that women are underrepresented as presidents of the markets because of their, in relation to the men, limited possession of local knowledge.

The importance of local knowledge

The public official Santiago mentioned how the current male president in market B was elected president, despite his shyness, as he was one of the founders of the market. Opposite to a large majority of the Bolivian women I spoke to who, at one point in time, had arrived to the market first after having married someone who was already settled in the area (in line with Magliano & Mallimaci Barral, 2015). Meanwhile none of the Bolivian men had moved to their wife's location after marriage. Hence, it is more common for women than men to be "newcomers" to the markets, thus restricting their networks and limiting their access to information and influence (cf. Timberlake, 2005). At the same time previous studies and my empirical results stress the importance for groups and communities to possess vertical and horizontal social connections in order to achieve their goals and improve their socioeconomic positions (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bartholdson, 2017; Timberlake, 2005). This can be seen in the emphasis Raul put on presidents of Bolivian horticulture markets to have good social relations with the authorities in the area, or in Santiago's description of how authorities want to speak with the presidents when they have something to discuss concerning the Bolivian horticulture markets (as was described in the *Empirical results*).

Javier's RESPA-story and Frederico's egg-story are two empirical examples where local knowledge and good social relations with the Argentinean authorities have mattered greatly for the president's ability to be successful and deal with unanticipated consequences of scripts, such as market shutdown because of errors with the bureaucratic paperwork (cf. Tilly, 1999). Bolivian communities are often vulnerable regarding their weak social rights and the support they receive from Argentinean authorities (Pizarro, 2016; Benencia & Ataide, 2016), in turn enhancing the importance of local knowledge in order for them to solve problems for their communities and markets (cf. Tilly, 1999). As only long-term residents can have such deep understandings of an area (ibid.) it seems that Bolivian women who, more common than not, arrive after the men to the destination of migration (cf. the section *Empirical results*; Pizarro, 2005) also have weaker local knowledge. Consequently diminishing women's access to social networks and information, in relation to men's, (cf. Timberlake, 2005), their ability to influence and obtain privileges (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bartholdson, 2017) and their flexibility to solve issues with the Argentinean authorities and bureaucracy (cf. Tilly, 1999). These female constraints and limitations, caused by social structures turning them into contextual "newcomers" compared to the men, strengthen people's perceptions of women as incapable of dealing with important presidential tasks, in turn (re)creating notions of women as unsuccessful presidents (cf. Heilman, 2001).

That long-term residency and experience of a market's location can be a strong contributing factor for one's possibility to become president is also supported by previous studies of Bolivian horticulture markets in Argentina (cf. Pizarro, 2008). Enhancing my belief that the current male president of market B was partly elected president, despite his shyness, because he was involved in the founding of the market, thus a long-term resident of the area with strong local knowledge and social relations with authorities (cf. Tilly, 1999). Whilst, as already discussed above, social structures of movements result in that Bolivian women often have less knowledge and experience of the market and its context compared to the men. A factor that I believe, together with the importance for a president to have strong local knowledge to deal with Argentinean authorities and bureaucracy, make people perceive women as less suitable than men as presidents of the Bolivian horticulture markets.

It is possible to question whether the difference between men's and women's local knowledge still matters as Bolivians have been migrating to Argentina since the early 1900s (as was described in the *Introduction*) and many of the Bolivian men and women I spoke to are either born in Argentina or have lived in the country for almost thirty years. Women have thus had time to expand their local knowledge. Nevertheless, the local knowledge-gap between men and women endures as men *too* have had time to strengthen their local knowledge. Men's *relatively* stronger local knowledge thus continue as they are first to migrate to the new location and that the destination of migration is chosen based on their social connections (Benencia *et al.*, 2016; Mallimaci Barral, 2011). I have previously mentioned the public official Santiago's belief that the president of market B was elected president as he was one of the market's founders (see section *Bolivians' explanations for why women are not elected presidents as often as men*). This reveals how local knowledge, being a result of long-term residency (Tilly, 1999), weaken women's chances of presidency as they migrate first after their male kin are established in the destination of migration (Benencia *et al.*, 2016; Mallimaci Barral, 2011) and therefore cannot title themselves as being one of the founders of a market as often as men.

In this section I have further discussed how structures constrain, at the same time as they are reproduced, by people's actions and routines. Even if it can't be said that women's movement after marriage is an everyday activity I still, based on its commonness (see the section *Empirical results*; cf. Magliano & Mallimaci Barral, 2015), understand it as a routine which, to a large extent, remains unquestioned and that, consequently, constrain and affect women in their new contexts (cf. Giddens, 1984). As promised the following, final, section of my discussion will end on a positive note in which I elaborate on how constraining social structures can enhance a group's potential.

The potential in being constrained by social structures

We have seen in the empirical results and in previous studies (cf. Pizarro, 2008) that Bolivians' experiences of being negatively treated by Argentineans and their public institutions have motivated them to take joint action and initiate their own horticulture markets. The Argentinean discrimination of Bolivians have also made it possible for the latter to justify their exclusion of Argentineans from becoming *socios* in the markets, thus securing Bolivians' own access to the markets' benefits (cf. Tilly, 1999). Ana's experience of Argentineans as problematic, entitled and always wanting to be right or Eduardo's description of how Bolivians previously have been excluded from Argentinean markets¹¹ exemplify how Bolivians have used storytelling to justify their exclusion of Argentineans from the horticulture markets. Hence, Bolivians' experiences of discrimination have justified their hoarding of the markets' economic opportunities, having allowed for them to thrive in the horticulture sector of Argentina (cf. García & Lemmi, 2009), as well as having strengthened their public representation and collective identity (cf. Tilly, 1999).

The Bolivian horticulture markets give evidence of the possibilities in liberating oneself from social structures. Making me believe that there is potential to remove the structural constraints that hinders women from becoming presidents of the Bolivian horticulture markets. Maybe the development of feminization amongst the market's sellers (the section *Empirical results*; Benencia, 2001) is an example of how women are beginning to hoard their own opportunities in the markets; spending more time in the markets might eventually strengthen their perceived legitimacy and advantages as presidents relative to that of the men. Such a development would prove how our day-to-day activities are not only constrained by, but also slowly change social structures (cf. Giddens, 1984), eventually transforming what is socially embodied in the feminine (and the masculine) which, according to Bourdieu (2001), is the only way to break the masculine domination.

¹¹ These Bolivian narratives have been described earlier in the section *Empirical results*. Together with the descriptions of Argentineans' storytelling in the section *Argentinean authorities' discrimination of Bolivian immigrants* these Bolivian stories further reminds me of Tilly's (1999) categorical inequality as it proves that groups on either side of a categorical boundary (Argentineans *and* Bolivians) can engage in the labeling and storytelling of the other.

Conclusion

Exploring how Bolivian salespersons narrate their social positions in Argentina, in relation to the state and the society at large, have in this thesis proven how Bolivian experiences and notions of marginalization, stigmatization and inequalities have reproduced structural barriers for women to become leaders of the associations that organizes and represents the Bolivian horticulture markets. Using examples of shyness and local knowledge I argue that Bolivian women are unable to live up to imagined required qualities of a leader because of structural constraints; hindered by imaginations and prejudices of what common understanding of female essence of being a woman entails. Meanwhile, the Argentinean discrimination of Bolivian immigrants has also proven to strengthen the collective identities of Bolivian communities, having motivated them to hoard the opportunities of the horticulture markets and give them, despite being a marginalized group, the potential to survive and thrive in the horticulture sector of Argentina. Bolivian horticulture markets thus give evidence of the opportunities for a discriminated and dominated group to transform the social structures that constrain and fetter their field of actions. Perhaps these transforming potentials that I have shown in this thesis will eventually remove the social and cultural constraints that hinder women from representing themselves in public decision processes and becoming leaders of the Bolivian horticulture markets.

References

- Adhikari, J. (2001). Mobility and Agrarian Change in Central Nepal. *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 28(2).
- Alvesson, M. & Sköldbberg, K. (2009). *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles; London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Bastia, T. (2017) Transnational Migration and the Gendered Right to the City in Buenos Aires. *Cities*.
- Bartholdson, Ö. (2017). Lecture: From Gender Relations to a Feminist Theoretical Approach.
- Benencia, R. (2011). Participación de los Inmigrantes Bolivianos en Espacios Específicos de la Producción Hortícola en la Argentina. *Migrations, Work and Agricultural Global Chains*, Vol. 49.
- Benencia, R., Diego, R. & Salusso, F. (2016). Mundo Agrario Inserción de Horticultores Bolivianos en Río Cuarto (Argentina). Procesos de Inmigración, Trabajo y Conformación de Economías Étnicas. *Ensenada*, Vol. 17(36).
- Benencia, R., & Ataide, S. (2016). Segmented Labor Market and Migratory Identity Constructions in Two Horticultural Fields in Mendoza. In Pizarro, C. (eds.). *Bolivian Labor Immigrants' Experiences in Argentina*. London: Lexington Books.
- Blackburn, R. (2011). *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights*. London: Verso.
- Bourdieu, P. (2001). *Masculine Domination*. Cornwall: MIG Books Ltd.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eagly, A. (2007). Female Leadership Advantage and Disadvantage: Resolving the Contradictions. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, Vol. 31.
- Frykman, J. & Gilje, N. (2003). Being There. In Frykman, J. & Gilje, N. (eds.). *Being There. New Perspectives on Phenomenology and the Analysis of Culture*. Lund: Nordic Academic Press.
- García, M. & Lemmi, S. (2009). Política Legislativa y Trabajo en la Horticultura del Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires (Argentina): Orígenes y Continuidades de la Precarización Laboral en la Horticultura. *Secuencia. Revista de Historia y Ciencias sociales*, Vol. 79.
- García, M. (2011). Proceso de Acumulación de Capital en Campesinos. El caso de los Horticultores Bolivianos de Buenos Aires (Argentina). *Cuadernos de Desarrollo Rural*, Vol. 8(66).

- Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Giddens, A. (1986). *Central Problems in Social Theory. Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*. Hong Kong: MacMillan.
- Gilroy, P. (2000). *Between Camps. Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race*. New York: The Penguin Press.
- Hansen, K. (2003). The Sensory Experience of Doing Fieldwork in an "Other" place. In Frykman, J & Gilje, N. (eds.). *Being There. New Perspectives on Phenomenology and the Analysis of Culture*. Lund: Nordic Academic Press.
- Hansen, K. (2017). Lecture 16: Using Empirical Data to Theorize.
- Heilman, M.E. (2001). Description and Prescription: How Gender Stereotypes Prevent Women's Ascent Up the Organizational Ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*.
- Hobsbawm, E. (2013). *Fractured Times. Culture and Society in the Twentieth Century*. London: The New Press.
- Inglis, D. (2012). *An Invitation to Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Jackson, M. (1996). *Things as They Are. New directions in phenomenological anthropology*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Mallimaci Barral, A.I. (2011). Migraciones y Géneros. Formas de Narrar los Movimientos por Parte de Migrantes Bolivianos/as en Argentina. *Estudios Feministas*, Vol. 19(3).
- Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: OUP Oxford.
- Latour, B. & Woolgar, S. (1986). *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Lovell, T. (2003). Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self. *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 20(1).
- Mauthner, N. & Doucet, A. (1998). In J. Ribbens & R. Edwards (eds.). *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research: Private Lives and Public Texts*. London: SAGE.
- Magliano, M. (2009). Migración, Género y Desigualdad Social. La Migración de Mujeres Bolivianas Hacia Argentina. *Revista Estudios Feministas*, Vol. 17(2).

- Magliano, M.J. & Mallimaci Barral, A.I. (2015). Las Edades de la Migración Boliviana en Argentina: Córdoba y Ushuaia Como Destino. *Si Somos Americanos*, Vol. 15(1).
- Oskarsson, P. (2017b). Lecture 2: Different Approaches to Research Design.
- Oskarsson, P. (2017c). Lecture 5: Contrasting Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Research.
- Pizarro, C. (2016). Intersection of Inequalities: Migratory Trajectories, Labor Experiences, and Family Life of Bolivian Women on the Outskirts of Buenos Aires and Córdoba. In Pizarro, C. (eds.). *Bolivian Labor Immigrants' Experiences in Argentina*. London: Lexington Books.
- Pizarro, C. (2008). *Un Pedazo de Bolivia en Escobar. Historia de la Asociación Civil Colectividad Boliviana de Escobar*. Recopilación de Testimonios de Algunos de sus Socios Realizada entre septiembre de 2006 y julio de 2008, Facultad de Agronomía-UBA, Buenos Aires. [Available at: http://www.academia.edu/1203504/La_Colectividad_Boliviana_de_Escobar]
- Salentin, K. & Heitmeyer, W. (2018). Discrimination. *Encyclopædia Britannica*.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/discrimination-society> (accessed 2018-10-21).
- Silverman, D. (2015). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Tilly, C. (1999). *Durable Inequality*. California: University of California Press.
- Timberlake, S. (2005). Social Capital and Gender in the Workplace. *Journal of Management Development*, Vol 24(1).
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.