

Chapter 2

Networks of Pottery Exchange

Abstract This chapter describes the pottery distribution methods used in San Bartolomé de los Olleros. The most important ways that pots are distributed are: (1) trading trips to other communities to barter pots for the products of those communities; (2) sale/barter of pots to customers who visit potters' homes, including: customers within the community (community-based exchange), customers purchasing for their own use (ad hoc trade) and bulk purchases by middlemen and women who take the pots to other communities to redistribute. The methods employed less frequently are annual fairs, itinerant production, and markets (weekly and daily). Maps of each trade method are presented and specific trade routes are explained.

Keywords Barter • Trade • Pottery • Andes

2.1 Methods of Pottery Distribution and the Case of San Bartolomé de los Olleros

Polanyi's classic prescription for understanding trade serves as a basic foundation for classifying the pottery exchange methods used by potters from San Bartolomé de los Olleros. He writes:

Since something must be carried by someone over a distance and this is to happen in two directions, trade must involve (1) personnel; (2) goods; (3) carrying; and (4) two-sidedness. All of these institutional features permit classification according to criteria which are either sociological or technological or both (Polanyi 1975: 136).

To trace Olleros pottery trade networks, and thus to reconstruct the spatiality of pottery-based livelihoods, the major categories of people involved, products exchanged, transport methods used, and social interactions are all considered.

Thus far, few scholars of Andean pottery have paid close attention to the distribution of the final product. Among those that do, most notably Mohr (1992) and Sillar (2000), the focus has been given to examples from Southern Peru (Cuzco and Puno) and Bolivia (Cochabamba and Potosi). However, Sillar provides a useful

Table 2.1 Pottery distribution methods in Peru, taken from Sillar (2000: 87)

	Pottery trade method
0	Production for own use: pots are not exchanged beyond the potter's household
1	Community-based exchanges: pots are exchanged within the potter's community
2	Ad hoc trade from the potter's house: consumers come directly to the potter's house to acquire pots for their own use
3	Weekly markets: potters and/or middlemen or women trade pots in the village square
4	Annual fairs: festivals where many potters and/or middlemen or women trade pots
5	Itinerant potters: potters make vessels in consumers' communities and return home with traded goods
6	Traveling traders: potters and/or middlemen or women take fired pots to other communities to trade
7	Bulk purchases: Middlemen or women buy pottery, occasionally made to order from potters
8	Daily markets: largely middlemen or women selling a range of wares from a variety of production centers

framework for examining pottery distribution in other Andean regions; in particular, he identifies eight distinct ways pots may be traded. He distinguishes these by three factors: (1) who is trading, (2) where trading takes place, and (3) the timing of the trade (daily, weekly or annual). This study draws on Sillar's (2000: 87) concepts and terminology, which are summarized in Table 2.1.

All of these trading methods can be observed in Northern Peru. There, just as both Sillar (2000) and Mohr (1992) observed for Southern Peru and Bolivia, the importance of these methods varies between pottery production centers as well as between potters within a single community. So, for example, traveling trade (6) is the dominant method in some communities, whereas annual fairs (4) are the most important trading venues in others.

In Ollerros, not all of the pottery exchange methods described in Sillar (2000) are used. Table 2.2 lists the methods that are used, classifying them by their varying levels of importance. While these generalized categories are helpful for

Table 2.2 Pottery distribution methods in Ollerros, methods within each column are listed in the order that they are discussed below

Very important	Occasionally practiced	Never (or rarely) practiced ^a
Production for own use (0)	Annual fairs (4)	Weekly markets (3)
Traveling traders (6)	Itinerant potters (6)	Daily markets (8)
Community-based exchange (1)		
Ad hoc trade from the potter's house (2)		
Bulk purchase (7)		

^aSmall local markets (weekly or daily) do not exist in Ollerros or any of the communities immediately surrounding it, probably because of the proximity to the major city of Ayabaca (about 5 h walking distance). Pots are sometimes sold in the main Ayabaca market in market women's stalls, this type of exchange is described in the text

demonstrating basic trends within a community, more detailed description is needed to understand how each method is actually used.

To begin, while potters do use their pots for cooking in their own homes, their major reason for making pots is to trade them for goods they cannot or do not produce for themselves, including money. The most important ways that pots are distributed are: (1) trading trips to other communities to barter pots for the products of those communities; (2) sale/barter of pots to customers who visit potters' homes, including: customers within the community (community-based exchange), customers purchasing for their own use (ad hoc trade), and bulk purchases by middlemen and women who take the pots to other communities to redistribute. The methods employed less frequently are annual fairs, itinerant production, and markets (weekly and daily). In the following paragraphs each of these methods is thoroughly described, and the spatial patterns of distribution resulting from each method are discussed. These descriptions are meant to be of typical examples of each method; they were created by combining many traders' responses.

2.2 Trading Trips

Almost all potters do, or have, traveled to other places to barter or sell their pots. A trading trip usually begins with a potter and/or her husband, (or father if she is young), deciding on the place(s) to travel to, and then finding traveling companions, usually a family member or friend from the community. Women potters do not rely on male family members to trade, although they will not travel long distances alone. Pottery traders travel to several different types of places, but generally they seek places where grain production is abundant (termed *sitios graneros*, see Sect. 3.1) and they especially desire to barter their pots for wheat, maize, peas, and beans. Trade destinations are usually specific *caseríos* (sectors) of *campesina* communities, the clustering of houses in these settlements makes trading easier (see Appendix C for a registry of trade destinations).

Trading trips only occur between the months of July and November, with a peak in August. This occurs for two reasons. First, because travel is much easier during the dry months. In fact, some of the trade routes between communities in the highlands of Piura are almost completely cut off during the rainy season, causing communities to stock up on trade goods during the dry season (Córdova, pers. comm.). And second, traders follow the harvests in the locations where they trade. During and directly after this time the exchange rates are best (see Sect. 3.2). Harvest timing varies between farming communities. According to Mauro Mondragón, an experienced trader, the first harvest among the distribution sites begins in July and the last ends in September. Once the destination and date of the trading trip have been determined, the traveling party collects donkeys to carry the loads. These donkeys may be the trader's own, or they may be rented or borrowed. The load each donkey can carry is called a *carga*, twelve pots are in one *carga* of pots. Usually one to five donkeys per pottery trader are used, however not all of the

donkeys are loaded with pots. Other products, especially *chancaca*, are often brought for trade as well. Traders travel up to two days walking (at a donkey's pace) one way. They sleep at fixed points en route, which are determined based on the availability of pasture for the pack animals.

Most pottery traders give similar accounts of their arrival in destination communities. When they arrive they call out "pots, pots" ("*ollas, ollas*") and people come outside to trade. Pots are usually bartered for potfuls of grain or other products, although sometimes they are sold for money (see Sects. 3.1 and 3.2). Almost all traders have friends or acquaintances (*amistades, conocidos*) in the places where they trade, these are partnerships that develop over years of visits. Potters greatly appreciate trading with these established friends, but this by no means limits exchange with new, as yet unknown, partners. For more distant destinations, traders will spend the night in the homes of these friends. For closer destinations, departure, trade, and return are all accomplished within a single day. Traders generally continue traveling from village to village until they trade all of their pots; no one wants to return home still carrying the load with which they set out. Sometimes, however, traders will miscalculate harvest times or deliberately arrive out of harvest. In these cases, pots are left with trade partners who promise to return the equivalent quantity of grain when they have it. This speaks to the level of trust inherent to these exchange relationships. Additionally, while the pots that are traded in destination communities are often for use in the trading partner's household, sometimes individual households will trade for up to six or eight pots and then re-trade these pots in still more distant places.

The most important site traveled to from Olleros is Matalacas, an immense grain-producing community about a two days' walk away. However, Matalacas is only one destination among many. It is perhaps most useful to classify destinations according to routes traveled, including all the stops made along the way, than to just list destinations as individual entities. In fact, almost all trading trips follow one of three distinct routes, each of which is fully described below, and represented in Fig. 2.1.

Route 1: Southeast to the community of Matalacas. (*34 references to different sectors in interview data*)

Matalacas is by far the most important exchange center for Olleros potters, mainly because it is a highly fertile grain producing zone, possessing far better and much more vast agricultural lands than do other parts of the Ayabaca highlands. According to Hildegardo Córdova, a prominent Peruvian geographer and native of the Piuran sierra, Matalacas is a regional bread basket (pers. comm.). It yields some of the highest volumes of wheat in Piura; cultivating at least thirteen different wheat varieties, mostly without external additions like pesticides (Bernex 1990: 98), and without irrigation ("*solo secano*" Córdova, pers. comm.).¹ Generally, wheat is

¹At least this was the status of agriculture in the late 1980s, changes since then would not be surprising.

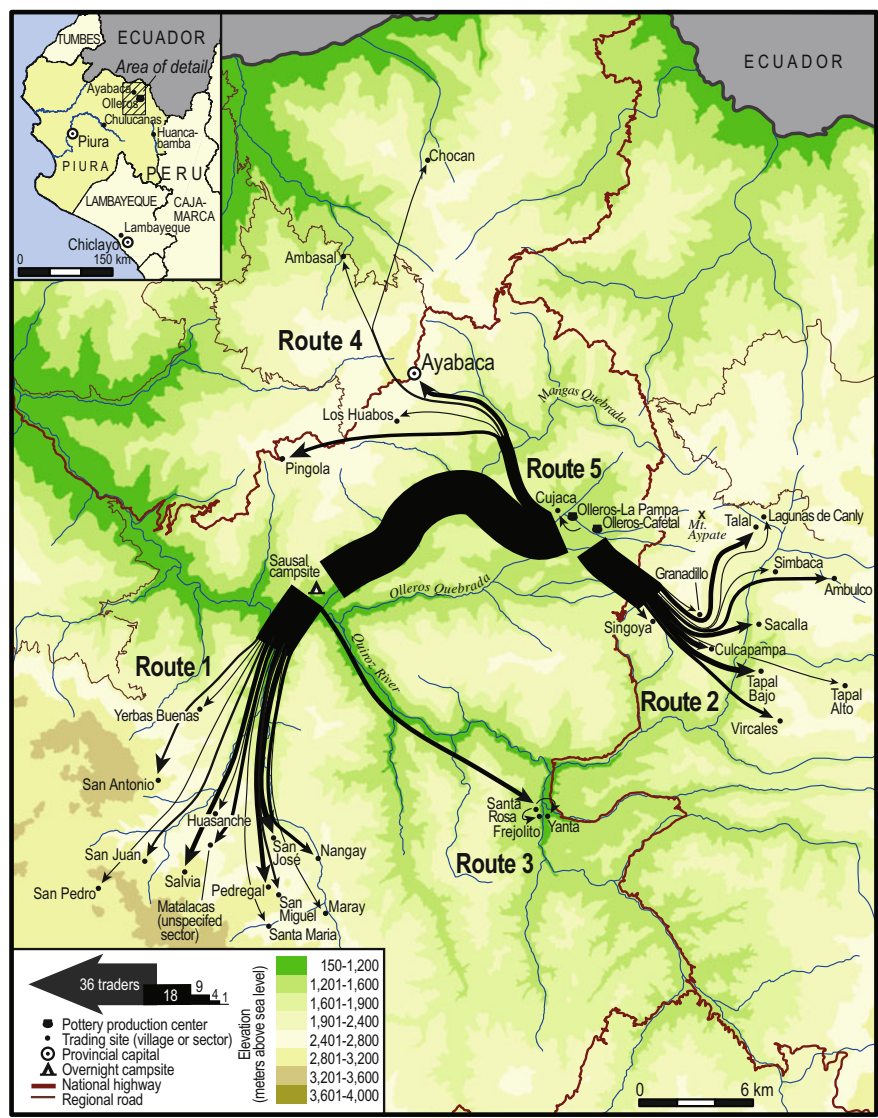


Fig. 2.1 Trading trip routes and destinations. Flow lines represent approximate routes followed, line thickness represents the number of traders who mentioned traveling to a specific destination during interviews

cultivated across a range of elevations, from 1600 to 3000 m.a.s.l. It is mixed with potatoes and barley at the higher end of this range and with maize at the lower end (Bernex 1990: 98–8). Pottery traders from Olleros concur with this description of Matalacas, as potter Emilia Pintado put it: “a lot of people go [to Matalacas] to exchange for grain; peas, wheat, potatoes, maize (*maíz amarillo*), beans, wool,

broad beans, everything! The land is different, it is better there.”² Trading pots from Ollereros for grain in Matalacas has also been observed by Bernex (1990: 100) and Sabogal (1982: 129).

Although technically a single community, Matalacas is actually an immense ex-hacienda comprised of approximately twenty separate sectors grouped as the single “*Comunidad de Matalacas*.” Of these twenty sectors, pottery traders reported traveling to sixteen. While the community of Matalacas spans elevations ranging from below 1600 to above 3500 m.a.s.l., the potters’ destinations fall mainly within the altitude range of 2400–3200 m.a.s.l. Not surprisingly, this is also the zone where the majority of Matalacas’ population lives (Bernex 1990).

Depending on the ultimate destination within the community of Matalacas, travel distance and time vary. Even so, all traders follow the same major route which takes two days to traverse (refer to Route 1 in Fig. 2.1). This route leads down from Ollereros into the *Quebrada Mangas*. It follows this valley in a southeasterly direction until the campsite at Sausal is reached. Almost all traders choose to spend the night at this point. This leg of the trip takes less than a full day of walking, but Sausal is a good stopping point as suitable pasture can be found there. The second day of travel includes a long ascent into the middle to high altitude sectors of Matalacas: “we pass that river and cross to the other side there [Sausal], and then we make it up the hill” (Emilia Pintado).³ Common points of entry into Matalacas include the sectors of San José or San Juan. From these points traders usually travel from sector to sector, all following their own particular routes, until they have successfully traded the pots (and/or *chancaca*) that they brought with them. “We go from sector to sector like this, since one has friends [in each]” (Mauro Mondragón).⁴ Pottery traders usually are hosted by their friends (and trading partners), they may stay several nights, presumably until they are finished trading.

Travel to Matalacas occurs mainly between the months of August and November. Since Matalacas occupies such a huge territory, and a range of elevations, harvests occur over a span of time. The first harvests begin during the final days of July and the last one extends into September. This is because lower parts (like Palo Blanco) are warmer: “we call them *temple*, ...they are more insulated, it is warmer” (Mauro Mondragón).⁵ Such places begin harvesting earlier, while others which are higher and colder, but which may grow the same crops, harvest up to two months later. Traders have to coordinate their trips with this geography of agriculture. During the harvest Matalacans are willing to barter their grain for pots and exchange rates are good. Afterwards it seems that they prefer to sell their crops for money, a situation not very beneficial to potters (see longer discussion in Sect. 3.2).

²“...van bastante gente a cambiar con grano: alverja, trigo, papas, maíz amarillo, frijol, papa, lana, habas, todo!.... La tierra es diferente, allá mejor” (Emilia Pintado).

³“Pasamos este río y bandeamos allá, y de ahí ganamos el cerro” (Emilia Pintado).

⁴“Vamos a sector a sector así, como uno tiene amigos” (Mauro Mondragón).

⁵“...llamamos temple...son mas abrigados, es mas caliente” (Mauro Mondragón).

It is fair to say that economically speaking, Matalacas is more important to Olleros than Olleros is to Matalacas (with the possible exception of *chancaca* production). This asymmetrical relationship directly affects trade patterns, so a basic understanding of some of the historical and economic trends influencing this relationship is relevant.⁶ The Hacienda Matalacas, which was in existence as early as 1615 (Schulpmann 1994, Annex 2: 24), was devoted to raising livestock (Bernex 1990: 95). Following the lead of several other estates in the region, in 1953 the owners of Matalacas decided to sell the land to the hacienda workers, who together purchased private plots in a single collective movement (Apel 1996: 61). This occurred nearly twenty years before the national Agrarian Reform Law in Peru, after which the Hacienda Olleros was broken up.⁷ This created a large group of smallholding farmers, many of whom began to cultivate the wheat Matalacas is known for today. Thus the change in the land tenure system also resulted in a significant change in regional land use. Since the 1950s, through a combination of agriculture, herding, and commerce, Matalacans have become relatively wealthy; consequently, they are a political power in the region. In fact, they represent strong enough of a political force to influence road construction routes. As early as the 1960s, Matalacas was directly linked to the coast by a road passing through the sectors of Las Pircas and Salvia (Franco 1990). It is via this route that much of the grain from Matalacas reaches the coastal markets.

While this coastal orientation and market integration is recognized by the pottery traders, they have mixed responses regarding its influence on their activities. For most it does not seem to have had a significant impact on trading practices. Even the sector of Salvia, where “the roads enter” (José Adán Troncos),⁸ is still one of the most popular destinations for pottery traders from Olleros. It is also worth noting that Salvia is one of the more highly populated centers within Matalacas. Yet, several traders have commented on the changes that the Salvia/Las Pircas road and consequent market expansion have wrought on local systems of barter exchange, perhaps referring to slowly shifting patterns. “Now things have changed because there are roads which allow [products] to be taken to the [coastal] cities. So now the people [from Olleros] have to go even farther, where the roads still don’t reach”

⁶Most of the following information comes from a large study of the central highlands of Piura carried out in the 1980s by the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and ORSTOM (Institut français de recherche scientifique pour le développement en coopération), and led by N. Bernex, H. Cordova, J.C. Roux, and G. Etesse. The detailed discussion of Matalacas presented here would not be possible without this study. Since such detail does not exist in the literature about the other trade destinations, an imbalance in this text is unavoidable.

⁷“The Agrarian Reform of 1969 manifested itself slowly and reluctantly in Piura. In 1970 it had only affected some of the largest estates on the coast located in the Chira valley and until 1974 almost the entirety of the Department’s sierra region was excluded from its actions”. (Rubin de Celis 1978: 11 cited in Apel 1996: 78, my translation).

⁸“...entra allá carretera de carro...” (José Adán Troncos).

(Beltrán Mondragón, son of Mauro Mondragón. Mauro is a prominent trader, who interestingly has no such complaints about Matalacas).⁹

Some anthropologists similarly argue that in Matalacas the traditional *campesino* subsistence economy is being abandoned for a more market oriented approach (Franco 1990: 325). This can be debated, since certainly it is “still” possible now to see the “old” barter circuits coexisting with the capitalist system (Bernex 1990: 100). For example, at least fairly recently, Matalacas was found to be strongly integrated into regional trade networks. Bernex (1990: 100) provides a vivid description of how traders from the entire region surrounding Matalacas go there with products to trade for its wheat and other crops. This includes traders from Morropón, Chalaco, and Pacaipampa who bring salt, soap, kerosene, rice, and sugar; from Aragoto carrying *bocadillos* and *alfeñiques*¹⁰; and of course from Olleros hauling clay pots. Matalacas themselves also travel on trading trips to other places. For example, from the sectors of Nangay and San Miguel they take tanned cow skins to the coast (Sullana). Additionally, from many of the higher altitude sectors traders go to Olleros (and other sugarcane growing zones) looking for *chancaca*, which they either cash or trade for with grain they bring with them. Interestingly, Matalacas rarely travel to Olleros looking for pots, the real attraction for them are the sugarcane products. This once again implies that pottery trade relationships are asymmetrical, with Matalacan farmers holding greater power than Olleros potters, perhaps because of Matalacas’ potential for increasing commercialization and abandoning “traditional” exchange systems. However, it also demonstrates the continuity of *campesino* barter even amidst increasing market integration, indicating the continued importance of this trade to rural livelihoods.

Route 2: Passing El Aypate: East to the communities beyond Mt. Aypate
(30 references to different villages and sectors in interview data)

A host of destinations for pottery traders are located to the east of Olleros, beyond the peaks of mounts Aypate and Viscacha, which form one boundary of the community. While the elevations of these destinations vary considerably from 2000 to 3600 m, these places are all grain producing zones (see Sect. 3.1). The main products bartered are maize, peas, beans, and wheat. Unlike the multi-destination routes followed during trips to Matalacas, these destinations are mainly visited in discrete trips. They can all be reached in a single day of walking. With trading, the total trip time is usually one to three days. Due to the proximity of these sites, (especially Tapal, which is said to be the shortest trip), these places are easier to

⁹“ahora cambió porque hay carreteras, y todo eso lo acapara y lo llevan a las ciudades [en la costa]. Entonces ahora la gente tiene que irse mas lejos donde no hay carros donde no entran las carreteras ya” (Beltrán Mondragón).

¹⁰*Bocadillos* are a kind of sweet made from *chancaca* and peanuts. *Alfeñiques* are a kind of molasses taffy. Both are commonly sold in festivals and marketplaces throughout Piura.

access than Matalacas. Since they grow the grains the potters seek, they are very popular destinations, especially among traders who are unable to travel the long distance to Matalacas, such as the elderly (see Sect. 3.3). The communities in this group are almost all ex-haciendas, which gained independence at varying times between the late 1940s and early 1970s (Apel 1996). Each pottery trader has specific communities among this group that he or she tends to visit; although traders do not always return to the same place every year. It is not clear why some traders visit some sites and not others; but, since traders have friends in each of the communities they visit, this may be a defining factor in their decision to continue visiting a place again and again.

Route 3: Lowlands to the south: Santa Rosa and Yanta (*4 references in interview data*)

These two sites located to the south of Olleros (Santa Rosa and Yanta) are infrequently visited, but are significant because they are destinations known for being places to trade pots for animals. One potter (Emma Mondragón) described them as “Goat Zones” (*Zonas Cabrillas*) (see Sect. 3.1). She used the word “*cabrilla*,” to reference the popularity of livestock, especially goats, which can be found in this area. Santa Rosa is located a half day’s walk away, with Yanta located just upstream along the Santa Rosa river. These are relatively low (<1200 m.a.s.l.), warm locations, only visited from time to time.

Route 4: Passing Ayabaca: The city of Ayabaca and surrounding communities (*11 references in interview data*)

Ayabaca is a major regional urban center. It is the provincial capital, the site of a large annual Catholic pilgrimage to “*El Poderoso Señor Cautivo de Ayabaca*,” and also home to a permanent daily market. Olleros pots are sometimes sold in the market (see Sect. 2.7). Olleros is the only potting community which distributes in this urban market. Selling or trading pots in the city is relatively rare. Potters who travel in this direction generally use Ayabaca as a waypoint; either for catching a ride on the way to other destinations (e.g., Pingola), or along a route traveled by foot, to the north (e.g., Ambasal en route to Chocán) and to the southeast (Pingola, La Laguna, Los Guavos). The products available at these higher altitude destinations include peas, maize, wheat, and broad beans. These are not common destinations, and the one potting family who described this route has not traveled to these places “in years” (Orfilia and Mauro Mondragón).¹¹ Overall they are more or less abandoned routes. The only trader from Olleros who has traveled once recently is not actually a potter herself: Altagracia Chuquihuanca visited Pingola for the local fiesta in 2005 (November 20), traveling by car with a half-*carga* of pots, which she traded with friends at the fiesta for maize and wheat.

¹¹“hace años” (Orfilia and Mauro Mondragón).

Route 5: Within and directly surrounding the community of Olleros (3 references in interview data)

Several pottery traders mentioned occasional visits to the non-pottery producing sectors of the community of Olleros, specifically the sectors Congoli and Toronche, which are located about two hours walking from La Pampa (slightly less from Cafetal). Also included in this “route” are visits to the neighboring community of Cujaca, which is very near to La Pampa (approximately 30 min walking, slightly longer from Cafetal, see Figs. 1.3 and 2.1). During these trips pots are traded for special products eaten fresh, like *choclo* (fresh corn on the cob), or products falling under the general category of “*Recado*” which in Olleros is a food type referring to products such as manioc or plantains (see Sect. 3.1).

Trips to these places have an “occasional” air to them. For example, one potter, Micaela Jiménez, traveled to Congoli during the fieldwork period at the invitation of a friend. She left at 3 AM and arrived at 6 AM. She took her son and three pots that she had “borrowed” from her neighbors since she did not have any fired pots at the time. She left the pots with her friends and in return they gave her two *alforjas* (saddle/shoulder bags) full of *choclos* as well as some beans. She also helped in the harvest and was given additional *choclos* in return (see Fig. 2.2). Micaela passed the better part of one day on her trip Congoli, and she returned in the evening to roast fresh *choclo* with her children (Fig. 2.3). Another potter, Zenaida Huaman, recounted that she occasionally travels to Congoli and Toronche with her mother-in-law (potter Rosa Jiménez) to trade for *recado*.



Fig. 2.2 Micaela Jiménez “borrowing” pots from one of her neighbors, in Olleros-La Pampa. Mt. Aypate and Olleros-Congoli are visible in the background



Fig. 2.3 Micaela Jiménez and her daughter preparing the choclo brought from Olleros-Congoli in exchange for pots, in Olleros-La Pampa

While these locations within Olleros are easy destinations, trips to them are infrequent and do not account for the majority of pottery trade. Potters cannot acquire the staple foods they need by exchanging pots within their home community, even in the higher elevation sectors—this is the main motivation for the trading trips described in Routes 1–4.

2.3 Community-Based Exchange

Potters and their family members are not the only ones who travel from Olleros to other places to trade. Pots are regularly exchanged within the community of Olleros between potters and other community members who do not practice this craft. These non-potters then (re)trade the pots in the same ways that potters themselves do. Pots are lent/borrowed (*se presta*) or sold/bought (*se compra*) between potters and other potters or between potters and non-potters. Pots are usually lent when the borrower is planning a trading trip and wants to take more pots for trade than he or she has at the moment. The borrower returns new pots to the lender when he or she is able, directly replacing those initially borrowed. When pots are bought, they can

be paid for either in cash or kind, the term “buy” (*se compra*) is used to describe both forms of payment. The products used as payments in such cases can vary, and seem to be flexibly determined by the potter and buyer. Examples include textiles (Altagracia Chuquihuanca trading *alforjas* for pots from Micaela Jiménez), *chancaca* (Orfilia Mondragón), and wool (Irma Abad).

These trades often occur between *comadres* or close friends. All the examples of intra-community exchanges collected during fieldwork interviews were between women, but presumably Olleros men could also buy pots from potters. The general consensus among potters and non-potters is that “... some know how to [make pots], and others buy” (Oralia Mondragón) or “When someone doesn’t know how, she buys from the women who do know” (Honoría García).¹² Pottery buyers may also store pots in their homes for future trading trips or to sell to visiting customers (see Sect. 2.4).

2.4 Visiting Customers: Ad Hoc Trade from the Potter’s House and Bulk Purchase

Customers from beyond Olleros also come directly to the potters’ houses for pots. These customers range from individuals looking for one or two pots for their own kitchens, to bulk purchasers who buy up to fifteen *cargas* (180 pots) from several potters at once, which they then redistribute. Many of the bulk traders come from the communities directly surrounding the city of Ayabaca. However, customers hail from many different locations, including many of the places where potters themselves travel to trade (see Appendix C for a registry of customer points of origin).

The potter Luzmila Parihuamán describes a typical customer visit as follows. The customer arrives to her house, she usually knows him (or her), and they greet one another outside. The customer(s) asks if she has pots, she replies yes and asks them what he or she has brought in exchange. The potter accepts (or presumably could refuse) the transaction and they exchange with one another.

Customers may bring both goods and money to exchange for pots. Potters say that customers bring “any kind of thing” for trade. This includes lowland foods (manioc, bananas, sugar, cacao), grains (wheat, maize, barley), *menestras* (beans, peas), products from the Ayabaca city market (kerosene, salt, soap, fish, vegetables), animals (guinea pigs, chickens), wool, textiles, and more. Customers can come casually while they are passing through Olleros, or they may order specific

¹²“Es que algunas saben hacer, y otras compran” (Oralia Mondragón) or “O sea cuando uno no sabe hacer compra a las señoras que saben hacer...” (Honoría García).

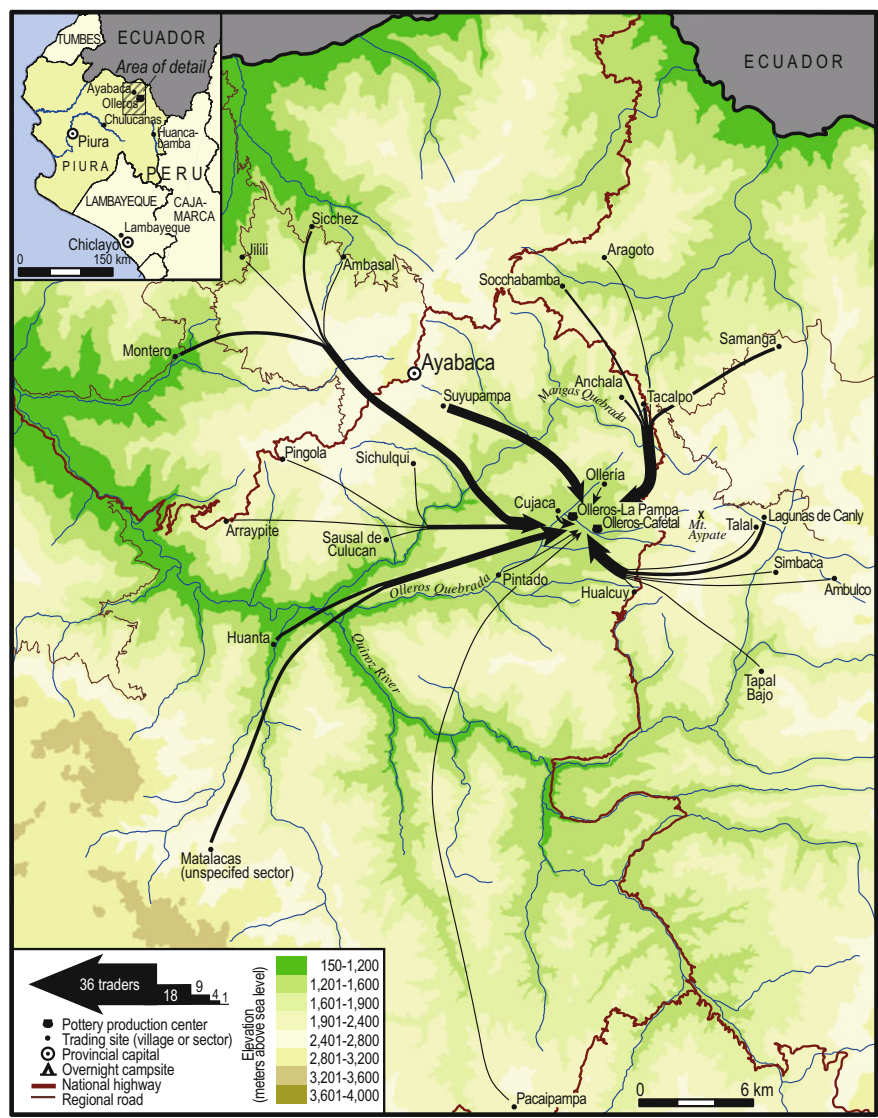


Fig. 2.4 Points of origin for visiting customers. Flow line thickness approximates the number of traders traveling from each destination (represented by the number of times a specific location was mentioned in interview data)

quantities of pots ahead of time. Customers arrive especially during the months of July and August, some plan their visits to coincide with Olleros’ community festival (San Bartolomé, August 24). Their visits may also coincide with festivals in other communities if they are planning to re-sell/re-barter the pots in those places.

Visiting customers come from many of the communities in the region surrounding Olleros (see Fig. 2.4). Customers from the communities directly surrounding Ayabaca, especially Suyupampa, are arguably the most important, since they are often the bulk purchasers. The bulk purchasers are popular individuals, referred to by name. This is not surprising given that they purchase pots from many potters at once and are said to buy up to three *cargas* (36 pots) from one potter at a time. The bulk purchasers bring all kinds of foods, as well as industrially produced products from the Ayabaca market, and/or money to trade for pots. They are merchants (*negociantes*) who seek to redistribute the pots. After leaving Olleros, they take the pots to their home communities and beyond, exchanging them with their own family members, but also trading them in the surrounding region in the same way that potters themselves do. Customers from the other locations, (many of which are the same communities as those traveled to by pottery traders), usually trade at a smaller scale. These customers bring grains, beans, peas, chickens, and guinea pigs for barter. The assumption is that these customers trade for their own use and for some redistribution in their home communities.

While trading trips from Olleros to other communities seem to have remained the same over time, there is a consensus within Olleros that fewer customers come looking for pots now than in the past, and specifically the pre-Agrarian Reform past (estimates of 30–40 years ago). Customers are said to have especially come on Sundays, not in great numbers, but at least 3 or 4 per Sunday (Irma Abad). Some customers still do visit, including some of the bulk purchasers, but there is general agreement that the pottery market used to be better than it is now. Such descriptions include: "...in the time when we were making pots there in Aguayco [the sector of Olleros where people lived during the hacienda], more people came on Sundays to buy pots" (Irma Abad); "Well, now since....now it's been thirty years more or less, because after that the people stopped coming down here [to La Pampa, the sector of Olleros where people live now]" (Luzmila Parihuamán); and "now [pots] aren't made, it's because now there isn't any market..." (Oralia Mondragón).¹³ While narratives of a glorified past should be approached with caution, there seems to be some truth to such statements. Before the Agrarian Reform the settlement pattern within the community of Olleros was very different. Potters refer to traders visiting their old homes, in Aguayco and Sidro, where they lived during hacienda times (see Fig. 1.3). Similarly, Roux (1990: 32) found that caravaneers in the central sierra of Piura thought haciendas to be good trading places because many workers lived close together and were interested in small scale trade. They feared the decline of their profession with the breakup of the estates.

¹³Opinions include: "...en tiempo que hacíamos ollas allá en Aguayco [sector of Olleros where people lived during the hacienda], el día domingo venía más gente a comprar ollas." (Irma Abad); "bueno, ya hace...ya como treinta años más o menos porque de allí esa gente ya dejó de venir acá abajo..." (Luzmila Parihuamán); and "ya ahorita ya no se hace, es por el motivo que ya no hay negocio..." (Oralia Mondragón).

2.5 Annual Fairs

Annual fairs play a minimal role in Olleros pottery distribution. Sometimes potters plan their production to coincide with annual fairs in either Olleros (San Bartolomé, August 24) or in other communities within the distribution area, (Pingola, Sicchez, and Montero), but not nearly to the extent described by Mohr (1992) (see Fig. 2.5

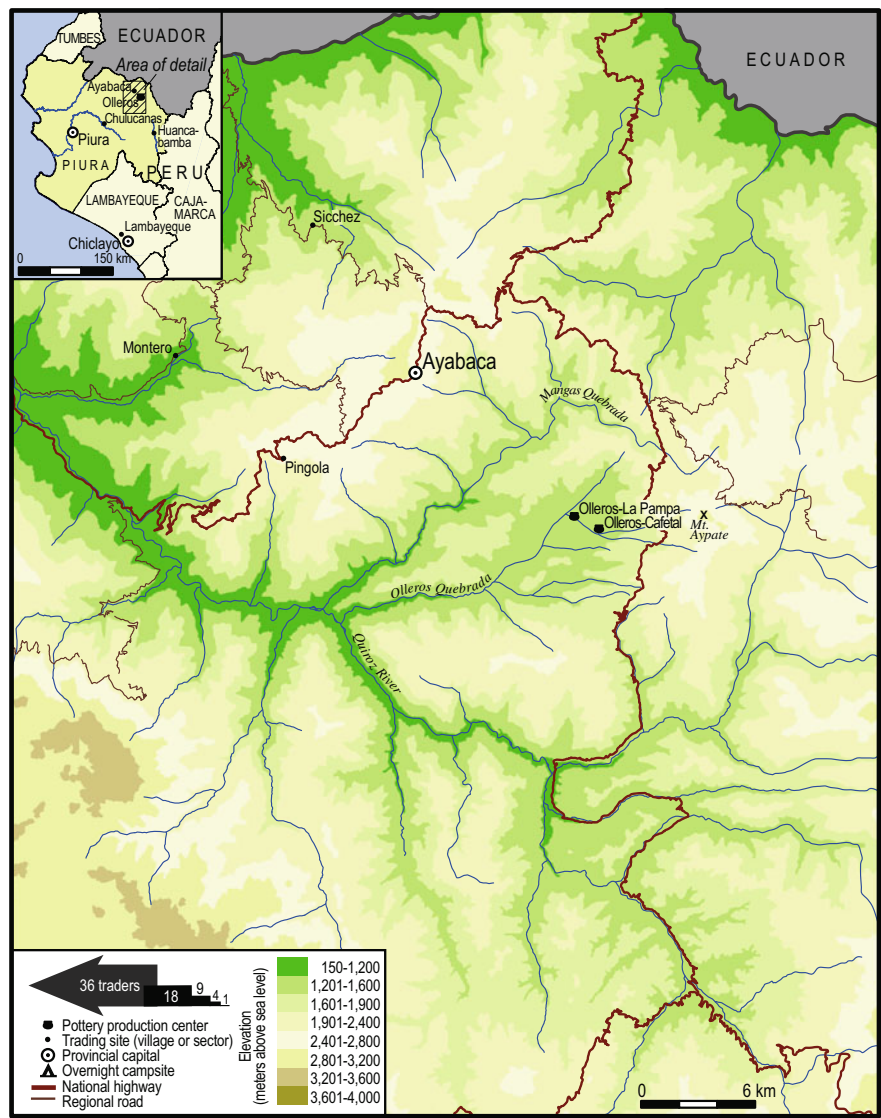


Fig. 2.5 Locations of annual fairs important for pottery trade

for locations of these fairs). Trade during festivals in Olleros occurs in the same way as described above for visiting customers, and in other communities in the same way as normal trading trips.

2.6 Itinerant Potters and Peonage

Itinerant potters are those who travel to locations away from their home community to make pots. These potters, called “swallows,” are described fully by Ramón (2011, 2013). In Olleros it is not very common for a potter to have traveled to other communities to practice her craft. Only three potters interviewed mentioned having participated in this type of activity. In all three cases it was at the request of a particular woman who ordered specific pots, paying the potter in either cash or kind. The places potters reported traveling to are Pintado, Cujaca, and Andurco (see Fig. 2.6). These are usually longstanding arrangements between a single potter and her customer, even spanning generations. For example: Micaela Jiménez works for the same woman as her mother Juana Mondragón did. While it is not frequently practiced in Olleros, itinerant production is a method by which pots are physically distributed over the landscape, and another way that potters can earn an income from pots.

Peonage labor arrangements are yet another way that potters produce pots away from their homes, although they physically remain within the community of Olleros to complete this work. This system usually entails one potter inviting several of her colleagues to her home to work together. The host is expected to provide meals and a day’s wages, and in return the invited potter works the whole day making pots that the host will keep. This is the same as peonage or day labor practices for other types of work. Six potters and one potter’s son (referring to his mother) described participating in this activity. Some potters seem to like this arrangement, describing it as a case of traditional reciprocity (“labor/energy exchange”).¹⁴ Others paint it in a less positive light “I didn’t much like renting myself out as a peon” (Luzmila Parihuamán).¹⁵ Some say that they practiced this activity when they were single but not after marriage (Irma Abad), and that it is way to gain a day’s wages or food (Rosa Jiménez and Orfilia Mondragón).¹⁶ In conclusion, pottery-making peonage represents a way that pots are distributed, a form of community-based exchange, and a way a potter can use her craft to earn income.

¹⁴“cambiaron fuerzas” (Daniel Mondragón, about his mother), “nos hemos cambiado de fuerzas que llamamos” (Luzmila Parihuamán).

¹⁵“Poco me ha gustado así, alquilarme de peona” (Luzmila Parihuamán).

¹⁶“...por ganar cinco solcitos y ganarme la comida” (Rosa Jiménez) and “Me pagaban cositas que uno no tenía pues” (Oralia Mondragón).

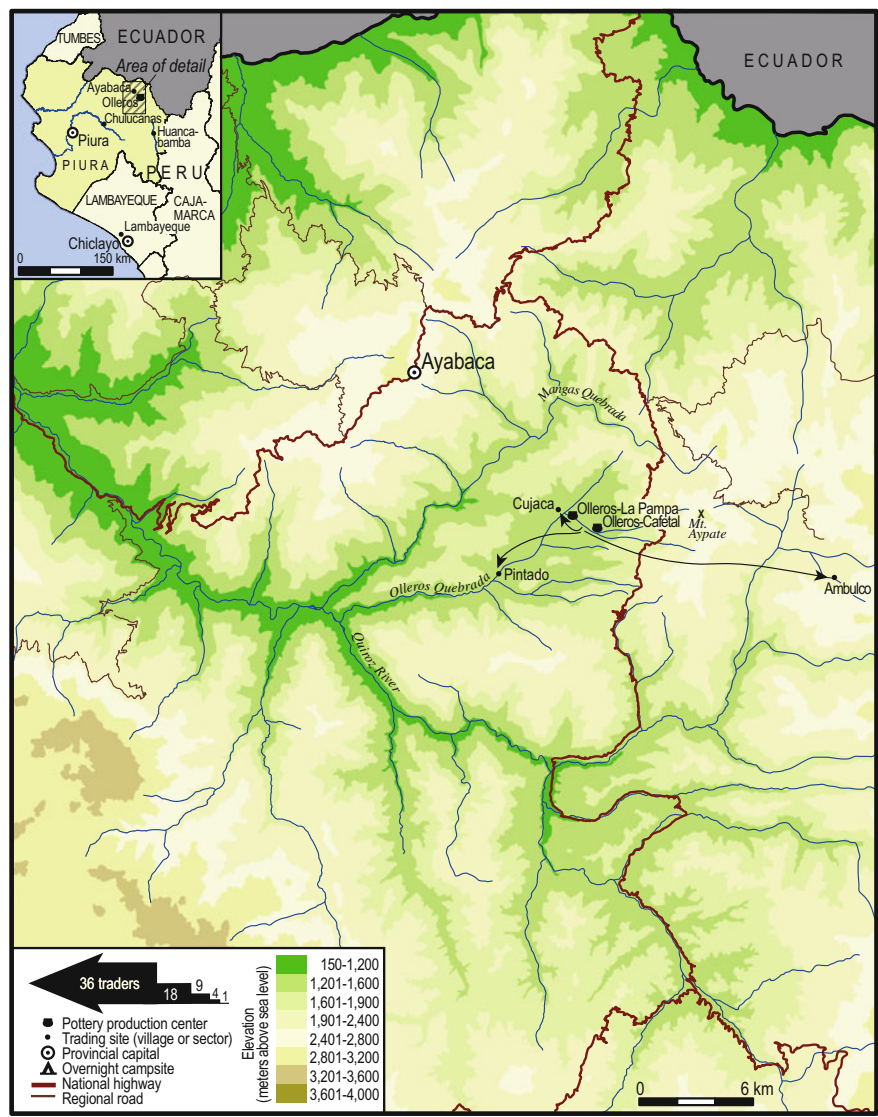


Fig. 2.6 Locations of itinerant pottery production

2.7 Urban Markets

Nowadays, sale in the urban market of Ayabaca is rare, but there are a few market stalls which sell pots from time to time. This is the result of trade between one specific potter (Micaela Jiménez) and the market women. When Micaela brings her pots to Ayabaca, she takes them directly to the market stall to sell. The vendors sum up the

price of the pots. While they sometimes pay her in cash, often Micaela will take home the equivalent monetary value of products from the market stall. Micaela probably would have bought similar products anyway (e.g., rice, noodles, soap), but the benefit to the market woman in this exchange is obvious. The relative unimportance of the Ayabaca market to Olleros potters is discussed in greater detail in Chap. 4.

2.8 Conclusions

Polanyi's (1975) classic categories for understanding the specifics of trade practices are helpful for distinguishing between different methods used to exchange pots from Olleros. The basic analysis of *who* trades *what* and *how* provides a good introduction to pottery exchange. However, making decisions about where to trade implies a much more thorough understanding of local geography, ecology, and agricultural practices, not to mention an appreciation for consumer preferences in terms of both products and exchange rates. These more detailed topics are analyzed in Chap. 3.

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