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The Political Economy of Coca and Cocaine in A Bolivian Yungas Community

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Introduction¹

At the present time Bolivia ranks second only to Peru as a producer of coca (*Erythroxylum coca*) which has grown to become that country's leading export commodity (Kawell 1989:36). In addition, it is estimated that coca constitutes 15% of Bolivia's GDP (Ibid.). A large number of Bolivians, in various social strata and occupations, are directly or indirectly involved in coca cultivation, trading coca leaves and processing of the leaves into cocaine and trading the drug. In 1980, a Bolivian government official in charge of recording and control of production and trade of coca, estimated that as many as 1,000,000 Bolivians were directly and indirectly involved in the cocaine business (Sandagorda 1980:165). Kawell gives a more conservative estimate of 200,000 people directly involved in coca cultivation and cocaine processing, while another 300,000 are in the underground economy dependent on the coca trade (1989:26). According to Henkel some 17,000 farmers are directly involved in the cultivation of coca (1986:53). These numbers, which are all estimates, need to be considered in light of the fact that Bolivia's total population is less than 7,000,000 people. Bolivia's two major coca growing areas are the Chapare region of Cochabamba and the Yungas valleys of La Paz. By 1980 the Chapare region had surpassed the Yungas as Bolivia's leading coca producer (Sandagorda 1980:168). In the Yungas, coca has long been known as "el oro verde" (green gold), the crop which made many great fortunes for some of the region's most important families and provided the local peasantry with a better standard of living than prevailed elsewhere in the country. Yungas coca was of the highest quality for chewing and had long demanded good prices in the traditional internal markets of the highland peasant villages and mining centers. When in the early 1970's the Chapare region began producing coca most of it entered the international cocaine trade while Yungas coca continued to receive better prices in its traditional internal markets. In the late 1970's, as the demand for cocaine hydrochloride rapidly expanded in the United States and Western Europe, the price paid for coca leaf dramatically increased in the Yungas. Even better prices were being offered for coca paste, base and cocaine hydrochloride. It was during this time coca paste began to be processed in the Yungas. Much has been written about the impact of cocaine use in the United States but much less is known about the effects it has had on the many Andean villages where the coca leaf is cultivated and processed into paste. Sidney W. Mintz (1989) has reminded us how coca is historically the most recent of tropical crops, including coffee, sugar, and tea, which

¹I am grateful to Dr. M. Barbara Leons (Department of Anthropology, Towson State University) and my daughter Eve A. Leons for sharing with me some of the ethnographic data contained in this paper. However, I alone am responsible for the data's interpretation.

have dramatically changed not only the Western consumer countries but also the producer countries in the tropical world. Mintz also points out that cocaine, much like the other stimulants, "wreak[s] vast and irreversible changes on producer nations" (32). In this article I propose to delineate some of the major economic and political changes, which in the past two decades have occurred in the Bolivian Yungas canton (county) of San Calixto² as a consequence of its involvement in the production of cocaine.³

Coca in the Yungas Economy

Coca has played a most important role in the Yungas' political economy since pre-Columbian times, indeed the region may have been settled by the Incas in order to cultivate this plant. From the eighteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century haciendas dominated the economic and the political life of the Yungas region (Klein 1985). Prior to 1952, "the time of the haciendas," coca production constituted more than 95% of all cash crops raised in canton San Calixto. This was attributable to transportation problems and the prevailing land tenure system. The transportation of crops from the Yungas to La Paz was both costly and difficult. The high costs involved could only be absorbed by coca, a light weight and high priced commodity. At this time most of the coca was raised on hacienda lands for the benefit of the owners (hacendados), their tenants (colonos or peons) produced only a small amount of coca for sale. The tenants were obligated to devote much of their time to working on the lands set aside for the benefit of the hacendados, in exchange for usufruct rights to land. On their small parcels of land the peons focused on the production of subsistence crops and cultivated small amounts of coca leaf for both personal use and sale to traveling coca buyers from the altiplano (highlands).

Revolution and Land Reform (1952-1970)

The Revolution of 1952 has proven itself to be a watershed event in Bolivia's history. Soon after coming to power the new government proclaimed a land reform decree, and unlike what happened in other Latin American countries, implemented the new act in most of the country. In the Yungas provinces the 1953 land reform swept away the hacienda system, creating a class of small land owners, while eliminating the considerable political powers of the hacendados at the provincial and national levels of government. Following the Revolution Bolivia's government, with substantial U.S. government aid, embarked on a massive road building program and encouraged urbanization in the countryside. One of the main aims of the new government was to make this largely rural and agricultural country an exporter rather than an importer of foodstuffs. This was to be achieved through the colonization of the sparsely populated tropical parts of the country where marketable cash crops for the national and international markets could be grown. It was believed there was a vast national and international market for coffee, citrus fruit, rice and sugar which Bolivia would be able to exploit. In the more densely settled sub-tropical Yungas of

²San Calixto is the fictitious name of a village and also the county of which it is the capital.

³Myrna Cintron (1986) has written an excellent historical article in which she traces the history of coca and cocaine and reactions to coca extracts in Europe and the United States since the 1800's.

La Paz the national government urged the substitution of coffee and citrus crops for coca, since the latter was believed to have a limited market.

In the early 1960s the government's agricultural extension agents were trying to persuade Yungas peasants to cultivate more coffee and citrus fruit in place of the traditional coca crop. The various changes promoted by the Bolivian government during the 1950's and 1960s resulted in a greatly expanded and changed market, profoundly affecting the peoples production and consumption patterns. Before the 1952 Revolution the national market for coffee, citrus fruit and other Yungas crops was limited to a very small urban elite, by 1960 the market for these commodities had expanded dramatically. During the time of the haciendas the tenants had very limited personal involvement in the marketplace. Following the land reform they became small land owning farmers and were consumers of a range of commodities which included canned sardines, bottled beer, kerosene lamps and stoves, and battery powered radios and record players. The Bolivian government's goal of attaining self-sufficiency and becoming an exporter of agricultural products was achieved by 1970.

Political Economy of San Calixto (1952-1970)

The village of San Calixto, like many other "new towns" in Bolivia, rapidly developed in the years following 1952. Drawing most of its population from the ex-haciendas in the canton it further added to its numbers through the settlement of a number of merchants and craftsmen from neighboring colonial towns and the altiplano. People were attracted to San Calixto because of its new road, grade school, potable water system, economic opportunities and stores. For most villagers, who had been born in local haciendas, San Calixto was an exiting place in which to live. In 1969 canton San Calixto was inhabited by an estimated 1,205 people, of this number 522 lived in the village. The canton's inhabitants belonged to various ethnic groups: Ayamara Indian (campesino), negro, mestizo and blanco. These ethnic groups have traditionally occupied different social strata.

Following the land reform, the traditional blanco hacienda owning elite saw its fortunes eclipsed as a new elite, largely composed of mestizo shopkeepers, established itself as the dominant economic and political force in the area. The former Aymara Indian and negro tenants of the haciendas were now mostly poor land owning farmers with little capital and few social links to the outside world. This new farming class in short order created patron-client relationships, which figured prominently in economic and political relations, with the new power holders. These links in part mimicked the now defunct feudal ties which had existed between hacendado and colono, but were dissimilar in that they facilitated a greater market orientation in both economic and social life.

In the years between 1953 and 1969 local agricultural production for the market increased and the traditional reliance on coca as a cash crop was modified. The peasants were now no longer obligated to provide unpaid labor services to the hacendados. It had also, following the completion of the road in 1960, become much easier and more profitable to market coffee and citrus fruits. Finally, villagers were both aware that the national government was ambivalent about the cultivation of coca, and that every year there were fewer people who still chewed the coca leaf as many dropped the habit and the young generally disdained the practice. These factors combined to limit Yungas cultivators enthusiasm for

the crop. Coca was locally seen as a crop of "el tiempo pasado" (the past) and most farmers were taking steps to gradually re-place this ancient crop which for so long had been the mainstay of the local economy. This voluntary and ultimately market directed crop substitution was carried out through planting coffee and citrus trees in well-established cocales (coca fields) and as these trees matured the coca leaf harvest would first decline and eventually cease. There was no local opposition to this process of crop substitution as most of the villagers recognized the necessity of a shift away from reliance on coca.⁴

In 1969 I collected several estimates which indicate a fifty percent reduction, since the early 1950s, in the amount of coca locally produced. Most of this decrease in coca leaf production occurred on lands which before the land reform had been cultivated for the hacendados. Several hacendados left San Calixto following the implementation of the land reform (abandoning their fields) while those who remained were due to labor shortages forced to shift to the cultivation of less labor intensive crops such as potatoes, coffee and particularly citrus fruit. During the 1960s, the canton's new elite, cultivated some coca but they like the ex-hacendados who had remained, found it more profitable to focus on the cultivation of the less labor intensive crops. Coca is a very labor intensive crop and good workers were not easy to attract, in the relatively sparsely settled Yungas, at what was in the 1960s the going rate of \$.32 per day for a woman and \$.50 per day for a man's wage. Were it not for the chronic indebtedness of most of the peasants, only those without land would have worked for the ex-hacendados and storekeepers, since all recognized it to be far more profitable to work their own fields. Various technological innovations such as mule drawn plows, fertilizers, pesticides and primitive tractors were used by those members of the local elite, mostly ex-hacendados, with greatest difficulty attracting workers. Perhaps the most significant break with the past was that some members of the elite now themselves worked in the fields. A fact they did not advertise in the village and certainly not in the capital.

My data shows that in 1969 coca accounted for 60.7% of the villagers income and was thus still the single most important cash crop cultivated. Citrus fruit accounted for 21.7%; coffee 5.7%; and avocados, potatoes, sugar cane, mangoes for the remaining 12% of cash crop derived income. The village storekeepers, who make up the most "modern" sector of the local economy, and were most heavily involved in the market, show this shift towards cash crop diversification and decreasing reliance on coca cultivation most dramatically. For the storekeepers, coca production accounted for only 44.3%, and with citrus fruit, coffee, potatoes and avocados accounting for 53% of their income derived from agriculture. San Calixto's peasants continued emphasis on coca cultivation was almost entirely due to economic considerations. One of the economic realities facing Yungas peasants was their limited ability to experiment with the cultivation of new crops, since their failure was an immediate threat to their survival. Local peasants are very aware that in the recent past such experiments (e. g. sugar cane and potato cultivation) had failed disastrously. The peasants, perennially short on cash, also favored coca because of its reliable harvests, three or four times a year, which brought in ready cash. In addition, coca requires no fertilizers or insecticides, which peasants find too expensive and also do not know how to apply

⁴In other parts of the Yungas, coca cultivation seems to have been less affected by these factors.

accurately.

It is important to note that during the 1960s I encountered no religious or dietary based resistance to the abandonment of coca cultivation. In the more acculturated southern part of the Yungas, coca leaves are masticated by many middle-aged and particularly older peasants, while eschewed by most young peasants and all of the mestizos and blancos. Coca is commonly chewed by mature Indian and negro peasants on social and ritual occasions. In part, because the older peasants are more heavily involved in the establishment and maintenance of social relations than are younger people, coca continues to function as a "lubricant" for them (see Mayer 1986:7). On ritual occasions I observed young men and women accepting coca when offered and then generally quickly spitting out the leaves. When I asked local villagers why they chewed coca the reply invariably was "it's only a custom," one much like having a beer with a relative or friend. When I suggested various dietary explanations for the chewing of coca to informants they demurred pointing out that they eat food when they are hungry. Enrique Mayer, in an article reviewing coca use amongst indigenous people in the Andean area, also dismisses the old myth that people chew coca as a food substitute (1986:4).

Informants recalled how the chewing of coca had been virtually universal among adult Indians and negros in earlier times (pre-1952) but how many had given up the habit in recent years. Several middle aged individuals recollected having been habitual coca users ten or more years ago and how they had abandoned the practice, which they now referred to as a vice. In San Calixto coca leaf mastication was clearly recognized as one of several traits, much like wearing sandals, eating chuu (dehydrated potatoes) or speaking Aymara, which defined one as a campesino, a rural and backward person. To give up any one of these practices moved one closer to ethnic reclassification, for example, from an Indian (campesino) to cholo or even mestizo. In contrast with what Mayer reports, no peasant ever told me they believed coca chewing gave them "energy, wisdom, and courage" (1986:9). The difference in our findings may well be due to the fact that Mayer describes the uses of coca in the "closed corporate" communities of the Andean world while San Calixto is an "open" community where there is less emphasis on the establishment and maintenance of horizontal social ties and there is greater involvement with the outside world.

In the late 1960s there was already evidence for considerable social and economic differentiation within the canton. Villagers distinguished between "the poor ones," "those that have," and "the rich." The "rich" class was made up of mestizo merchants and several blanco ex-hacendados while the other two categories were comprised of negro and campesinos. Economic differentiation did not simply occur along the major ethnic cleavages in the community. At least one negro (a former hacienda owner) and one campesino (a truck owner) were recognized as "rich", both had earnings of more than \$2,000 in 1968 from farming alone. This internal economic differentiation can be demonstrated in part by considering local household differences in cash crop production.

In 1968 some 36 village households earned less than \$500; 24 households between \$500 and \$2,000 and 8 households between \$2,000 and \$3,500. Those classified as "rich," not only had significant earnings derived from agriculture, but in addition at least doubled their income through the buying and selling of cash crops; lending of money; running small general stores; and the ownership of trucks; caches (coca drying facilities) or the

local coca press. These villagers live in households either extended through kinship or by the device of having adopted poor landless workers. These households monopolized the most profitable sectors of the local economy: they owned much of the best lands, and were involved in trade, transportation and money lending. It was within this small group that continual friction over control of political offices and economic resources was expressed. Real and fictive kinship at crucial times functioned to maintain group solidarity within the class against the peasant majority.

Those households in the middle category were largely made up of intact nuclear and extended families, which had received several hectares of land from the land reform, who spent most of their time working their land for themselves. Most of these households were either former tenants of the canton's estates or the children of former tenants who had inherited land. The heads of households in this category were middle aged and elderly adults with children, grandchildren and other kin attached. Households in the lowest category ("the poor") were made up of households headed by single women; elderly widows, people severely affected by tuberculosis, alcoholism or mental illness. Most of these people had received little or no land at the time of the land reform and most of their income was earned through working for more affluent villagers.

In the 1960s many of the local peasant households had one or more of its younger members living either in La Paz or elsewhere in the Yungas. The reasons for migration out of San Calixto most frequently cited by the villagers included the local lack of social mobility, scarcity of land, lack of excitement and limited educational opportunities. Many young people saw village life as boring and longed for a factory job and the bright lights of La Paz.

The canton of San Calixto, and indeed much of the region was under the control of a classic Latin American style of political leader (*cacique*). In this role he dominated the local and regional political economy and functioned as a broker who traded peasant support to the national government in exchange for control over economic assistance to San Calixto. The *caciques* position at this time was quite unassailable and no significant challenger appeared on the local scene.

San Calixto's Political Economy 1970 to the Present

As cocaine has since the late 1970s come to dominate Bolivia's national economy so has it come to powerfully affect San Calixto's political economy. In 1985 coca was by far the village's most valuable cash crop. Coca has greatly increased in importance since the 1960s due to a doubling in its price and a dramatic expansion in the amount of land under coca cultivation. During the years of hyper-inflation, experienced in Bolivia in the early 1980s, coca prices remained stable while the prices of such legal cash crops as coffee and citrus fruits collapsed. The government tried to control inflation through imposing price controls on all legal commodities, since cocaine (as an illegal drug) could not be controlled, it came to serve as a hedge against inflation for the peasants.

The income of many villagers is now no longer limited to the cultivation of coca but is instead largely derived from their involvement in the trading of coca, processing of coca paste and trading the paste. Generally the sons and daughters of Indian and negro peasant households are involved in the buying and selling of coca leaf and in the processing

stage. Some young sons of the elite, have become involved in the more capital intensive and profitable areas of trafficking in cocaine. Since they are vulnerable to arrest by law enforcement agents and lacking the protection of the urban and well organized traficantes (cocaine dealers) they have generally not met with much success.

Most of the local people have directly or indirectly profited economically from the cocaine boom. Although like other instances of dramatic and rapid forms of economic change, this boom has not been without costs. Local villagers increases in real income during the 1980s stands in sharp contrast with the experiences of most other Bolivians who saw their savings wiped out and earnings shrink because of hyper-inflation. As a result urban standards of living have plummeted and a large number of local youths who had left San Calixto in earlier years have returned in order to participate in the bonanza. Several of these youths are quite successful cocaine dealers in the canton.

Although coca is now, even more than during the 1960's, the dominant cash crop villagers continue to grow coffee and citrus fruit and traditional subsistence crops. However, even more than in the late 1960s, people find it often more convenient and more profitable to purchase such dietary staples as rice, plantains and manioc in the local market. Henkel argues that a decrease in the production of food crops in the coca growing regions of Bolivia, has resulted in scarcity and high prices in the altiplano markets. Henkel sees this problem being compounded by a flow of highland workers, at crucial times in the agricultural year, into the Yungas and Chapare (1986:67). The evidence from San Calixto does not support such an interpretation. Locally, the production of all cash crops, not only coca, continues to increase. Also, the flow of migrant workers from the altiplano into San Calixto is an old phenomenon and is continuing at only slightly higher rates. The cause of food and labor shortages described by Henkel for the highlands may be explained by evidence from the Chapare and other of the newer coca growing regions of Bolivia.

The most significant economic change which has occurred in San Calixto since the early 1970s is that virtually all coca leaf is now locally pro-cessed into coca paste and almost none is sold in the traditional internal market. This means that highland peasants and miners often have difficulty in purchasing coca leaves for chewing and ritual uses. It also means that Bolivia's national government, which during the 1960s levied a tax of \$2.50 per tambor (50lb.) of coca shipped out of the Yungas, has seen this important source of income diminish.

It can be argued that economic development has taken place in San Calixto since the 1970's as at least the first stage in the production of cocaine hydrochloride takes place at the local level. As a result of this innovation a host of other changes have occurred in San Calixto. Some of the young men have learned entrepreneurial skills, as local buyers and sellers of coca leaves, a few have learned some chemistry as part of their involvement in the making of coca paste, and most have acquired new work habits quite different from those of their parents. One of the major complaints the older villagers have against local production of cocaine is the involvement of the young men. They complain that they now find it even more difficult than in the past to find agricultural workers and they see the young as lazy and no longer respecting them. Quite clearly a generation gap, not present in the 1960s, has developed. In the past young men learned from older men how to build coales and plant coca as members of juntas (cooperative work groups). In this context

they also learned values specific to work and the proper behavior for adult men. At present it is rare to find young men working with older men in such groups, since they find it more profitable to be involved in the cocaine industry.

The processing of coca paste is quite labor intensive and village children as young as eleven to thirteen years of age are recruited as pisadores (leaf stompers). They are often paid in cocaine, much of which they smoke, giving their mother only part of their earnings. Many of these children drop out of school. It is now rare to hear villagers expressing an interest in improving the local school system, a favorite topic of conversation in the 1960s, when education was seen as a way out of San Calixto and its limited opportunities. At present San Calixto offers to many a far more attractive home than Bolivia's cities with their appalling poverty.

One effect of the local development of the cocaine industry is that fathers find it difficult to get their sons to accompany them to their fields. Many of San Calixto's teenagers prefer to spend most of the day drinking and smoking pitillos (a cigarette made of a mixture of marijuana and cocaine) while their parents work in the fields. When evening falls the young men go out into the surrounding countryside and work all night at processing the coca leaves into paste. A few of the villagers are now addicted to cocaine and live only to obtain money by any means possible for drugs, while others are occasional users suffering no apparent harm. Some individuals seem to have a psychological predisposition to cocaine addiction while others do not. Most of the cocaine users in San Calixto are young men, under the age of thirty, very few women smoke the pitillos. It is in the cities of La Paz or Cochabamba one can see the ravages of cocaine addiction most dramatically.

Since the late 1970s more stores and bars have opened in the village. Much of the increased wealth in the village is spent in the local bars, and alcoholism is now a much greater problem than it was during the 1960s. Local fiestas, last longer and are much more expensive than in the past. More troops of dancers, wearing costly costumes, dancing to the best bands from La Paz, are now involved in the week long celebrations. The consumption of smuggled consumer goods in the village is a new phenomenon and includes TV's, cassette players, refrigerators, propane stoves, freezers, motorcycles, very stylish Italian track suits and Reebok athletic shoes. None of these commodities are of Bolivian or U.S. manufacture. This increase in expensive consumer goods has contributed to an increase in robbery and also to greater physical conflict within the community than was the case in the late 1960s. In contrast to what Henkel reports for the Upper Cochabamba valley, locally there is little evidence of peasant cultivators using their new riches to acquire more land or "green revolution inputs to improve their farming operations" (1986:67). This difference between the two areas is due to the facts that in the Yungas little cultivatable land is for sale and neither the local terrain or crops cultivated readily lend themselves to mechanization or other modernizing in-puts. These factors, and a local history of haciendas, contribute to a more limited development of socio-economic differentiation than Sanabria (1986) reports for the Chapare. This is of course not to argue that socio-economic differences do not exist in San Calixto, nor to argue these have not become more pronounced in recent years, rather that there is little evidence for dramatic qualitative changes.

San Calixto's storekeepers have lost much of their former economic preeminence. Be-

fore 1970 they relied less than the local peasants on coca and more on the cultivation of coffee and citrus fruit. In the light of sharp decreases in the prices of coffee and citrus fruit during the late 1970s and 1980s this may be seen as a miscalculation on their part. Furthermore, since much of the storekeepers income was derived from the buying of coca leaf from clients, and its sale in the traditional market, the entry in the early 1970s of cocaine traficantes (traffickers) meant a drastic reduction in their income. The cocaine traficantes effectively challenged the storekeepers control over both the coca leaf and labor markets. The traffi cantes seemed to have unlimited amounts of money to pay for coca leaf, coca paste and to young people willing to work as coca leaf buyers or as pisadores. The traficantes profits from cocaine, several times as great as the profits made by the storekeepers, allowed them to replace the latter as well as the ex-hacendados as sources of credit for the peasants. The introduction of an alternate source of credit, which had played a crucial role in the establishment and maintenance of patron-client networks, profoundly affected internal political and economic relationships.

Another factor involved in the decline of the storekeepers fortunes is that they are simply not willing to take the great personal and financial risks it takes to become involved in cocaine trafficking. Their aspirations for wealth and power are more limited and have largely been satisfied at the local level. San Calixto's storekeepers present position is reminiscent of that of the ex-hacendados in the 1950s and 1960s. The storekeepers and ex-hacendados were both satisfied with the status quo, unable and unwilling, to pay the high costs involved in adapting to a new economic world. Local economic development is curtailed by the strategies employed by the cocaine traders from outside the community. In order to minimize the economic independence of local villagers, coca traders often pay them for their coca or labor in such goods as Italian track suits, European designer jeans or Japanese cassette players rather than in cash.

The economic differences which existed in the 1960s within the peasant class, and even within the community as a whole, were not as great nor as dramatically visible to all as they are now. Villagers find it much harder to overlook a TV or a refrigerator owned by another villager than the older and more traditional forms of wealth. Although in the past, people often grumbled about the economic and political powers of the "forasteros" (outsiders), as the storekeepers were called, a degree of social acceptance and legitimacy was granted them not assigned to villagers now displaying their new found wealth.

During the 1960s the storekeepers were quite careful to "hide" their wealth which might have differentiated them too sharply from the majority of villagers. They did not live in big houses nor display a standard of living much higher than many villagers enjoyed. They generally owned a greater amount of socially acceptable goods rather than luxury items with no productive value. Goods, such as trucks, owned by storekeepers were seen as legitimate and essential to their role and status in the community. It is noteworthy that before 1970 that not one member of the local elite had a bathroom installed in their houses nor owned a propane fuelled stove or refrigerator. These were amenities many desired and most of the elite could have afforded. In terms of dress mestizo males were quite indistinguishable from that of all but the poorest members of the community. Only when they visited one of the province's old colonial towns or La Paz did they dress in a manner which more accurately reflected their economic and ethnic status. Although

fictive kin ties between mestizo storekeepers and other villagers had many economic and political functions these also functioned to maintain the legitimacy of social relations within the community between competing groups. The storekeepers, much more than the ex-hacendados, were very aware of their tentative (guest) status in San Calixto.

It is hard to over estimate the impact of new consumer goods on the social life of the community. Television is very popular in San Calixto. Those villagers who own TV's are very popular with their relatives and friends, several have also made a lucrative business from selling seats and soft drinks to paying customers. The impact of television viewing on the values, aspirations and world view of the people is great. Most popular TV shows are Brazilian and Mexican "novellas" (soap operas) which show an upper class life style and further stimulate demand for consumer goods. In the fields where men once talked village politics, gossiped about a local soccer match, or someone's sexual escapades now the fate of novella characters are passionately discussed.

Much more than during the late 1960s an atmosphere of secrecy and suspicion pervades the community. People are afraid, with considerable justification, of having their newly-acquired consumer goods stolen by fellow villagers or their involvement in cocaine paste processing or trading revealed to government agents. The generation gap which has developed in recent years and a prevailing atmosphere of secrecy are connected. At present some of the local young people steal in order to support their addiction and others because they simply find it preferable to work in agriculture for a pittance. It is generally the younger villagers who know where the cocaine labs are located and who are most involved in illegal activities while most of the older, more affluent, villagers generally avoid involvement in these affairs. The older villagers, who are afraid of being robbed or killed, frequently criticize the youth of the village for their shortcomings.

In the political sphere profound changes have also occurred. The sindicatos (peasant unions), organized by the government following the Revolution of 1952, are moribund. There is none of the passionate interest in local, national and even international politics present in the 1950s and 1960s. The people's interests now seem to be focused on satisfying their passions for the acquisition of consumer goods. A passion already present during earlier times but which then could not be responded to by the local economy.

The local cacique, like most other members of the elite not involved in the cocaine trade, has lost most of his political influence in village affairs now that he no longer dominates the local economy. During the 1950s and 1960s, the cacique could, with some justification claim credit for the establishment of the village's school, construction of the potable water system, local road and electrification system. These obras (public works) he obtained for the village were expected from him in his role as a recognized broker with the national government. At the present time there is no one cacique in San Calixto. Instead, there are several contending factions, none with a monopoly on power, and lacking the access to governmental institutions once manipulated by the cacique. The leaders of these factions have been unable to establish a health clinic, expand the local school nor improve the potable water system, all changes long desired by the villagers.

At present San Calixto's various political factions are primarily interested in protecting coca cultivation and coca paste production and consequently are in an antagonistic position vis-a-vis the national government. Bolivia's national government in turn is under great

international pressures to curtail cocaine production. This position of course limits local political factions' ability to gain obras (public works) for the village. The community's various factions are also unable to organize the people to work collectively or to impose a property tax on home owners or a business tax on the various stores and traders operating in the canton.

The presence in San Calixto of a large variety of weapons is also a new phenomenon: revolvers, automatic weapons and grenades all contribute to factionalism and a political atmosphere which on occasion borders on anarchy. This is exacerbated by the presence of cocaine traficantes, from Santa Cruz and the Beni region, who compete for access to coca and workers needed in the processing of coca paste. The traficantes mostly blancos, also seek to minimize local village traders' involvement in the more lucrative areas of the cocaine trade through threats and by informing on them to La Paz drug enforcement officials. The cocaine traffickers are of urban middle class background and are generally of higher social and ethnic status than the people of San Calixto. They have good connections with officials in the provincial and national governments which both give them a degree of protection and can be used to minimize competition. As a result of cocaine trade involvement several local youths are now in prison. Because of a high level of violence, many of the sons of San Calixto's mestizo and blanco elite families have left the community for the relative safety of La Paz.

As San Calixto has become much more involved in the external world, many of the villagers have become more cognizant of their low social status as a result of abuses directed against them as Indians and negros and also as peasants. For example, some young men having joined the military and police forces involved in drug control and local villagers generally believe they have been abused and even killed because of ethnic or class background. Many villagers have in recent years been exposed to the indiscriminate violations of their human rights by Bolivia's military and drug control agents when these raided the community on several occasions. These raids did not lead to the eradication of coca bushes or destruction of cocaine refining laboratories but rather involved the physical abuse of men and women, and the theft of much personal property.

In discussing the social costs of the cocaine industry Henkel argues it has "led to widespread corruption among the military, police, and numerous government officials throughout the country" (1986:68). The Bolivian military, police and indeed all government officials, long before the cocaine industry was established, have traditionally been perceived as notoriously corrupt by Bolivians of all walks of life. Bolivia's military and drug control officials are recognized as particularly corrupt and brutal by the villagers. The governments attempts at controlling coca cultivation and cocaine processing has done little to improve its image amongst the peasants. It might be better to argue that with more money around, corruption has reached unprecedented heights and has penetrated the countryside. However, Bolivia's peasants, like those of Peru, are not without either political or military skills in dealing with those forces who seek to destroy their livelihood. Several years ago peasant syndicates from a neighboring town, organized and well armed, chased the military and police out of the villages and they have not since that time returned. At present the national government has no presence in San Calixto. The people of San Calixto now live in great fear that the national government will resort to the use of

herbicides, at the urging of the United States government, in an attempt to eradicate coca.

Conclusions

Bolivia's 1952 Revolution, and the changes which flowed from this event, set the stage for the penetration of a modern capitalist market into the countryside. These market forces, controlled by a new entrepreneurial class, resulted in dramatic changes in the economic and political life of the country. San Calixto's economy, political structure, relations between generations and local values have all unalterably changed through its involvement in the cocaine market over the past decade. This is a new world, neither wholly made nor controlled by people at the local level, and whose future causes much anxiety amongst the inhabitants of San Calixto.

There have been both great costs and benefits as a result of the transformations caused by the cocaine boom in San Calixto. From the perspective of the peasant villagers however, the costs pale in comparison with the gains derived. In comparison, the social dislocation experienced by England's working class during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, the suffering of San Calixto's inhabitants is minimal. Of course, Bolivia is not experiencing an Industrial Revolution but rather is responding to new demands for exotic stimulants from First World countries. Bolivians, like other people of the Third World, do not make bargains wholly on their own terms and are going to find the costs increasingly hard to bear as the benefits vanish. This too is part of Bolivia's long history as a producer of raw materials for distant lands.

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