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CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS
IN BOLIVIAN TIN MINES

by June Nash
City University of New York

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ABSTRACT

Culture, Community, and Class Consciousness in Bolivian Tin Mines

As anthropologists have turned their attention to urban and industrial settings, they are expanding the concept of culture to consider the culture core as a generative base for adapting to, and transforming, reality rather than as a storehouse of beliefs, acts, and understandings inherited and transmitted from one generation to the next. In the analysis of Third World countries undergoing rapid change, traditional customs and social structures provide the basis for resistance to dependency relations fostered in an industrial wage system. Bolivian tin miners are an extreme case of a work force linked to the international market and conscious of their role as producers in the global exchange system at the same time that they identify with aboriginal traditions. It is the thesis of this paper that strong identification with their own cultural roots, reinforced by community solidarity, helps them to overcome the alienation characteristic of an industrial working class. Far from being opposed to militant class consciousness, this enables the tin miners to overcome the opposition of military regimes and coopted populist movements.

CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS
IN BOLIVIAN TIN MINES

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As anthropologists have turned their attention to urban and industrial settings, the concept of culture has undergone change. Edward Tylor's definition of culture--as the beliefs, acts, understandings, etc., inherited and transmitted from one generation to the next--was the cornerstone of functionalist anthropology, which emphasized the role of tradition in maintaining a status quo. The concept of culture is being expanded to include the culture core as a generative base for adapting to, and transforming, reality. Studies of Hausa cattle traders in Ibadan,¹ Rhodesian miners,² Indian steel workers,³ East African pastoralists,⁴ and Andean farmers⁵ show that cultural "traditions" can provide a basis for self-determination in the process of adaptation to change. This view of culture is concerned not only with the transmission of the structured elements of a society, but with the structuring process itself.⁶ This changing view of culture has implications for the analysis of institutions. Family and community have generally been considered the institutional base for transmitting the structured elements of culture. I hope to show in this review of Bolivian mining communities that the conservative tendencies of family and community can provide the basis for generating new forms of resistance to industrial capitalism. Communities with a semi-subsistence base and those which have retained an extended cooperative kinship group are able to resist some of the dependency relations fostered in an industrial wage system. Single-industry towns, especially mining communities where common residence reinforces occupational solidarity,⁷ are especially resistant to the values imposed by capitalist industrial enterprises.

The special characteristics of the work force in developing countries derive from the structural position of workers in the world economy as well as from ethnic differences defined in the community. We can learn a great deal about the genesis of class consciousness by analyzing the potential for reinterpretation and growth in a cultural idiom different from that of the developed centers of the world. Whereas industrial workers of developed countries are insulated from shock in both long- and short-term market fluctuations, industrial workers in developing countries have little protection in trade unions or governmental support. They experience the impact of a change in the price of tin or oil or cotton immediately. Their ability to respond with militant class action, however, is conditioned by the availability of a support system other than a job. This is where

family and community come in. And because these support structures are not underwritten by government welfare systems as in the United States and most European countries, the family and community reflect the militant class consciousness cultivated in the work place.

Bolivian miners are an extreme case of a work force linked to the international market and conscious of their role as producers in the global exchange system at the same time that they retain strong identification with pre-conquest sources of cultural identity. As a result, their class consciousness is intrinsically tied to an awareness of the global division of labor, in which they feel themselves to be exploited not only as a working class in opposition to a managerial elite but also as nationals of a dependent economy subject to domination by developed centers. As a class, they are more aware of international relations than are their counterparts in the United States. As a cultural enclave, they are less alienated than the majority of the working class of industrial nations, since they are not cut off from the base for self-identification and communication that is still generated in the mining communities. The alienation of the working class takes on a more concentrated meaning in the tin-mining community.

The Cultural Roots of Working-Class Identity

The culture of transition in the industrial setting is that of the cholo. Miners are, as a group, very mobile, and many chose to go to the mines because those were the only places where there were schools and the wages opened up at least the illusion of a better standard of living. However, becoming a cholo offered only a partial entry into the culture of the dominant Spanish-speaking group; it held the promise, but not the reality, of full admission into the national society. Cholos speak Spanish, but are not always functionally literate. They wear an adaptation of the early-independence style of clothing, but the pollera (a voluminous skirt worn by women), even when made of synthetics, is distinctly different from modern dress, and the derby hat is an emblem of ethnic identity. Some cholos learned to despise the "ignorance and backwardness" of their Indian origins, but not to participate fully in the dominant culture. Women who have more than a primary-school education often reject wearing the pollera that identifies them as cholas. Within the same family, sisters will often have different styles of dress and identify with entirely different segments of the national culture because of educational differences. Children of the same parents may be labeled differently on their birth certificates as "blanco," "mestizo," or even "indio."

The cholo culture is, then, heterogeneous. However, when cholos were drawn into industrial mining communities, the solidarity of a class working in the same enterprise enabled the workers to incorporate many different groups. Miners are recruited from both Quechua- and Aymara-speaking communities, as well as from mestizo populations of the altiplano and the Cochabamba valley. Since many are third-generation mine workers, they are often indirectly tied to a campesino background. Often parents are of different language groups and Spanish is the language of the home. Even when both parents speak the same Indian language, Spanish may be preferred

in order to advance the children's opportunities. Quechua is spoken more frequently than Aymara, which is always combined with Quechua words. Language is not a basis for tribal identification, and whatever conflicts existed have been worked out within family and neighborhood primary groups.

The tensions generated in the mobile cholo culture are mitigated in the mining communities, where the homogeneous housing and life-style limit competitiveness between cholo subcultures. The mobility of the individual miner is in contradiction to the communal sharing cultivated in the encampments. What tips the balance in favor of class solidarity is the inability of a flagging economy to permit economic or social advancement for the vast majority of workers.

Within the cholo culture of the mines, there is a dialectical tension between egalitarianism and paternalism. The search for a patron is institutionalized in the compadrazgo relationship and in the fiestas given to saints. Saints are believed to have varying degrees of luck which can be exploited by the lavishness of the fiestas offered to them. Since saints, like people, feel envy if one is not loyal to them, people tend to cultivate a single saint. Cholos often say of saints that they are "very evil," but this is taken as a sign of power and people feel that this can be manipulated to one's advantage.

Bolivian cholo culture differs from that of Peru and from the rota culture of Chile. Bourricaud speaks of the cunning and violence of the cholos in Peru.⁸ He quotes José María Arguedas regarding the cholo "who no longer lives or belongs to the ayllu [territorially based kinship group] but he is constantly reminded of the fact that he comes from it," to capture the cholo's marginality.⁹ Cotler sees the cholo culture as a more positive product of the dislocation and migration that serve to break the mestizos' monopoly of control over Indian communities.¹⁰ By providing alternative sources of goods and services, the cholos open up new centers of social identity.

The difference in Bolivian culture, at least in the mining communities, is that cholos are the central figures, not intermediaries between a subordinated Indian group and a superordinate ladino group (claiming European descent). In their mining centers they have found a basis for social solidarity and collective action. This is based on their ability to weave together the different cultural strands in family and community contexts.

Pre-conquest myths and rituals were an important means of transcending the culture shock of the Indian population that entered the mines in the colonial period. The sense of fear that came with the violation of the earth and descent into the domain of Huari, "the Spirit of the Hills," was explicitly reflected in a myth that encompassed both the pre-conquest and colonial periods. According to this myth, the invasion of the Inca into the land of the Uru Uru--the present site of Oruro, a major mine center in the highlands south of La Paz--brought to an end a kind of Garden

of Eden in which the Uru Uru were pastoralists and agriculturalists. The people subsequently turned from agriculture to work in the mines. They were delivered from plagues brought upon them because of their indolence and vice by the Inca virgin, Nusta. The return of the four plagues--a giant reptile, a serpent, a toad, and a swarm of ants--can be related to the Spanish conquest. This threat was overcome by the Virgin of the mineshaft, and chapels were erected at the site of the slain monsters. Ritualistic sacrifices of llamas--in which the llamas' hearts are offered to Huari (whose image is found in the deserted shafts of most mines) and in which blood is splashed in the dangerous places--are a continuation, within the mines, of rituals earlier carried out by the agriculturalists. These rituals re-enact a strategy of appeasement and restoration. The offering of the blood and palpitating heart of a sacrificed llama to "the Spirit of the Hills," familiarly called "uncle," satisfies Huari's appetite so that he will not "eat" the miners. In addition, the offering of a sacrificed life is felt to restore the equilibrium of productive forces upset by mining. The foreign technicians were tolerant of these customs, and the former major mineowner, Simón Patiño, joined in the ceremonies. The Bolivian technicians who replaced the foreigners after nationalization of the mines rejected them, however, possibly because of their own alienation and desire to separate themselves from the traditional culture. As one miner told me at a ch'alla (a weekly ritualistic offering of liquor and coca to the "uncle"):

Today the jefes that we have are nationals, and they are inattentive to the rituals. They believe themselves to be great señoritos who do not want to mix into the beliefs of the pueblo or of the workers. And because of this, the mines are declining. There is not as much production today.

Most of the miners feel that these beliefs are in no sense contradictory to the modernization and industrialization processes of which they are such an integral part. A young miner with a secondary school education said:

The ch'alla this year was better than ever before. The miners are modernizing this kind of ch'alla; now the worker automatically goes to work on Tuesday, or Friday, puts his coca, his cigarettes, his alcohol, his liquor, and whatever else he uses and makes his offering to the Uncle.

In his view, this systematization of the ritual as part of an automatic work habit was the modernizing element and presented no contradiction with the past. It reminded me of the Taylor principle in work processes, where the modernizing aspect is the automatic performance regardless of content or whether the segmentation of the task structure actually means greater efficiency.

The cult of the "uncle"-reinforces the solidarity of the work group. Prior to nationalization of the mines, when teams

were contracted to work a mining site and were paid in proportion to the mineral output, the inner solidarity of the team was opposed to other work groups. The ch'alla was performed to wheedle more output from the Devil, as each team competed against others. After nationalization, the individual worker was paid a basic wage regardless of the mineral produced, and solidarity included not only the entire work force of the mine, but of all nationalized mines. The ch'alla became more of a recreation than a basis for solidarity in the productive work group. Following the military's takeover of the mines in 1965, the ch'alla was repressed along with unions and worker control. Workers continued to perform the ritual in secret, however, and these sessions became a focus for discussing the problems and struggles of the workers. Just as other pre-conquest rituals--such as the "Warming of the Earth" ceremonies celebrated on June 24, the day of Saint John--became more explicitly the ritual expression of the desire to live, to multiply, and to enhance the reproductive and productive sources of life, so also did the ch'alla. Resistance to military repression by the men and women of the mining community came from these deep wells of cultural identity that gave them a sense of worth and the will to survive when they recognized the genocidal power of the military regime which came to power in the 1964 coup that ended populist rule.

Separation of the indigenous customs in time and space from those of the Catholic religion imposed on the people gave greater viability to the traditions, in contrast to those cultures of Latin America in which syncretism characterizes the relationship between Catholic and indigenous rituals. With the Virgin assigned to her niche in the church, and the saints in their neon-lit boxes at level zero of the mines, the "uncle" could maintain his dominion more effectively below ground and the Pachamama--the time-space concept identified with "Earth Mother"--the tie to the earth and its fertility. Cholo culture maintained this anchorage for the industrial workers, who were only partially admitted into the industrial era.

Carnival remains the pinnacle in the yearly cycle of rituals that vindicate cholo culture and the methods by which its members deal with their living conditions. It is a dramatization of the occupational and ethnic roles into which Indians, Blacks, and Mestizos were thrust: llameras (llama herders), morenadas (blacks who served in the vineyards), negritos (blacks of the Caribbean), tobas (Indians of the lowlands), and diablos (devils, the Spanish identification of the "uncle"). In Carnival's polymorphous and perverse dance combinations, whites play blacks, men play women, and all the contradictions of their lot in life are transformed into their opposite and transcended. Weaving in and around the dance figures are the Condors, Bears, and Hedgehogs--the totem of Oruro--which remind people that these enchanted figures can still make all dreams come true.

Cholo culture is an adaptive mode for adjusting to an industrial scene, but it does not provide a basis for changing the scenario. The fluid social ties, coca chewing, and stress on commercialization

are adjustive mechanisms which maintain humanity in inhuman working and living conditions. Even mobility, the striving for self-improvement, is adjustive since it provides limited entry to a few positions of influence in the dominant society and, by coopting the talented tenth, cuts off leaders from the masses of cholos. In the adjustment to the new, the technique of complementary distribution permitted cholos to retain elements of the old Indian culture that gave them the strength to resist the alienating effects of the industrial setting and to survive in the harsh physical and social environment of the mines. Instead of confronting the power structure which produced the conditions of exploitation, it provided the myths that justified polarized wealth, and cultivated a desire on the part of workers to become a part of that dominant group. On the other hand, it is a milieu in which cholos become conscious of their class position and identify their frustrated mobility with a common understanding of their problems. Thus the cholo culture stimulates aspirations and desires that cannot be met for more than a small minority, and it is out of these frustrations that a class awareness is born.

Class Consciousness

The class consciousness of industrial workers post-dated the factory system of production by over a century, emerging in explicit form about 1839-40.¹¹ The time period for the development of class consciousness in Bolivia was eclipsed to two decades following the industrialization of mining in the Patino mines beginning about 1886. The shortening of this incubation period was in part due to the transplanting of anarcho-syndicalist and socialist conceptions of society by European emigrant workers entering Bolivia from Argentina and Chile about 1910,¹² as well as to the opening up of communication and contact with other regions of Bolivia. Shortly after the Russian revolution, class consciousness was carried into organized syndical activity. The labor strikes beginning in 1918, and peaking in the 1923 Uncía massacre, established the miners' modern industrialized consciousness.

Marx's distinction between a class in itself, or a group which has not as yet formulated a consciousness of its identity in opposition to the capital-owning class, and a class for itself, or the development of a theory about its place in society and a program to change it, established the basis for assessing consciousness in working-class movements. Lukacs further distinguished the actual ideas men form about class and ascribed class consciousness, or the theoretical constructs which could be derived from objective conditions.¹³

Most discussions about class are meta-theories of the second category--that is, they put the conditions observed in a set of propositions the theoreticians would derive if they were experiencing those conditions. This does not always coincide (or perhaps never coincides) with the ontological propositions of the men and women in the work setting. Even notions of poverty, of excessive labor, of insufficient nutrition are relative to a theory of what the worker should get if he were justly compensated. In the case of cholo miners, the very fact that they are mobile makes them assess their condition

in life in terms relative to the Indian culture from which they came and to the national culture to which they aspire. The contradiction between the mobility drives cultivated in a context of bourgeois identification and the limitation set on those mobility drives forces an identification with the community in which they live. When they accept the fact that their mobility depends on that of their class as a whole, there is a basis for a class-conscious movement. In order to better grasp some of these elusive concepts, I shall focus on four themes that are treated in the theoretical literature on class consciousness--identity as a class, alienation, and their corollaries, dependency and exploitation--and attempt to sort out the ideas which the men and women of the mining communities form about their class condition.

Identity as a class. If we take Gramsci's formulation of the three stages of ideological transformation--from (1) economic corporative, or one trader with another, to (2) solidarity of all members in a social group defined in the economic field, and (3) awareness that one's own corporative interests transcend the narrowly defined group and can become the consciousness of other subordinated members¹⁴--the cutting edge of a collective movement comes in transforming the sentiments developed in stage 2 to those of stage 3. As an example of this, I shall take the cholos' frequently expressed anger and frustration against technicians and show how this complaint is transformed, in the rhetoric of trade-union organizers, into protest. In the views expressed below by labor spokesmen representing differing ideological orientations, we can see the transformation from stage 1 to stage 3.

When miners feel themselves or their children to be blocked in gaining access to middle-class posts in the technical or administrative ranks, they often turn against the technicians, whose relative power and privilege is accentuated by a pay scale which seeks to maintain engineers' salaries at levels comparable to world market prices while depressing labor's rate of return to below-subsistence levels. "The jefes," one miner told me, "earn four thousand bolivianos [about U.S. \$400], and we earn four hundred bolivianos [about U.S. \$40], a little less than enough to earn our daily bread."

A worker who interrupted his studies in Oruro's university in order to help support his family carried this same complaint one step further toward defining the condition of the miner:

The president of the company earns \$b23,000 [about \$U.S. 1950] a month, but a worker gets only \$b300 [\$U.S. 25]. They only earn big salaries in the bureaucratic section of the administration--some in dollars and another part in Bolivian bills. And the ones who bear the burden of the work are the workers, whose contribution ought to be recognized. They ought to be paid 100 percent of what they earn, not the miserable \$b200 or \$b300 they get. . . . and there are technicians who never show their aptitude, any special knowledge or ability. They come into the mine rarely and only say "here, hurry up!" This does not demonstrate technical capacity. . . . This

bureaucracy is a calamity! . . . They should know our suffering. . . . I want to make them know the reality of the miner. I am the son of a miner, and now I am working in the mines, and I am going to do what I can to help them. They are the subsistence base of the community, but they are the class that suffers most.

The use of the term "they" reveals the distance which this man places between himself and his co-workers, perhaps because of his university education. In contrast, the rhetoric of trade-union leaders is the inclusive "we," as the speech of a candidate for secretary-general of the miners' union reveals. Summing up the essence of the miners' discontent, he relates it to a more global statement of the problem:

The engineers earn in dollars and they produce less than we do. The workers earn less and produce more. We have to earn for the engineers, the lawyers, and the colonels and we pay for their errors. Our mechanics know better than the theoreticians the problems inside the mine. The workers always have to work for the rest. For every 300 workers there are 20 engineers. There are technicians of oil, technicians of designs, all are useless. When they travel to other mines, they receive \$b100 a day. This comes from the ribs of those workers. When we receive a bonus, they receive the same percentage, but they have higher salaries. Our capitalists do not help their country. They save their money in foreign banks. The miners are maintaining the country.

Here the labor union leader transforms the complaints of the workers into a theory about the relationship of the exploited underground worker to the managerial bureaucracy and the expropriation of surplus value by a capitalist state. In his final statement he even pushes classical Marxist theory into an understanding of dependency relations and the uneven development of world capitalism, by pointing out that Bolivia's capitalists do not even carry out their function of capital accumulation within the country.

Another aspiring labor leader attacked not only the bureaucratic state apparatus but the penetration of monopoly capital from abroad:

Monopolistic state capitalism [referring to COMIBOL] is nothing but the administrator of foreign monopolies. We want the deepening of the revolution and we are going to ask for it with the workers themselves because they are the ones who have decreed the profundization of the revolution in Bolivia. We comrades are the ones who have won the democratic conquests and the civil liberties of our country. No government has given them to the others. This is the reason we must go out in the streets and demonstrate to the feudal reactionaries, comrades, in the United States of America and give them an

injection and put on a politics of ulupica [herbal medicine] to take out the blindness to real life. I believe, comrades, that imperialism in this time in our country is acting like a dog making turns chasing his tail. It is necessary to point out, comrades, this initiative role of the working class to the other labor sectors and unite their revolutionary forces in order to show North American imperialism and those who put themselves up in this country without permission of the working class.

These three statements point to different programs for transforming the position of the working class. The first looks toward gaining for workers a greater share of the surplus generated within the system. The second, the position of a PRIN political activist, points to a kind of worker control or participation in management whereby the workers gain a greater role in the organization of work. The third, spoken by a political leader of the Fourth International or Trotskyist orientation, relates the nationalized enterprise to the external market control systems and attacks imperialism. The fact that the second speaker won his union election says more about the particular historical circumstances in which the workers were operating than it does about the level or weight of opinion. The mining communities had only recently emerged from some of the most brutal repressive actions carried out by Barrientos. Most miners attributed the massacres of 1965-1967 to the penetration of U.S. imperialism, exercised through its agent, Barrientos, in the interest of carrying out the prescription of the Triangular Plan. They were not willing to risk a confrontation at this point, however, since they were still in a stage of recuperation. Their wages were the primary reference point in making demands on the system, and the memory of the confrontation with an army well-equipped with M-1s and bazookas on the fields of Hilbo and Sora Sora was too fresh for them to want to link their trade-union demands to an attack on imperialism. There was no less class consciousness in 1970 than in 1961 when the miners of Siglo XX-Catavi elected Federico Escobar, the PCB leader who was, as the workers said, the "most combative" of the leaders running that year.

It should be emphasized that the term "leaders" is not an absolute category. The moment that some individuals in the encampments moved from private statements of discontent to an analysis of that discontent within a wider framework, and began to organize others, often in opposition to the official leaders, they became recognized as "people who have earned the right to speak for us." Leaders in office who become spokespersons for the government or COMIBOL are soon recognized as "oficialistas" who no longer represent the sentiments of the community. This process is as true of the women in the encampment as it is of the male workers. Demitila, a miner's wife who was jailed for her outspoken opposition to the massacres, spoke of this process among the women in the 1961 strike:

When they stopped sending in food to the encampment and cut off the payment of wages, then the idea rose among those women whose husbands were imprisoned and they

saw the necessity of organizing. The wife of Escobar went to ask the freedom of her husband and did not gain it on her part alone, and the wife of Pimental went alone on her part and failed. Then they saw the necessity of unifying the women in a front to go ask the freedom of their union leaders and at the same time to demand provisions in the pulperia which they had cut off for a month. We had nothing to give for food; there were not even wages with which to buy food. They had even cut off the water. Then the committee organized a delegation to go to La Paz and there they declared a hunger strike.

This identification of the housewives with the workers during the strike reinforced the communities' class solidarity. It was at that point that massive military force was mobilized to overcome the growing unity in the protest.

Alienation. Marx pointed to the sources of alienation in capitalist society as (1) separation of the producers from the product, or the alienation of surplus value, (2) separation of the producers from the means of production, which forces them to become dependent on the owners of capital in order to make a living, and (3) separation of the producers from the sense of meaningful self-involvement in the work process. A fourth source of alienation is the separation of the worker from the sense of identity with a community. Marx did not develop this source of alienation since he assumed that the solidarity of workers in the factory would be the basis for their vanguard action. However, workers in industrial centers have been deprived of that identity with community which provides the moral basis for human action extending beyond self-interest.

When the process of alienation of labor is complete in all spheres, there is probably little basis for rebellion and revolution. The sense of the self being denied comes from some reinforcement of what this means, either within the work process or in the community. The quality of life in the mining community, by virtue of the retained roots of cultural identity, defies the process of reification that Lukacs speaks of,¹⁵ which arises when a society learns to satisfy all of its needs in terms of commodity exchange.

In the Bolivian tin mines, the process by which the worker is cut off from control over the work process and the distribution of rewards has been intensifying. Nationalization of the mines increased the workers' alienation, contrary to their expectations. The repression of trade unions under Barrientos, and later under Banzer, confirmed the separation of the workers from the organization of production. The only sphere in which a modicum of control remains is that of the community, where the politicization of the people continues to grow.

1) Alienation from the rewards of work. The returns from productivity are doubly expropriated in dependent economies: first from the workers who are paid less than the value of their marginal productivity or whatever other rationale is used to calculate their wage, and second from the nation's sale of raw materials or semi-processed goods in a market over which the nation has little or no control. Tin has constituted from 42 to 75 percent of Bolivia's exports in the twentieth century. When private companies expropriated the profits of the mines, they controlled the country's politics. After nationalization of the mines, paradoxically, the MNR government became increasingly dependent on foreign aid. These debts tied Bolivia to heavy interest obligations and required that imports come from the United States, even when some of the needed tools and supplies could have been purchased more cheaply in other countries.

In colonial days the mines enriched the merchants and kings of Spain. In the early decades of the twentieth century, they enabled Patiño to expand competitive production in Malaya. In the nationalization period, the riches of the mines made it possible for the government to build up the oil industry in Santa Cruz. Very little remained in the mining centers. When the military regime of Barrientos took over, the returns from the mines supported the army.

This sense of double expropriation, from workers in an exploitative industry and from citizens of a dependent nation, is sharply felt in the mining community and takes expression in denunciations of both the COMIBOL bureaucracy and imperialism. The attack on U.S. imperialism is a constant and never-ending theme among the workers and their leaders. Every candidate for the office of secretary general of the union in 1970 stated an anti-imperialist platform. According to the PRIN candidate:

Bolivia's economy is set in a field of simple, primary materials. . . . Its economic, social, and institutional structures are conditioned by the needs and pressures of the imperialist countries.

He proposed a revolutionary plan of anti-imperialism, opposed to occupation by external economic forces, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other "opponents of socialism." The Communist Party leader placed his anti-imperialist position in opposition to the MNR and its offshoot, the PRIN, stating "It is necessary to have a vanguard party that is of the working class, but you cannot find this in a party that has betrayed the workers since 1952." The Fourth International contender was more specific in his attack on imperialism: "We must prevent a restructuring of unions on the basis of 'free unionism' or 'yellow unionism' [a reference to the U.S.-based ORIT school] which just atomizes the union movement." He called for the expulsion of the CIA, an end to the alienation of national resources, and termination of the indemnity to the Gulf Oil Corporation.

Anti-imperialism was a unifying slogan to draw support from sectors of the middle class and students as well as workers, because nationalization provided work for technicians and professionals who replaced the foreigners--but the level of workers' gains declined, especially in the second decade after the revolution. Both President Ovando and his successor, Torres, attacked imperialism in their speeches, but their inability to overcome dependency relations with the United States crippled their ability to make their nationalistic programs work. When Torres appeared to be succeeding in attracting capital from the Soviet orbit in 1971, he was no longer tolerable to the United States.

2) Alienation from the means of production implies dependency on the jobs provided by capital owners. By reviewing the changing mode of production in the history of Bolivian mining, we can perhaps gain a sense of the causal relationship between forms of ownership and control over the labor force.

In colonial mining, the technological input was minimal and consequently the amount of capital needed to enter mining was minor. The hand mallet and drill, the carbon lamp, leather bags and helmets were produced at low cost by local craftsmen. The only thing that prevented a large number of small contractors from going into the mines for their own profit was ownership of the mine-site in the major centers, combined with the coercive mita labor system. With the advent of industrial mining at the start of the twentieth century, metal carts, lifts, and, later, mechanized drills increased the capital required to enter into competitive production. The need for a coerced labor force not only lessened as the capital requirements eliminated the competition of small independent entrepreneurs; in fact, such a labor force became counter-productive as the risks to expensive capital goods from worker sabotage increased. Workers were tied to the job through consumer dependency cultivated in the pulperias. This was further reinforced by the paternalistic dependencies which developed in mining communities, where the company supplied not only the main food stocks but the dwelling places, hospital, and school for workers. Whenever the workers developed a strong united front to fight for wages, the managers responded by closing the pulperia. If a strike persisted, they followed this up with a lock-out. The lack of alternative employment assures that the workers must rely on the mines as the source of their life.

3) Alienation from the work process is the focus of much of the sociological literature on industrial relations which concentrates on "social isolation," "powerlessness," "meaninglessness," "self-estrangement," and "normlessness," to use Seeman's categories.¹⁶ Most often, studies are conducted without reference to other forms of alienation or to the framework in which it is cultivated. Control over the means of production has become increasingly concentrated as the technology of production has grown more complex. Third World dependence on technology from the industrial centers has, as Harry Magdoff points out, cultivated a lack of self-confidence and reliance on foreign expertise.¹⁷ The work process is defined in

terms of technological imperatives which may or may not be required for efficient operation, but which are often not questioned.

The organization of work in Bolivian mines has eroded the autonomy of the work group and reinforced the authority of the technicians. Scientific and safe exploitation of the mines obviously requires sound engineering principles to control the advance in the pits. This, however, has not been followed up by training workers to enable them to enter into management. In the kinero system favored by the rosca, the worker was paid for the mineral content of what he produced. He was highly motivated to use all his ingenuity and senses to work the veins. Miners used their skill, exploiting their bodies and their souls, which they "sold" to the Devil in their desire to find the metal. Some would work up to 20 hours at a stretch and even sleep inside the mine during the quest. Although the payment in relation to brute loads introduced after the revolution may have been a fairer system from an overall industrial perspective, it negated that intelligent involvement of the workers' faculties. Worker control failed to cultivate the abilities workers had developed in the old system of production. Instead, it served to heighten the conflict between workers and management and technicians by serving as a brake on supervisors without implementing worker initiative in production.

The Triangular Plan was a further step toward controlling the workers in the plans for nationalization of the work force. In addition to cutting down the number of workers, it attempted to combine a speedup with reduced contract payments; the increased alienation was expressed in the series of strikes between 1961 and 1963.

4) Alienation and the community. In periods of crisis, a sense of community may be reinforced or come into being. Turner defines the meaning of community, or "communitas" as he prefers to call it, as "consciousness and willingness, insofar as they exist, [which] constitute a social bond uniting these people over and above any formal social bonds which are due to the existence of regulated social relations and organized social groups."¹⁸ He shows how communitas emerges in periods of anti-structure when the society is in a stage of liminality. This threshold condition, in which the usual structural processes are in abeyance, is a period when "undifferentiated, equalitarian, direct, nonrational (though not irrational) behavior is manifested."¹⁹

To the extent that the community has these generative bonds of new growth, the people can sustain the most brutal attacks. The mining community has demonstrated the strength of these sentiments that carry it through such periods. It provides the resistance against alienation that is the essence of the work system in industrial centers. When company officials recognized this, they tried to destroy it by firing or sending into exile the husbands of those women who focalized the sentiments of communitas, thereby breaking the primal base of solidarity. The rituals in the mind, the ch'allala to the Pachamama and the offerings

to the enchanted spirits, are all reminders in normal periods of the root sources of *communitas*,

Dependency and Exploitation. Alienation from the means of production creates a sense of dependence on the owners and managers of capital goods. This consciousness, which is endemic in the mining population, is in dialectical opposition to the feeling of exploitation which comes from alienation from the distribution of rewards. The lowering of wages and control of workers in the organization of tasks in the nationalized mines especially after 1965 could continue only because the lack of alternative employment possibilities compelled the workers to remain on the job. Management played on the workers' fears of losing their only basis of subsistence in the labor conflicts of 1946-51, and after nationalization from 1961 on, when they carried out the masacres blancos (white massacres), or mass layoffs. When resistance persisted, they used masacres rojas (red massacres), or bloodbaths, to end the conflict, notably during 1949-51 and 1965-67.

The psychological effect of the fear of layoffs inhibits the militant action of a class fully conscious of the exploitation they endure. Francisca, who had worked on the slag pile since she was 12 years old, expressed the workers' fear:

The Second World War ended in 1945. In 1946 and 1947 there was not much need for this part of Latin America to take out tin. Then we were not well off. There was no need for our tin. There was no need for hands to continue working. Then the mines began to decline and there was unemployment. The unemployment rose [here she used flotar, floated, like the scum of non-usable ores in the flotation process of the preconcentration plants].

I worked since I was twelve collecting mineral from the slag pile. There were *pirkiñeros* in this time and we used to produce two or three pounds or even four pounds each day. Sometimes they cut us off from that and we went without eating up to two days, chewing coca. My father was dead. I had an older brother who went to Potosí. My sister was still small. My mother knew how to work, breaking up the mineral for our daily bread. They used to pay us ten bills for a pound of mineral. We worked all day from early morning. We worked like a man with a shovel. Sometimes we went into the mines to take out the mineral. We had to work or we wouldn't have been able to eat.

When the workers developed a strong union, the managers often responded by threatening to close the mines. This woman's husband commented on the management's threat to close San José in 1957 when the union was at the peak of its success in gaining worker control:

It is a threat that puts fear in the workers. It is like a weapon for them to threaten us. A worker knows more than they do about where the mineral is. They frankly do not know the mine. Itos has plenty if the technicians wanted to

prepare it and develop it. If they only want to "eat" from one place, that gives out. They ought to search elsewhere.

The decision to close the mine was blocked by engineers and government officials who recognized the threat to the basic economy of Oruro. But such threats were always present and served to tame the workers' protest.

Feelings of dependency cultivate a sense of the need for a patron in order to gain some security in a threatening situation. In the mines, this was countered by the strong egalitarian tendencies and communal exchanges existing in the encampments, but it survived as a strategy. Patron-client relationships, usually institutionalized in the *compadrazgo* relationship, reinforced the sense of dependency and the super- and subordination that undermine the drive toward self-determination. It entered into and defined some of the relationships within the union. The potential leaders as well as those elected to office were the most vulnerable to paternalistic cooptation, because management worked directly on them to limit protest action. These vulnerable union leaders became the only beneficiaries of paternalism, which formerly had been more diffuse. Their own dependence on management and political leaders limited the development of a worker-directed organization.

In contrast to the U.S. labor movement, alienation in the Bolivian working class is derived more from the exploitation inherent in global productive relations than from the work process itself. This is a corollary of the country's position in the world market system. In advanced industrial centers, redistribution of profits serves as a stimulus to the economy by enabling workers to become consumers and buy the goods produced. When Henry Ford raised his workers' wages, he did it so that they would buy the cars he was able to produce cheaply and plentifully on the newly introduced assembly lines. In Bolivia, where the major enterprises produce minerals or oil for an external market, there is not even this incentive for business to raise wages or for the government to step in and effect, through taxation or minimum wage laws, a redistribution of income. When this occurred in the early days of the MNR, it was sharply criticized by U.S. advisors, who argued that it increased the inflationary spiral. Thus, the dependency relationship between an underdeveloped country and the dominant industrial centers limits the ability of working-class organizations to affect the flow of capital even more than in the developed centers. In the United States, the greater return to labor reduces their awareness of exploitation. Their trade-union activities are directed toward limiting work output on the job. In contrast, Bolivian trade unions phrase their resistance in more global political statements. The fact that U.S. intervention supporting anti-labor governments negated their only weapon in the strike sharpened anti-imperialist sentiments in all ranks of the labor force.

The opposition between consciousness of exploitation, which stems from alienation from the means of production, has not been adequately

treated in theory or practice. The assumption is that the two forms of alienation reinforce each other in the creation of a revolutionary movement. In fact, they tend to negate each other, since consciousness of dependency leads to a search for security and the cultivation of patron-client relations. By rejecting not only the tactics springing from this dependency, but even the existence of such consciousness in the working class, Marxists have failed to deal directly with the kinds of relationships in which dependency is cultivated. It is possible, however, to counter the pernicious effects of dependency, played upon by management in periods of economic crisis, by raising it to the level of consciousness that the union has done with the sense of exploitation and at the same time cultivate the kind of support system that women developed during the strike of 1963. Women are very aware of the vulnerability of a household with a single wage-earner, and do everything in their power to acquire another income or cut living costs by buying directly from farmers. As yet, their efforts have not been given official support by the unions.

Despite the fact that Third World countries like Bolivia are doubly dependent--their workers dependent within the capitalist enterprises of their countries, and the nation dependent in a world market over which it has no control--their working-class movements are potentially more militant than those of the developed centers. First, as the victims of the exploitation of nations as well as of class, they are more aware of the implications of a world market than are their counterparts in developed centers. Secondly, as the "hijos bastardos de imperialismo," as they say, they have no illusions about the ability of their own bourgeoisie to bring democratic reform to their country nor do they benefit from the surplus value expropriated from the workers of other countries. They are, as a consequence, more at liberty to define their own future.

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