

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523 BIBLIOGRAPHIC INPUT SHEET	FOR AID USE ONLY BATCH #16
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1. SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION	A. PRIMARY Agriculture	AE30-0000-0000
	B. SECONDARY Development	

2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
Freedom and development: rural decion-making and agricultural development

3. AUTHOR(S)
Patch, R.W.

4. DOCUMENT DATE 1966	5. NUMBER OF PAGES 36p.	6. ARC NUMBER ARC 630.11.P294
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7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS
Wis.

8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (*Sponsoring Organization, Publishers, Availability*)
(In Land Tenure Center paper no.22)

9. ABSTRACT

10. CONTROL NUMBER PN-RAA-849	11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT
12. DESCRIPTORS Decision making Freedom	13. PROJECT NUMBER
	14. CONTRACT NUMBER Repas-3 Res.
	15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

July 1966

LTC No. 22

THE LAND TENURE CENTER
310 King Hall
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

FREEDOM AND DEVELOPMENT

Rural Decision-Making and Agricultural Development

BY

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All views, interpretations, recommendations and conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of the supporting or cooperating organizations.

FREEDOM AND DEVELOPMENT: RURAL DECISION-MAKING

AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Richard W. Patch

The Hypothesis

Central to this book is the hypothesis that the exercise of freedom is essential to self-sustaining development. The hypothesis is challenged by usual ideas of freedom and development. By defining "freedom" to mean the "making of effective and rational public choices" the concept is narrowed to a small part of its conventional meaning. The definition of "development" as the "growth of modernization" which would include "economic, social and political development" broadens the common meaning of the word to include nearly any change viewed as good in nearly any sphere of human endeavor. The value of the definitions is that they permit the argument that there is not a necessary relationship between development and abridgement of freedom. There remains to be established a positive relationship between freedom and development.

It is easiest for me to trace this relationship by considering only a part of the broad idea of development as defined above. "Development," for my purpose, is economic development in agriculture as measured by increased productivity and considering the destination of distributive shares. Similarly for my purpose "freedom" is unimpeded decision-making which for this paper is limited to a rural context. The criterion of rationality as an element of freedom is specifically rejected for reasons discussed in the conclusion of this chapter. My central hypothesis becomes one that unimpeded decision-making by rural people is essential to

self-sustaining economic development in agriculture. The role of agriculture in total development has been amply argued elsewhere and is not relevant to this discussion.

Decision-Making in Different Modes of Agriculture

There are two major kinds of agriculture illustrated by Latin America and found throughout most of the world. One is the relatively large commercial operation in which decisions are usually made on the basis of economic gain. The other is the subsistence agriculture in which decisions are made on the basis of immediate provision for the sustenance of life. In most of northern South America there is no middle category-- that of the family farm in which subsistence goals are relatively easily achieved while more distant economic gains are pursued. Instead the line is sharply drawn between the agriculturalists who look to the greater world and those who must first concern themselves with the small world of their family needs.

Freedom to decide, to experiment and to risk is infinitely greater among the commercial farmers. The cost of a mistake may be temporarily lowered income. The cost of a mistake to a subsistence farmer may be a threat to his existence or the loss of his land. Development requires innovation. Thus the freedom of the commercial farmers to accept risks allows them to develop, while the inability of the subsistence farmer to do so tends to preclude development. This is the kernel of the relationship between freedom and development in agriculture which must be further examined before the statement can be considered as conclusive.

The Context of Decision-Making and Development

Rural Latin America provides a range of variations on a theme basic to the context of decisions and development. The theme is that of two worlds. The distinction between the two worlds ranges from a relatively blurred line between plenty and poverty in some countries to hard caste lines, with attributed ethnic differences, in countries such as Peru where the rural population breaks sharply into Western and non-Western language groups with accompanying sharp differences in modes of life. Bolivia furnishes us a case in which the attributed and real distinctions have broken down in most of the country. Comparison of the cases can illustrate the way in which decisions are shaped by context, with strong implications for development.

Lest the comparison appear complex it should be pointed out that essentially we are looking at the Spanish-speaking and at the indigenous-language-speaking rural populations in each of the two countries. It is often assumed that the former are "freer" and thus more open to development, while the latter are less free and less open to development. But we must proceed beyond our kernel assumption that links development to the ability to take risk.

The Rural Spanish Context

It would be misleading to give the impression that the Spanish and indigenous cultures of even such countries as Peru and Bolivia are separate entities existing quite apart from one another. While modes of life are very different the two cultures share many if not most of the values and concepts of social order brought to the New World from the Iberian

Peninsula 400 and more years ago. The roles actively claimed or passively accepted by individuals of the two language groups are often simply the opposite and complementary parts of a common value. The indigenous culture inherited from the Quechua-speaking Incas is now a thing of bits and pieces, and most of those bits and pieces have been absorbed by the rural Spanish-speaking folk.

Attitudes, values, and organizing social ideas such as personalism, fatalism, formalism, the social meaning of work, religion, and hierarchy are more shared than not, and in different ways they are decisive in the conduct of affairs.

The meaning of work is one example suited to the purposes of this paper. It is argued by some that manual labor is rejected as socially demeaning by Spanish-speakers while it is accepted and may be valued as "the measure of the man" by peasants.^{1/} It is my observation that manual labor is basically considered demeaning by mestizos and peasants alike. However, the role of performing it is accepted by the peasants who have no other role open to them within the confines of the world as he conceives it. It may be that within these conceptual bounds he desires to excel in the restricted role, but this does not mean that he is ignorant of larger

1. The word "peasant" is used here and below for "farmer of a relatively small amount of land who speaks an indigenous language." The word "campesino" would be more accurate and appropriate but would fill these pages with italics. "Indian" is inappropriate unless carefully qualified to reduce the implied ethnic distinctiveness and a sort of mystical cultural heritage from the Incas. "Mestizo" will be used to mean a person who ethnically combines both Peninsular and Indian characteristics and whose primary language is Spanish. "Cholo" is not used because it can be only subjectively defined and depending upon the situation could mean either a peasant or a mestizo in our sense.

horizons or of the opprobrium attached to labor with the hands. Not surprisingly he may seek alternative roles for his sons.

Likewise there is a common acceptance of the social hierarchy, from top to bottom. Within it there is a yearning for upward movement by those near the top and by those at the bottom, but it is highly significant that even at the bottom there is a granting of validity to the barriers which give the hierarchy form.

These briefly treated examples illustrate why a description of the Spanish-speaking rural context does not consist of a system of beliefs completely apart from that of the peasants. It is the very sharing of beliefs which perpetuates the system and the disparate positions within it. The beliefs circumscribe freedom of choice and affect potential for change and development.

The Rural Indian Context

In rural Peru the Spanish-speaking mestizos, most of whom would insist on the appellation "blanco," conduct agricultural operations under a variety of land tenure patterns. In the Andes the dominant pattern is still the latifundium in which unpaid peasants perform services in exchange for the use of small plots which they occupy at the pleasure of the patrón. Patrón and peasant are caught in a pattern which is unproductive and yields little economic return. On the Pacific coastal strip, which is highly productive when water is available for irrigation, the tenure pattern is one of large holdings which are worked by paid laborers on most sugar plantations or by tenant farmers on many cotton estates. Much of the coastal land is held by foreign corporations or by naturalized Peruvian families

descended from European but non-Spanish antecedents. Owners and administrators are more free to make radically different decisions. Capitalization is large, economic returns are large, but the returns do not flow down to the laborers whose wages are near subsistence. Agriculture is highly developed but its efficiency does not engender an upward spiral of generalized freedom of choice and participation by the majority of workers in the rewards of development. The idea of immutable hierarchy is adhered to and the idea acts to discourage moderate size operations. A laborer on a subsistence wage does not acquire a family size farm. Further, given his idea of status, his aspiration is most often to escape entirely from agriculture.

Similarly there is an excluded middle in highland agriculture. A peasant has little incentive to develop a usufruct plot, although he may accumulate wealth in livestock. Should he use such wealth to purchase a family farm in the highlands his conduct would be considered extraordinary by his fellow peasants and would be seen as a threat by mestizos. Upward movement is not achieved by success in agriculture but by escape from association with manual labor--as by the peasant who desires his son to become a lawyer--or association with Indian status--as by the peasant who abandons the highlands to learn Spanish on the coastal plantations.

The Hierarchy and Decision-Rigidity

The idea of hierarchy must, perhaps, be overemphasized in connecting freedom of decision with development. To a person from the United States, unless he is a member of certain minority groups, the concepts of freedom of choice and of development seem natural and familiar. The notion of a

rigid hierarchy of well-defined classes buttressed by vestiges of caste lines is academically intelligible but its part in the life of modern nations is not fully appreciated if indeed it is not rejected. While the social hierarchy in Latin America has its roots in the past it is not a thing of the past. While it exists development may be achieved by those able to take risks, but the resulting sectorial development broadens the gaps between those in a position to profit from their risk-taking and those whose imputed social inferiority and relative immobility are used as devices to limit economic and political as well as social participation.

The class hierarchy does not stand alone. It is supported by a fatalism about one's lot in life, by the importance given to ascribed rather than achieved status, by the significance attached to the form rather than the content of an act, by the strength of family ties, by the conduct if not by the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church in Andean America, and by the social meaning of various ways of holding and working land. The institution will not be shaken by those who live under its precepts, see advancement in its terms, and accept low position and restrictions on freedom of choice as being matters beyond human influence.

But even in Peru the hierarchy is not invulnerable. In the coastal urban areas sectorial development has allowed the growth of what has been called the "Middle Mass." The emergence in the middle of a growing mass of lawyers, doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs and others identified with neither top nor bottom disturbs the dichotomy on which the edifice rests.

However, in rural Peru the dichotomy persists. The middle is vacant. Peasants, such as those of the Mantaro Valley, who do become nearly bilingual are prevented from becoming operators of family farms by sheer

scarcity of land. Innovative risks cannot be taken on scattered plots, although they may be freehold, when they measure only a few square meters and must support a family.

The Hierarchy and Decision-Breakdown of Barriers

Despite the seeming immutability of the complex of hierarchy, immobility, the excluded middle, land scarcity, and lack of freedom to seriously entertain decisions involving risk in the rural Andes there are signs that the chain may be broken.

The signs are apparent in a great part of the Quechua-speaking population of Bolivia. By comparison with changes in the social modes of other peoples wholeheartedly caught up in the mass patterns of the technology and ideology of the modern world, as in Japan, the difference between the Bolivian peasant of today and of 20 years ago is not dramatic. But the change is dramatic and significant to those observers who are familiar with the remarkably durable class structure of the Andes of Tawantinsuyu.^{2/}

The leveling of the Bolivian class structure, the upward movement of the "Indians," and the dispersal and elimination of the rural upper class, has been described elsewhere.^{3/} But the line has not been fully drawn between this leveling, the increased freedom of choice, and developmental potential in agriculture.

The Chaco War of the early 1930's and events after the revolution of 1952 led to a redefinition of class lines in Bolivia. The latifundium

2. The "Four Quarters" of the Inca Empire.

3. Richard W. Patch, in Social Change in Latin America Today, Council on Foreign Relations, New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

disappeared as an institution, both as the result of acts by the peasants themselves and of formal legislation after 1953. The service obligations of the peón to the patrón dropped away. Land was seized by former peones and was confirmed to them in freehold by law. The patrón was stripped of his power and for safety left the countryside and often the country. For the first time the former peones escaped from the status of "Indian" with its near-caste attributes and took the name and status of campesino. The new peasant was a free agent in many ways and he began to make decisions. The wisdom of many of the decisions is debatable, but I am unable to discover external criteria which would qualify the decisions as logical or illogical.

One decision, even before the 1952 revolution, was to join in sindicatos or peasant federations. The first sindicato had the limited objective of renting land to escape from the feudal obligations of the latifundium. Later some sindicatos were managed for the aggrandizement of peasant leaders. But they did wield power and as the peasant mass became a force to be seriously considered individual peasants consolidated their higher status.

Some choices seem quite short-sighted. Many of the former patrón's seed stocks were taken and used for food. Valuable cattle imported for breeding purposes were butchered for meat. Stands of eucalyptus trees were cut down and sold for ready cash. Some heavily capitalized farms, such as dairies, were overrun and divided, and their high productive efficiency destroyed. But the destructive elements of what became a thorough land reform began to fade as a sense of land ownership grew more gen

Another decision, in most of the heavily populated Cochabamba valleys, was to seize land rather than wait for claims slowly to make their way through the over-complicated bureaucracy of the new government. The process was not orderly and the finer points of justice were overlooked, but the result was that, in general, the land went to the persons who worked it. Productivity declined, marketing was disrupted, and at first much land was idle because of disagreements. But the basis was laid by social leveling and land redistribution for individuals to suffer from wrong decisions and to profit from actions which yielded greater returns or satisfactions.

Geographical Mobility and Immobility in Development

What has this to do with agricultural development? The upper and lower Cochabamba valleys of Bolivia were the focus of a land reform which was eminently successful in terms of placing land in the hands of those who worked it and in destroying a large part of the class system and the latifundia which made most economic decisions of the ordinary man meaningless. Now, more than a decade later, the large rural population of the valleys exist on minifundia--small plots of, usually less than two and one-half acres. Farming techniques remain rudimentary: wooden plows and oxen, threshing by driving animals over circular piles of grain. The common language is still Quechua, the adobe houses remain the same. Low earthen borders mark out each individual's plot and help retain waters of the rainy season, but make impossible the cooperative use of machinery in most fields. Production is rising but remains low when compared with experimental yields. All of this is hardly an inspiring example of development

Yet realistically these are the terms in which development must be considered in the most populated rural areas of northern South America. The dense population of the northern part of the continent is heavily concentrated on the coasts and in the ranges of the Andes near the sea. So far there has been little population penetration into the Amazon and Orinoco basins south in the Guianas and Venezuela, south and east in Colombia, east in Ecuador and Peru and west in Brazil. Movement north and east in Bolivia is significant, but it has not led to a visible lessening of the population pressure in the highland areas. The incipient movement in Bolivia and plans for large scale movement into the lowlands of Peru demonstrate that mass population movement is costly--in access to roads, in minimum services for the colonists, and in research and dissemination of information about the problems of lowland tropical agriculture. Emigration from the traditional areas of settlement is not a practical solution, but can be a palliative in conjunction with agricultural development in the regions where the people now live.

Industrialization is sometimes seen as the solution to rural overpopulation and underemployment. But the countries which have experienced relatively high investment in the industrialization of certain centers find that the industrialization tends to create further problems without substantially affecting rural overpopulation, underemployment, low productivity and poverty. The urban centers such as Caracas, Bogotá, Lima, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo are foci which attract hundreds of thousands of agriculturalists who abandon the struggle on their plots. In spite of often large industrial complexes employment opportunities create work for

only a fraction of those aspiring to it. To massive rural underemployment is added urban unemployment. It is doubtful whether industrialization is an effective employment alternative in these countries where the number of jobs which can be created in any foreseeable program cannot begin to satisfy the expectations they create.

Thus we return from the apparent alternatives to the hard but not hopeless problem of on-site development of agriculture in the areas where the farmers live. And for this reason we turn again to the undramatic but basic lessons of the possibility for development as illustrated in Bolivia.

Self-Conceptualization, Freedom and Development

The inter-mountain valleys and the altiplano of the Bolivian Andes are instructive for our purpose because the only major changes to affect development of the regions have been changes in institutions, beliefs and structures which together give the campesinos (peasants) significantly greater freedom as we have defined it. Meaningful freedom to make decisions has been promoted socially by elimination of the designation, "Indian," and the dispersal of the former landowning class, economically by distribution of the land and politically by a universal vote which is no longer denied the peasants on the grounds of their illiteracy. (The last element of freedom must be qualified, recognizing that peasant votes are managed in blocks by federation leaders. Still, while the individual peasant may have little voice, the political position of the peasants as a whole is enhanced by even the managed vote.)

Little else has occurred which might affect agricultural development. The experiment stations of La Tamborada and Belem have had little positive

effect. Extension agents have been isolated and ineffective. Provisions in the agrarian reform law for technical improvement have not become operative. Industrialization in the city of Cochabamba and its environs is limited and stagnant. A United Nations financed model milk plant functions at a small part of its capacity. The most important physical change is the completion of a paved highway to Santa Cruz in the eastern lowlands. A national fruit nursery is a recent innovation. In sum, except for the new highway, the impact of any external programs for development has been slight.

The essential fact, however, is that a climate for development has been created. Quantitative evidence for the existence of the developmental climate must await results of research being conducted by the University of Wisconsin Land Tenure Center. But over a decade of observation of the area convinces me that the Cochabamba peasants have moved from a feeling of helplessness in the days of their subjugation to the latifundium through a period of disorientation in the 1950's to an attitude which values economic development and accepts the correlates of such an attitude.

The attitude can best be described by comparison with similar Quechua-speaking peasants who still live under the latifundium system in the Peruvian sierra.

The peasants of Cochabamba, Bolivia, feel they have participated in national affairs--many of the older ones since the time of the Chaco War, thirty years ago. It was then that the Spanish-speakers who preferred to think of themselves as "Whites" were forced to abandon the fictions of ethnic apartness and appeal to the "Indians" to fight as "citizens" for

the Patria. And if the Fatherland was able to extract obligations from all its citizens the inference of corresponding rights was not lost on the latifundium serfs conscripted into the armies of the Chaco. When Bolivia finally lost the war with Paraguay the one-time "Indians" were ill-content to return to virtual serfdom on usufruct plots. From the mid-1930's seeds were sown for the formation of peasant federations, for the seizure of land, and for the claims to new freedom. The desires matured and bore fruit in the confusion and power vacuum following the revolution of April 1952, in which the peasants took no direct part.

The power of the peasants after 1952 was willingly and necessarily recognized by the new government. The universal vote placed a formal seal on the freedom. The peasants' acquisition of land gave them new social status and economic independence to make decisions which were enacted into law by agrarian reform legislation.

Crucial in the evolution of attitudes favorable to development was the sense of real freedom as distinguished from formal or merely legal freedom. Since the early years of independence the Latin American republics have enacted programs for the rights of the mass of rural population. Whether they were well-intended or vehicles for demagogues their effect in nearly every case was the enactment of formalities. There is a clear difference in a situation, such as the Bolivian, where basic freedoms were gained by the people and recognized by a government aware of the power of the people--not diffidently placed in the body of law for reasons of its own to please or mislead a powerless population.

The rural Cochabambinos eat more and still have enough to spend for English bicycles, Japanese radios and Italian accordions. The land is one's own and there is interest in developing it within the limits of capital available. Fruit trees are bought from a nursery, new irrigation canals have been dug cooperatively. There is an eagerness for supervised agricultural credit--but not with the high interest rates and expensive formalities of a previous scheme supervised by the Agricultural Bank. There is a willingness among many of the hardest pressed for land to leave their small plots in the hands of relatives and seek new opportunities in the virgin lands of the Chapare to the north and Santa Cruz to the east. The Quechua-speakers of Cochabamba and the Aymará-speakers of the altiplano are in a position to accept advice and make full use of whatever intelligent material aid is extended to them, and in which they feel they participate as responsible parties.

A base for development, within limits, has been laid through a felt sense of freedom to make decisions. A man no longer faces acute hunger if he makes a poor decision, such as to accept a new variety of barley seed from the experiment station and find that different varieties are mixed, mature at different times, and are impossible to harvest. And he still sees a future, of sorts, in the pursuit of agriculture.

In the Peruvian highlands, on the other hand, where the latifundium dominates large areas, the near-serf must yet pass through a period of belief in his own participation and ability to make decisions without facing catastrophe before development is possible. Even if the latifundia were to disappear under the Peruvian agrarian reform law, the continued

status of "Indians" and their identification with traditional communities, language, dress, and small farming would encourage total escape from agriculture to the large cities rather than the development of highland or lowland agriculture.

In the Peruvian highlands other elements, besides hierarchy, immobility, the excluded middle, attitudes towards manual work, and non-agricultural aspiration, severely impede the making of decisions in agriculture on what a Western observer would recognize as rational grounds.

One is the homogeneity, and the value placed on the homogeneity, of the traditional Quechua-speaking community. Some stress must be placed on the "traditional" because there are a range of kinds of communities including those with a basis of organization for cooperative selling of community products, and those in which Spanish is so well understood and commonly used with outsiders that the population is nearly bilingual. Other communities, usually because of the geographical position, act as a stable source of seasonal labor for haciendas, road construction and the like. In these agriculture is mainly supplementary to wages. But the traditional latifundium communities remain numerous and important, and they are our best demonstration of the cultural impediments to "rational" decision-making and thus to development in its Western economic meaning.

The homogeneity extends to dress, conduct, and conformance to a standard of "Indianness" as it is conceived by the community members. The dress is a prescribed uniform of homespun, hand tailored, native wool which, with its cut and slight ornamentation is distinctive of the community. Actually the origin of the dress--the short jacket and knee breeches of the

men--is not indigenous but is colonial Spanish. Given the high price of raw wool and the high value of hand produced textiles the clothing is expensive in comparison with manufactured work clothes available in the markets of sierra towns. But the expensive uniform is worn by all, even those who possess more practical manufactured clothes purchased during a period of work on the coast. A man wearing manufactured clothing would be considered presumptuous, aping the Spanish-speakers, pretending to be something which he is not.

The same applies to language. Even in the traditional communities there are some men who have worked on the coast or have been conscripted into the army where they forcibly learned Spanish when thrust among people ignorant of Quechua and ridiculing those who spoke it. The men who re-incorporate themselves into their highland communities do so with the understanding that they cease to use their Spanish. Their accomplishment in the language is not a thing to be cultivated but is a disturbing factor to be submerged and used only on the infrequent occasion of the arrival of an outsider who cannot make himself understood in Quechua.

Clothing and language are two examples of the pressure towards conformity. They could be extended by such items as the sharp ridicule sanction applied to encourage an individual to begin chewing coca when he reaches the working age of 14 years. But the purpose of the examples is to furnish background on the agriculturally pertinent social homogeneity and resistance to the idea that an individual may reach a position of dominance in the community by hard work, by using new techniques, by becoming a progressive farmer and by expanding his lands.

In traditional communities the route to a position of respect among the people is not the simple route of accumulation of material goods. In itself this statement is neither profound nor does it express a difference so great as some might suppose from Western social modes. Yet much as we may (and must) deride the Western Economic Man it remains clear that, in the United States, for example, a successful farmer with the product of his labor may command some mobility and respect, facilities of education, and the assurance of influence if not dominance. The interesting feature of the Peruvian highland case lies in the cultural elements which create barriers to these achievements.

For this paper the interest of the case lies in the appearance, from the outside looking in, that the cultural elements which create barriers are self-imposed restrictions on freedom of choice. They seem a contrived way of walling in one's self--irrational and inexplicable except in terms of quaintness. It is certainly not the place here to argue rationality or quaintness, either of Peruvian highland Indians or of United States motorists. The point is that if freedom of choice is to be so effectively increased that agricultural development becomes possible, an entire edifice of beliefs and modes must fall. The traditional beliefs have fallen in most of Bolivia, the peasants are undamaged, and development has become possible though not immediately visible.

Emphasis on the homogeneity of the community and the many sanctions against uncommon behavior act as major economic levelers among community members. There are rich and poor, but except for virtual outcasts there is little social break between the two and little difference in their manner of life. There are also powerful devices which act to limit wealth and to prevent penury unto starvation.

Among these devices is the secular and religious fiesta system, particularly the latter. The religious fiesta system, connected mainly with the observance of the day of the patron saint of the community, contains a series of offices. These offices are filled a year in advance, from the man whose pleasure and duty it is to provide the fireworks, upward to the mayordomo who must organize and sponsor the entire affair, providing meat and drink for hundreds of people. The successively higher offices entail a successively greater economic burden. Yet occupancy of the offices gives both public esteem and, in the opinion of some, religious merit. Many persons endure years of the privations of savings and then of debt to gain these ends through the religious fiesta system. Those who are agriculturally successful in the terms of the community and do not seek to pass through the religious offices find themselves subjected to increasing pressures to do so. There comes a point when they cannot refuse.

At the other end of the economic scale there are defenses against the greatest extremes of poverty, as one would expect in a tightly-knit, self-contained community, where the rights and obligations of extended kinship are elevated to prime articles of faith. The economic misery of a nephew would be acutely embarrassing to the uncle who was in a position to help. To the mutual obligations of the extended biological family are added mutual obligations of ceremonial kinship, compadrazco.^{4/} Also whole extended families are allied into supposedly blood-related castas. The entire web of obligations can be a substantial drain upon the farmer who,

4. It should be noted that compadrazco is of European origin and is "indigenous" only by adoption.

In spite of all, manages to build a herd of sheep and cattle.

The economic leveling is one important part of the greater context in which economic advancement for the sake of economic advancement, or for the sake of a more comodious life, is largely meaningless. The aim of the community is subsistence. The religious fiestas are only one of a number of examples of ways in which the margin above subsistence is unproductively consumed. In the rare cases in which a man still manages to accumulate a reserve for the future he becomes the target of dozens of less fortunate men who have a variety of claims upon him. Any unusual expenditure in housing, clothing, land improvement, or simple machinery make him doubly the object of importunities and accusations of pretentiousness. He is accused of believing that he is something more than a simple campesino, or serrano or indio.

Here the deep sense of self and group identification as inferior campesinos (at best) or Indians (at worst), the sanctions applied to those who would rise above this status while remaining in the physical vicinity, the strictly limited idea of the possibilities of achievement in life, and the profound fatalism that God so made the world, combine to reduce a man's view of the choices which he is free to make to choices which are without meaning in the terms of agricultural development.

A main reason for the long continuance of this self-conception and the associated limited view of possible alternatives is that every contact with the world outside the community has served to reinforce his feeling of inferiority and increase his dependence on a fatalism which deadens what might otherwise be a sense of ranging injustice.

Bolivia as a National Case

The importance of Peru and Bolivia in demonstrating the relationship between freedom and development lies in the difference in self-conception of their rural populations despite their sharing of a common background, despite the essential sameness of their populations, and despite the similarity of their geographical settings. But the significance of the Bolivian case as an illustration of a true national change is obscured if we confine our discussion to a restricted geographical area or to a particular political period. The argument will carry conviction only if it is shown that described changes have taken place beyond the Cochabamba Valleys--important though the Valleys are, and that the changes have survived a change in government in which the Nationalistic Revolutionary Party (which claimed credit for the changes) disintegrated and gave way to a military government. Since the climate of change which I have been trying to establish is cultural and not political, it is crucial to present the situation of the peasants after the fall of the MNR to show that the change was irreversible regardless of the party in power and that the change was actually national and not a phenomenon of a single area or language group.

For that reason in June 1966 I traveled out on the altiplano, east from La Paz toward Lake Titicaca, along roads that were dry in this winter season but were still deeply rutted from the rains of summer. Ten days before, the first heavy snow of the year had covered the ground but by early June it had retreated to the flanks and peaks of the looming Cordillera Real which is the northern boundary of the 12,000-foot altiplano in this region and marks the crest beyond which

the Andes slip down into the piedmont foothills and the flood plains of the tributaries of the Amazon.

I chose an area between Peñas and Huarina in the province of Los Andes as typical of the countryside farmed by the Aymará speaking peasants. Most closely observed was the community of Pairumani, an ex-latifundium, which is barely accessible by four-wheel-drive vehicles even in the dry season, does not benefit from the immediate proximity of the lake, is sufficiently south of Achacachi to be relatively undisturbed by the peasant organization and uprisings there, and in which the people must work mightily to strain a living from the rocky, infertile soil in the shadow of the almost unbelievable escarpment of Illampu.

According to the traditional literature the Aymará speakers are supposed to be a "closed" kind of people, as contrasted with the "openness" of the Quechua speakers. They are supposed to be hostile to outsiders, a belief supported by the assassination a few years ago, of the Minister of Rural Affairs who had come from La Paz for a visit to the peasants of Achacachi. Pairumani seemed a fair test of the belief and a test of the national scope of whether increased freedom in decision-making does indeed lead to agricultural development even in this barren and inhospitable land.

Our unannounced arrival seemed to come at a most inappropriate time. The quick night of the altiplano had fallen without the twilight of lower altitudes and the people of Pairumani were gathering in the bitter cold to try to arrive at a decision of what should be done about a feud of long standing which had resulted in the wounding of several

men during a recent Saint's day celebration. It was not a time for strangers; nevertheless, we were invited into the meeting room where a single kerosene lantern provided a spot of brightness in the dark. The meeting was conducted in a restrained and orderly way, women sitting on the floor, and the men standing along the walls.

The coordinator of the meeting (he was hardly presiding) was a member of the community and was soon successful in gaining a consensus and in deciding upon a person who would assess damages. It was fascinating to see and hear the inner workings of a community in which important decisions were made without need for an outsider, without regard to the old latifundium system of a patrón meting justice, and even without regard to the ancient prerogatives of the jilakatas--men of authority in the community who from the Conquest until recent years were the patrón-supported enforcers of patrón-decided justice. A vestige of the jilakatas was present in the person of a justicia, with a vara as his badge of office slung across his back.^{5/} But he kept his silence and the community with its spontaneous leadership came to agreement.

To all appearances decisions were being made by these people of the altiplano themselves. It remained to be seen what effects were manifested in agricultural development.

Agricultural development must be a relative term in this land. Potatoes may be planted one year, barley another year, and oca or

5. The vara is a short staff formerly of silver or pewter, now of wood; bound with leather and forming the handle for a braided leather whip.

olluca (small tubers) another year; but then the land must lie fallow for three to six years. There are no trees, there is no brush, so llama and sheep dung is dried and used for fuel instead of for fertilizer. The rains come only in summer, often mixed with hail which beats the struggling crops into the stony earth. The natural vegetation is bunch grass which bears the generic name of ichu in the Andean highlands. Here the least tough species is called huichu, while the rough spears of another species, called chilliwa, nevertheless furnishes grazing material for the livestock.

Somehow in this land potatoes reproduce and then are trampled and frozen in the frigid nights into a dehydrated chuño, or are soaked in the ditches and frozen into the black tunta. Both are delicious in a soup called chairo if there is enough other substance to overcome a certain taste of pasteboard. Even the oca is dehydrated and preserved by the same process of freezing and tramping out the ice crystals to make the oca equivalent of chuño which is called kailia. Sheep, cattle, and poultry are raised; but their products are for cash sales, not for consumption.

However, the distribution of land, the disappearance of the patrón, new freedom to make decisions, and the possibility of benefiting one's self from one's own innovations, have brought change to this seemingly forsaken place. It took only a single visit by a representative of Bolivia's substitute for an extension service to convince a young peasant, Victor Flores, of the superiority of an improved type of criollo, or indigenous, potato. In the days when Pairumani was a

latifundium the serfs had fatalistically eaten the largest of their stunted potatoes and saved only the smallest for planting. The obvious consequences have followed. But Flores, after his first year's harvest, was able to show two piles of potatoes, one the type which had been planted for generations, the other the type to which he had been newly introduced. The superiority of the new variety of potato was striking. It was also striking that the single experiment made by one community member had become well known in the community and had created a demand for the new variety by most of the peasants.

Unfortunately such success in introducing innovation creates its own problems--the peasants were told that the new variety was experimental and that further stocks were unavailable. But the failure of the extension service aside, the experience in Pairumani contrasts strongly with the experience in Vicos in the Peruvian highlands where it took several years to introduce an obviously superior potato to the majority of peasants. The contrast suggests two lessons. One, that the freedom of decision in Vicos was an imposed kind of freedom in a laboratory setting and had not yet been reinforced by actual distribution of land and confirmation of holdings by titles. The other lesson is that innovation should be by simple stages. In Pairumani the new kind of potatoes was only an improvement of the indigenous variety familiar to the peasants and which they could accept without objection by a demonstration of greater yield. In Vicos, Peru, on the other hand, the new potato was a foreign variety brought from the Tarma Valley. It was far larger in size and had an impressively greater yield, but it was different in taste, in color,

In texture, and it had to be protected by novel methods of pest control. The introduction of the new potato in Vicos was successful after a period of years. The introduction of the new potato in Pairumani was an embarrassingly immediate success.

Agricultural development comprehends rather more than the production of more and bigger potatoes. A more dramatic change which has accompanied the new role of the peasants as free agents has been their assumption of the marketing function which was once the exclusive prerogative of the latifundium patrón. Before 1952 it was the patrón who gathered in the crops, transported them to La Paz, and there sold them according to his own judgment. The serfs were the producers but they had little knowledge of outside price fluctuations or of the ultimate destination of their products.

So it was with much interest that I walked two kilometers north-east of Pairumani to the neighboring community of San Juan de Chachacomani where land distribution, land ownership, and the necessity for, as well as the freedom to make, decisions had led to a more complex manifestation of agricultural development. The manifestation was a weekly market, organized by the peasants themselves, in which they sell their own products. The market had not existed in the days of the latifundium before the agrarian reform but had been organized in 1954 as a means of getting goods to market in the absence of a patrón.

The organization of the market is straightforward. There is only a single middleman between the producer and the retailer in La Paz (the middleman earns his commission by solving the vexing

problem of transportation from this isolated part of the altiplano to La Paz). The peasants further benefit from the weekly opportunity to buy clothing, plastic shoes, sandals (made from a rubber material designed for the purpose--the sandals cut from truck tires are disappearing), condiments, and the manufactured necessities of life brought from La Paz by the middlemen. The peasants no longer waste a full day in a trip to La Paz to buy a bit of salt, several handfuls of coca, and a tin of kerosene. The market is also a focus for the trading (with cash, not by barter) among themselves. From the different surrounding communities come specialists in cottage industries who make the rubber sandals, the tasseled wool caps with ear flaps which are called chullos in Peru and in the Bolivian province of Omasuyus, and lluchus in the province of Ingavi and most of the Bolivian altiplano, and the cups, pitchers, ladles, lanterns, and lamps which peasant tinkers expertly fashion from discarded tin cans. Most audible of the peasant artisans are the makers and vendors of sampoñas (a kind of panpipe) and quenás (remotely resembling a flute). But more will be said of the sampoñas and quenás below, as one more illustration that development is not straight-line, and perhaps it is even facilitated when the climate of development is not such as to destroy the foundation of ancient beliefs and customs.

An exceptional feature of the market of Chachacomani is that its major items of trade, cheese and eggs, are sold only wholesale, direct to the middlemen from La Paz who have established trading relationships, give fair prices, and take the entire output of the market to the city. It was a bit difficult for us who were strangers in Pairumani,

trying to subsist on an oatmeal gruel, bread and sardines, to see the tidy stacks of round, fresh cheeses, and mounds of eggs which would have greatly soothed our suffering stomachs--to know that their sale had already been arranged and there was no way to buy a single cheese or a few eggs. In recent years at least nice trucks have been attracted from La Paz for each weekly fair, and the satisfaction of the middlemen's expectations was considerably more important than the hunger of an itinerant anthropologist. Besides, we should do as everyone else did; eat the chairo and stuff ourselves with bread. The recently acquired ability to make one's own decisions in Pairumani, in Chachacomani, and in the other communities of the area, had resulted in a moderately elaborate and quite formal set of marketing relationships from which the peasants benefited greatly. If these be the "closed," conservative, unprogressive Aymarás, it would be good if there were more like them in the Peruvian and Ecuadorian sierra. But neither land nor freedom of choice have come to more than a handful of the Peruvian and Ecuadorian "Indians." They comprehend perfectly that without freedom change is more likely to bring disaster than material advance.

Before leaving the subject of Pairumani it may be well to reiterate that the freedom of its inhabitants to make their own decisions stemmed not from a simple political fiat in 1952. It had its roots in the peasants' own actions and a change in their own self-conception from that of "Indian" to that of "campesino" (which I am imperfectly rendering as "peasant"). The agrarian reform legislation of 1953 corroborated the change in self-conception,

but suspicion of the government in the early years of the revolution was even more apparent on the altiplano than in the valleys. The government confirmed the peasants in their new estate but it is significant that on the altiplano there are many examples of ex-latifundia, which have now become communities, whose members sought out the former patrón and gave him at least a token payment for the land which had been unconditionally given them by the government. Old beliefs do die slowly, and sometimes they do not die at all--but that is not incompatible with freedom.

Development is not an across-the-board movement from folk culture toward Western culture. The men on the altiplano are changing their dress, the women are not. But I would like to return to an item in the market of Chachacomani to illustrate the survival of a custom and an art not only from Incaic times but from a pre-Incaic period. The panpipes and flutes are referred to and illustrated in the chronicles. They were a part of Aymar^a culture before the expanding Quechua speakers--the Incas of the Urubamba Valley--overran the altiplano and imposed their empire, but not their language, upon the Aymar^as. The wind instruments were also a part of Inca culture, but their use has nearly disappeared among the present Quechua speakers of Bolivia, whose preferred instruments are the guitar, the charango (the carapace of an armadillo, fitted with as many as 16 strings), and the accordion.

The sampoñas and quen^as, however, continue to typify life on the altiplano--almost as much as the bowler hats of the women. The sampoñas are of two kinds, one of a double row of six pipes each called the ura which carries the monotonous but haunting

melody, and the other of a double row of seven pipes each, called the arca, which furnishes the accompaniment to the ura. There are also two principal kinds of quenás, one with two orifices called the pinquillo (which causes rain) and the other with four holes, called the huaca-huaca. Each of these instruments has a particular effect in the causing or discouraging of the all-important variable in altiplano agriculture--rain. According to the ideal patterns some are played only in the dry season, others only in the rainy season. But this is not strictly observed in practice except on solemn occasions. More important, and probably responsible for the survival of the instruments, is their association with machismo, or the virility of the Aymará male. Women do not play the instruments, and all men are supposed to be able to play them as a badge of their manhood. Machismo is a basic value in all of Latin America, indigenous as well as Spanish. Its demonstration takes many forms, often seemingly irrelevant. Among the Quechua-speakers the chewing of coca is a fundamental prerequisite. Among the Aymará-speakers it is the playing of the ura, arca, pinquillo, or huaca-huaca; and preferably all four. The result is a pervasive, melancholy, music heard over most of the altiplano, particularly at dawn and dusk, as the men drive their sheep, cattle, and llamas to and from the pastures. The men may improve their livestock, adopt a new kind of potato, and establish the mechanism to market their products, but they do not abandon old beliefs concerning the meaning of music in agriculture, nor their own place among the people.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this paper the central hypothesis presented in the introduction, that the exercise of freedom is essential to self-sustaining development, was broadened in one sense and narrowed in another. The concept of "freedom" was broadened to mean unimpeded decision-making, and the qualifications of effectiveness and rationality were rejected. "Development" was narrowed to refer only to productivity and distribution in the rural sector of the economy.

It is, I hope, unnecessary here to discuss the relationship between freedom and responsibility. Philosophers have delved into the question, and I am indebted to the works of George Lincoln Burr. But it is both apposite and necessary for an anthropologist to present the argument that any qualification of "freedom" to include criteria of "effectiveness" and "rationality" is doomed to hopelessly subjective judgments in terms of a particular culture and a particular time. Even within the supposed rationality of the culture of the United States, and even in that citadel of United States rationality, the Supreme Court; the rule of reason quite obviously is shaped by the ideas of nine men, and their ideas are equally obviously shaped by the context and time in which they are formed. The nine eminences of rationality seldom agree among themselves, and progress under law appears to be the application of newly revealed reason as justification for reversing what had seemed to be reasonable until it was declared to be unreasonable. But this has been sufficiently discussed by such persons as Thurman Arnold (in The Symbols of Government) and by Arthur Train (in Tutt and Mr. Tutt and others

ad infinitum). If rationality is thus manifestly subjective in this sanctum of reason, how can we hope to approach an objective concept of rationality among the diversity of cultures in Latin America?

It has been my task to present freedom in cultural rather than in political terms. The disappearance of the patrón and the emergence of the self-conceptualization of the peasant as a free and independent agent was more of a cultural phenomenon than it was a political event--the claims of the MNR notwithstanding.

The qualification of the effectiveness of a decision as a measure of freedom is also hopelessly subject to the culture and time bias of the definer of "effectiveness." The Aymarás not only play the pinquillo to bring rain, they fire skyrockets to disperse clouds which threaten hail. Would this apparently ineffective and thus unfree behavior become effective and thus free if silver iodide were added to the ingredients of the rockets? Thus, in this paper "freedom" means unimpeded decision-making. While this permits the confusion of "freedom" with "license" I escape the burden of a defense of the distinction. Actions during the early years of the Bolivian agrarian reform have been described as acts of unfettered license, but few would dispute that whether it was license or freedom it was a vital part of the re-appraisal of the "Indians" which led them to become "people."

A central point is that the freedom which leads to development is the freedom to fail as well as the freedom to succeed. The difference between the commercial and the subsistence farmers of Latin America is that the former are free to fail--in experimenting

with a new crop or technique, and they will not starve. The latter, the subsistence farmers, are not free to fail because the price they must pay is hunger and loss of land. The ability of the former to innovate leads to development. The subsistence farmers become free to innovate and develop only when they gain title to their land, when they can innovate with impunity, and when failure becomes an incident not a calamity.

The importance of self-conceptualization has been mentioned repeatedly. The Indians of the more remote areas of the Peruvian Andes think of themselves as "Indians," as "belonging" to a patrón, and as an inferior group. They are in fact thought of by Spanish speakers as Indians, serfs, and inferiors. They are not free and they will not develop until they conceive of themselves as occupying a status in which freedom has meaning. The "Indians" of Bolivia have changed their self-conceptualization. They consider themselves free to make their own decisions by reason of a radical redefinition of their status. This is as objective a test of freedom as I can present, and I have attempted to demonstrate that this freedom, to fail or succeed, has been crucial in the development of agriculture in rural Bolivia.

There flows from a change in self-conceptualization of status and the meaning of the social hierarchy another fundamental difference which is the means of the measure of the man. When a man conceives of himself as an Indian, a serf, and an inferior; he accepts the ascription of status as applying to himself and to his children. He was born Fulano de Tal and he is fated to die Fulano

de Tal. He was born an Indian and it is the will of God that he be an Indian and an inferior person in a caste apart. His children will be serfs and he can only hope that they will heed their parents, accept the will of God, and wash the dishes (in the words of one Peruvian respondent).

The Bolivian peasant has accepted the postulate which is basic to modernization--that the measure of the man is achieved, not ascribed. He may have been born Fulano de Tal, but if his potatoes yield and his sheep multiply on his own land, he may well become Don Fulano. He may have been born an Indian and a serf, but he is now a peasant and he, not a patrón, is master of his destiny. The will of God is a matter for the women. His children may continue on the land, but more likely they will seek opportunities in the regions of colonization. Or there is no reason why they may not complete school, enter the University of San Andrés, and become that marvel of the human species, a doctor. A hierarchy still exists, but the barriers have disintegrated, and a man is now judged for what he does more than for the manner to which he was born.

Material has been here presented to substantiate the hypothesis that the exercise of freedom is essential to self-sustaining development. To me it is crucial that the freedom is unimpeded by strictures of rationality and effectiveness. Rather, the foundation of authoritarianism and totalitarianism lies in the assumption of the objective nature of rationality and effectiveness and the idea that the people must be protected from becoming irrational or ineffective.

It is the freedom of men to make their own decisions, to fail without catastrophe, to succeed without abridging the freedom of others, and to be judged upon their achievements, which leads to economic development. One day freedom may lead to "social development" but in the meantime may we remember the words of a great man who said that democracy is the worst form of government, except all the rest which have been tried.