

Between Coca and Cocaine: A Century or More of U.S.-Peruvian Drug Paradoxes, 1860–1980

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Cocaine has a long and mostly forgotten history, which more often than not over the past century has revolved around relationships between the United States and the Andean republic of Peru.¹ This essay examines that U.S.-Peruvian axis, through three long historical arcs or processes that preceded—and in some sense inform—the hemispheric “drug wars” of the past twenty years. For each stage, I will focus on the changing U.S. influences, signals, or designs around Andean coca and cocaine, the global contexts and competing cocaine circuits that mediated those transnational forces and flows, and the notably dynamic Peruvian responses to North American drug challenges. Each period left its legacies, and paradoxes, for cocaine’s progressive definition as a global, illicit, and menacing drug.

This is mainly a synthetic essay, trying to make sense of a vast body of new research in international archives—but the history of drugs also makes fertile

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1. And largely *unknown*: this essay is part of a larger archival project to unveil this hidden history. For the United States itself, we now have the superb study by Joseph F. Spillane, *Cocaine: From Medical Marvel to Modern Menace in the United States, 1884–1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1999); for global views, see Paul Gootenberg, ed., *Cocaine: Global Histories* (London: Routledge, 1999); as background, Steven B. Karch, M.D., *A Brief History of Cocaine* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1998). A strong source on transnational issues is William Walker III’s *Drug Control in the Americas* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1981).

ground for trying new methods or approaches from the historical social sciences. Two approaches are worth mentioning here. First, this essay draws on the “new international history,” which is working to overcome traditional academic dichotomies between domestic and foreign actors, dominant and dependent geographies of power, and between cultural and economic dimensions of transnational events and relationships. I thus hope to go behind and beyond standard diplomatic history narratives of “drug control.” Second, this essay shares broadly in what can be termed a political or social “constructionist” view of drug regimes, an approach with long roots in the field of drug studies. Not only official drug policies but our basic attitudes towards drugs (friend or foe, legal or illicit, domesticated or foreign), their variable social uses and bodily effects, and shifting patterns of supply and demand, are to a good degree historically created, conditioned, and changeable. Drug history, including that of cocaine, is about our protean social relationships to mind-altering substances, more than any rigid dictates of biochemistry or current morality.²

The three phases explored in this cocaine genealogy are: (1) 1860–1910, an initial period that saw the promotion of hemispheric coca and cocaine networks and cooperation between the United States and Peru in making cocaine into a modern and global medical commodity; (2) 1910–40, which constituted an era of transition in which the United States reversed itself and launched a domestic and worldwide crusade to banish the drug, while Peru exhibited greater autonomy, ambivalence, and cultural crisis towards its national coca and cocaine; and (3) 1940–80, when contemporary cocaine “prohibitions” came to fruition and a global reach, accompanied by a high degree of U.S.-Peruvian collaboration. But this final period and process also witnessed the creation of illicit international networks of the drug; with them, as we also see, were born the persisting and paradox-laden North American drug dilemmas of the late twentieth century.

2. For a feel for this new international history, try recent anthologies: Gilbert Joseph, Catherine LeGrand, and Ricardo Salvatore, eds., *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Culture History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1998); Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1993); and Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoller, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1997). For analysis of “constructionism” in drug studies, see Gootenberg, “Cocaine: The Hidden Histories,” in Gootenberg, *Cocaine: Global Histories*, 7–8, 13. The many sources for this view range from anthropology (classical ethnobotany) to the behavioral drug “set and setting” school of Norman Zinberg, to today’s post-structuralism.

1860–1910: From Coca to Commodity Cocaine

The half-century from 1860 to 1910 witnessed the erection of legal coca and cocaine networks linking the Andes to the United States and Europe. This era saw coca transformed from an exotic botanical rarity (in the West) and traditional indigenous herb (in the Andean highlands) into a modern global commodity and a staple of late-nineteenth-century medicine and culture. Yet by 1910, both cocaine and coca had become controversial and contested commodities, and the U.S.-Peruvian coca connection was riven with contradictions.

Cocaine, first crystallized from Peruvian coca leaf by 1860, was widely regarded as the modern miracle alkaloid of the late nineteenth century. By 1900, the United States had emerged as the world's largest consumer and promoter of coca and cocaine for a range of medical and popular uses. Coca leaf spread first, inspired by luxurious French wine tonics (such as *Vin Mariani*) and a growing public and scientific confidence in coca's active energizing qualities. During the 1860s, leading American physicians, such as William S. Searle, traded notes and fresh coca samples with their Peruvian counterparts. *Erythroxylon coca*, a mild yet complex stimulant comparable to tea or coffee, became embraced therapeutically by a range of American "eclectic" herbal physicians and drug companies for the treatment of a broad range of ailments, real and imagined. Culturally, coca became the antidote for that most emblematic of Gilded-Age American conditions—"neurasthenia," the chronic nervousness associated with "brain-workers," fast-paced urbanity, and competitive modernity. By the 1890s, a large consumer market for coca products existed where none had before. Infused in countless health tonics and patent medicines of the era, North America's love affair with coca became immortalized in *Coca-Cola*, concocted in Atlanta in 1886, and by 1900 already one of the most marketable commodities ever seen.³ By 1900, the United States imported 600–1,000 (metric) tons of coca annually, mainly for this consumer market, and mainly from eastern Peru. One still feels the initial American enchantment

3. Colleagues, my apologies: in this essay I will occasionally fall into the corny misnomer "American" to describe North Americans or United States policy. See Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country, and Coca-Cola* (New York: Scribner, 1993), chap. 2, for American culture of coca; W. Golden Mortimer, *History of Coca: "The Divine Plant" of the Incas* (New York, 1901, reprinted Fitzhugh Ludlow Memorial Library, San Francisco, 1974); W. S. Searle, M.D., *A New Form of Nervous Disease Together with an Essay on Erythroxylon Coca* (New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert, 1881); Tom Lutz, *American Nervousness 1903: An Anecdotal History* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991).

with coca in Dr. W. Golden Mortimer's classic defense of it, *History of Coca: "The Divine Plant" of the Incas* (1901).

Cocaine, coca's derivative, was a modern medical marvel, the first drug whose profile came entirely out of emerging laboratory science. Its medical uses, especially in surgery, boomed after the late-1884 news of its local anesthetic powers. Cocaine revolutionized anesthesia and hitherto unbearably delicate and painful operations, such as eye surgery. By the late 1880s, scores of American physicians and pharmacists, following European research leads, experimented with cocaine and publicized its other potential applications, in forums ranging from Detroit's commercial *Therapeutic Gazette* to the staid New York Academy of Medicine. For a time, cocaine sparked serious debates as a therapy for a host of internal bodily and mental ills: for cholera, opiate addiction, hay fever, epilepsy, melancholia, and so on. Leading U.S. pharmaceutical firms—Parke, Davis & Co., Schlieffelin & Co., Mallinckrodt Chemical Works, and Merck of New Jersey—swiftly became leaders in cocaine production, marketing five to six tons of it yearly by the turn of the century, about a third of world supply. Cocaine—purer, more powerful, more “scientific” than populist coca—was lauded by some of the greatest figures in American medicine, such as William Hammond and William S. Halstead. But doctors also developed a balanced appreciation of the drug's dangerous side effects, and by the 1890s warnings and fears of another type of use, by thrill-seeking “cocaine fiends” who had discovered quickly the recreational uses of cocaine (by injection or snorting).⁴

The United States, through a variety of signals and means, sought to encourage Peruvian production of coca (though less so with manufactured cocaine). In the mid-1880s, the heated interest of North American science and industry quickly filtered to Peruvian doctors, statesmen, and capitalists. The U.S. Navy and U.S. consuls stationed in the Andes worked to ensure coca supply routes during the great coca scarcity and price crisis of 1884–87; later, commercial attachés in Lima built contacts with local cocaine makers to diversify their business and helped Peruvians upgrade coca processing and shipping practices. One consul in the region worked to promote coca use up north to Americans (whom he termed “White People”) as a healthy substitute for their

4. Spillane, *Cocaine*, chap. 6, studies the making of the “fiend.” “Snow,” “coke,” and “dope” were actually early terms for recreational cocaine. Medical journals of the late 1880s (e.g., *New York Medical Journal*, 1884–90, esp. The New York Academy of Medicine, 26 Nov. 1889, “The Indiscriminate Use of Cocaine,” a symposium) had already noted cocaine's potential perils as well as nonmedical use.

avored racial vice, whiskey. In the mid-1880s, Parke, Davis & Co. sent Henry Hurd Rusby, North America's premier "pharmacognosist" (i.e., ethnobotanist), on a legendary Andean mission to scope out reliable coca supplies and study indigenous coca therapies, the first of Rusby's many involvements with the drug. Drug-trade journals debated coca-growing schemes closer to or even within the United States, though this talk abated as Peru proved amply capable of meeting swelling American demands. (Anecdotally, the young Mark Twain dreamt of making his fortune in coca raising.)⁵ In fact, little push was needed here, as after 1898 South America drifted into the informally expanding U.S. commercial sphere. Indeed, by the late 1890s a clutch of American cocaine interests, flexing political muscle, implemented a U.S. tariff structure that strongly favored domestic manufacturers of the drug over the nascent Peruvian industry.

The United States, however, was by no means the sole power vested in cocaine. It competed with a vibrant early science and "commodity chain" linking Germanic Europe to the Andes. Austro-Swiss Germans traversed the Andes in midcentury and revived a long dormant European curiosity in coca, now for an accelerated industrializing world.⁶ German pharmacologists ordered fresh Peruvian coca leaf during the Austrian *Novara* naval mission of 1859 to supply their leading-edge laboratories, where chemist Albert Niemann (among others) soon claimed credit for discovering its most active alkaloid, *Kokain*. The pioneer medical celebrities associated with the drug in the 1880s were Germanic: Dr. Karl Köller (in anesthesia) and the young Sigmund

5. H. H. Rusby, *Jungle Memories* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933), chaps. 1 and 8; New York's weekly *Oil, Drug and Chemical Reporter* kept a good eye on the trade; U.S. National Archives (hereafter NA), RG 59 (Microfilm, Consular Reports from Lima/Callao), vol. 13, "On the Subject of Cocaine," 4 April 1891; U.S. Navy, "Report on Coca or Cuca," *Sanitary and Medical Reports* (Washington) 1875: 675–76; Consul-Gen. Gibbs, "The Coca Plant," *Leonard's Illustrated Medical Journal*, April 1886; C. J. DuPré, Consuls of the U.S., 78, May 1887, cited in *American Druggist* 16, no. 9 (1887); Mark Twain, "The Turning-Point in My Life," 1910, in J. Strausbaugh and D. Blaise, eds., *The Drug User* (New York: Blast Books, 1991), 148–50.

6. For "Wallersteinian" structural commodity-chain approach, see Gary Gereffi and Miguel Korzeniewicz, eds., *Commodity Chains and Global Capitalism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994); for cocaine's broadest global patterns, see Gootenberg, "Coca and Cocaine in (Commodity) Chains: Their Global Rise and Demise, 1860–1950" (paper presented at the XIII Congress of the International Economic History Association, Buenos Aires, July 2002); for an anthropological transnational approach linking power and cultures, try Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985).

Freud (as psycho-pharmacologist and an avid user). And it was a German firm, E. Merck of Darmstadt, which earned its reputation making premium cocaine hydrochloride, its leading product line by the 1890s. Hamburg became the world's cocaine entrepôt, and by 1900 German pharmaceuticals joined into a formidable cartel to manage unstable world cocaine prices and profits.⁷ (The French, *à la* popular coca-laced *Vin Mariani*, and the British with imperial Kew Gardens, also exerted some influences. Yet their interest focused more on neo-Incan coca cultures and coca leaf botany, and in products used from opera singers to bicycle racers.) The Germanic link reached far into Peru. Lima's best-placed cocaine merchants and manufacturing pharmacies sported German names. It was a German migrant to Peru, one Arnaldo Kitz, who marched out in 1888 to find lost Austrian peasants (in the Amazonian colony of Pozuzo) and who created a new cocaine industry "on the spot"—the eastern Andes, ancestral homeland of coca. Moreover, Europeans took an active colonial mercantilist stake in coca. The British in India, as well as the French and Dutch in their tropical outposts, swiftly launched botanical and commercial experiments for coca plantations, which were abandoned (or so it seemed) when Peru, under German tutelage, countered with reliable cheap exports of semi-processed "crude cocaine" by 1890. The German cocaine nexus survived into this century. Hamburg brought in the bulk of legal Peruvian cocaine for refinement (whereas New York imported mostly coca leaf). American policy pegged Germany as the chief obstacle to global cocaine controls, during the first international narcotics conventions (1912) and beyond.

Peruvian responses to these wordly forces proved crucial to the creation of modern cocaine as a global commodity. In the late nineteenth century Peru was a poor, ethnically fractured and economically devastated land, barely recovering from the multiple disasters of its first six decades of independent life. The coca bush was long associated with traditional leaf "chewing" by the country's denigrated Andean Indian majority, so the precolumbian custom was thus viewed ambivalently by the country's coastal white elite. Yet by the 1860s, Peruvian intellectuals and medical men, such as Manuel A. Fuentes, Dr. José

7. Cocaine was a multiple discovery—others being Gaedcke and an obscure Italian pharmacist (Pizzi) in La Paz. Dr. Karl Scherzer, *Narrative of the Circumvention of the Globe by the Austrian Frigate Novara* (London: Saunders, Oatley & Co., 1861), vol. 3; Richard Friman, "Germany and the Transformation of Cocaine," in Gootenberg, ed., *Cocaine: Global Histories*; Robert Byck, M.D., comp., *The Cocaine Papers by Sigmund Freud* (New York: Stonewall Books, 1974); on Kitz et al., see Gootenberg, "Rise and Shine of a National Commodity: Peruvian Cocaine, 1885–1910" (Washington, D.C.: The Wilson Center, March 2000, ms.).

Casimiro Ulloa, and Dr. Tomás Moreno y Maíz, began to actively revalorize native coca as a good thing and a sleeping fortune, sparked by growing European medical curiosity. In the mid-1880s, following the catastrophic War of the Pacific with Chile, a local medical and promotional movement for refined cocaine swiftly appeared, in concert with burgeoning scientific and commercial interest overseas. The innovative chemical and therapeutic research of Lima pharmacist Alfredo Bignon (a true unsung case of scientific “excellence on the periphery”) inspired after 1885 a medical-promotional “Cocaine Commission” and a handful of cocaine-exporting pharmaceutical workshops in the capital. This caught the attention of Peruvian authorities, who convened a blue-ribbon panel on the drug. Ulloa’s official “Coca Commission” of 1888 strongly urged Peruvian production of the drug itself for export: “crude cocaine,” not just coca leaf, coca elixirs, and the like. They urged a range of proactive steps to market coca as a mass “hygienic” (health) good for the Northern toiling masses; Peruvian coca could be the “coffee or tea” of the coming century. The country’s intellectual lights, such as sociologist Carlos Lissón, also saw cocaine as a modernizing good, as did pioneer promoters of Amazonian development.⁸ The activities were well underway.

Peru thus became the biggest supplier of not only coca, but also cocaine, to this burgeoning world market from the 1890s until its saturation around 1905. Cocaine manufacturing, based on Bignon’s methods, spread from Lima to all parts of the country where coca thrived: the northern department of La Libertad, Amazonian Pozuzo, the tropical valleys of southern Cuzco and Huanta, and central Andean Huánuco. By 1900, the town and province of Huánuco had emerged as the capital of legal Peruvian cocaine manufacture, linked to the bustling coca plantations of the fertile Chinchao-Derrepenente district, in the adjacent *montaña* (tropical Andean foothills) of the Huallaga river valley below. Grown at perfect midlevel altitude, Huánuco’s high-alkaloid leaf became famed for cocaine extraction. A government colonization program spurred a small wave of coca peasant migration into the valley (and to frontier Monzón), augmenting sharecroppers and labor for expanding elite planta-

8. For Bignon and local cocaine science, see Gootenberg, “From Imagining Coca to Making Cocaine” (Washington, D.C.: The Wilson Center, April 2000, ms.) or *La Gaceta Médica de Perú* and *Boletín de la Academia Libre de Medicina de Lima* (1885–87); J. C. Ulloa, N. Colunga, and J. de los Ríos, “Informe sobre la coca,” *La Crónica Médica* (Lima) 1889: 27–31; Carlos Lissón, *Breves apuntes sobre la sociología del Perú en 1886* (Lima: Imp. Gil, 1887), 63–69; Mariano Albornoz, *Breves apuntes sobre la región amazónica* (Lima: Imp. El Progreso, 1885), 36–37. On national science, see Marcos Cueto, *Excelencia científica en la periferia* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1989).

tions. By 1900, the peak of the trade, coca products reached fifth place among Peru's leading export commodities: some two million pounds of coca (mostly sent to Americans) and more than ten metric tons of cocaine (mainly to Germany).⁹ "Huánuco" and northwestern "Trujillo" leaf became branded commodities on world medicinal markets, edging out Bolivian and Cuzco varieties, which soon fell back onto traditional local markets. Immigrant entrepreneurs—French, Germans, and in Huánuco, an exotic circle of Croats—helped initiate cocaine processing in Peru. There sprung up about two dozen small factories, all employing local tooling and techniques. This 80–90 percent pure export—cocaine sulfates or crude cocaine—was akin to the illicit jungle *pasta básica* of the 1980s, but was sent on for refinement in northern medical markets via legal pharmaceutical firms in the core, rather than via clandestine Colombian labs and smugglers. After 1900, some of these areas' most respected commercial families consolidated and led this industry: the Pinillos and Vergils of the north, and the powerful and ever-political Huánuco clan of Augusto Durand, who was one of Peru's best-known caudillos and *políticos*. The northern Trujillo circuit increasingly specialized in beverage-related coca-leaf sales for U.S. markets. It eventually became, via Maywood Chemical of New Jersey, the privileged supplier for Coca-Cola—albeit, to maintain respectability, in de-cocainized form after 1903. Huánuco's cocaine industry, in particular, became an expansive regional politico-economic pole, articulating the tropical estates of Huallaga's Amazon to drug markets, drug firms, and soon, to "snow" aficionados and antinarcotics reformers across the globe.

High hopes were invested in Peruvian cocaine (no pun intended). Cocaine, in the words of statesman Alejandro Garland, was the "essentially Peruvian industry." Cocaine became so highly valorized in Peru because it fused modern Western science and liberal commerce with a dormant ancient national resource, coca leaf. Coca signified the wondrous and profitable gifts Peru could offer the world, and even its native stock went up with its new Europeanized uses (hadn't Andean peoples first discovered it?). Cocaine embodied deferred nationalist hopes of industrialism after a century of commercial

9. Gootenberg, "Rise and Shine of a National Commodity" (a study based on Huánuco regional archives); see also Alejandro Garland, *El Perú en 1906* (Lima: Imp. del Estado, 1907), 180–82, 213, for sector. If highly esteemed and of rapid initial growth, coca/cocaine never exceeded 5 percent of the era's national exports. These branded varieties of export coca should not be confused with true botanical varieties, which sparked countless controversies in the nineteenth century.

dependence.¹⁰ It combined a Peruvian botanical monopoly with proof of the possibilities for Peruvian innovation and entrepreneurship without recourse to old-style government intervention. In part, such positive and positivist associations reflected how cocaine—by 1900 a waning nineteenth-century miracle drug—was seen in the world at large, with a strong added dose of national pride.

So, when between 1900 and 1920 cocaine began its transformation abroad—from miracle to pariah drug, from boom commodity to unwelcomed illicit one—its legacies were paradoxical. The principle legacy was the working existence of global circuits of commodity cocaine: the U.S.-Andean and the distinctive European link, which now was to be limited or suppressed. The American preference for coca leaf imports—enshrined in U.S. politics on tariffs—was preferably satisfied through open currents of commerce with Peru. Cocaine earned its place as the “first modern global drug,” not only in its far geographic reach but in its broader cultural implications.¹¹ In one generation, its image became inverted in Western medical circles, from a novel modern panacea to an unscientific “mania,” and from the hope of exhausted modern brain-workers to the bane of our criminal classes, “easy women” (i.e., sex-workers), despised racial minorities, and catchall “others.” One paradox in this complex transformation was that coca—a relatively benign object of widespread popular use, and a possible domestic alternative to cocaine—became vilified by the same medical, professional, and governing circles that turned against stronger cocaine, with minor dissent. Another irony lay in how the United States, the most avid consumer of both substances, quickly transformed into the world’s most passionate and committed anticocaine crusader, in what medical historian David F. Musto has diagnosed generally as “the American Disease”—our eternal love-hate obsession with drugs as remedy and scourge.¹² For Peru, these were

10. Gootenberg, *Imagining Development: Economic Ideas in Peru’s “Fictitious Prosperity” of Guano* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1993); a notion developed also in JoAnn Kawell, “The Essentially Peruvian Industry,” unpublished ms., Berkeley, Calif., 1997.

11. Gootenberg, “Cocaine: The Hidden Histories,” in Gootenberg, *Cocaine: Global Histories*, for cocaine as global drug. Arguably, tobacco was the first global drug (but hardly of modern origin) and opiates widespread and ancient. A remarkable text on cocaine’s reach is British PRO FO (Foreign Office) 228/2202 (“Cocaine 1909/10”), Imperial Institute, Dec. 1909, “Memorandum on the Production, Distribution, Sale and Physiological Effects of Cocaine” (a survey requested by Chinese sovereigns, concerned that Western cocaine would compound their opium problems).

12. David F. Musto, M.D., *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973); and “America’s First Cocaine Epidemic,” *Wilson Quarterly* (Summer 1989); another cyclical view is David T. Courtwright, “The Rise and Fall of

highly confused messages: once so vital to develop, cocaine was now deemed a bad thing. It took another 50 years for Peruvians to fully get that message, perhaps due to the high initial hopes placed on the drug, as well as the material and regional interests at stake.

Cocaine in Retreat, 1910–1940

Cocaine did decline globally in the years 1910 to 1940, both in worldly prestige and bodily usage. World consumption likely halved from a 15-ton yearly peak to less than 4 tons in shrinking medical use by the eve of World War II. This era saw the first attempts, led by the United States, to project a global prohibition regime against cocaine at the same time licit world networks diversified and shifted toward Asia. The depression of locally produced Andean cocaine produced notable ideological challenges to American designs but as yet no illicit response. Significantly, the interwar period also represents the nadir of criminal or recreational (ab)use of cocaine, particularly within the United States itself.

The United States was the prime mover in most of cocaine's changes as Europeans, Peruvians, and other emerging actors watched, waited, or eluded them. The sources of the anticocaine movement in the United States were complex, and will never be narrowed to one overriding cause. It first welled up from local levels—by 1905, most American states had passed specific “anticocaine” statutes in reaction to increasing awareness of its dangers, real and imagined, and to the emergence of underground markets and deviant cultures of pleasure-seeking nonmedical cocaine use. The highly visible and fear-inspiring figure of the “coke fiend,” who appeared more menacing than behaviorally passive and still often upper-class opiate habitués, predated drug prohibitions. By 1905, cocaine use also became notoriously racialized: the newly Jim-Crow South feared rampaging “Negroes” on coke, while northern cities, New York especially, imagined unscrupulous pharmacists and dealers or predatory “Jew-peddlers” everywhere. This was an effective mixture of “moral panic”—a classic passionate drug scare—and serious muckraking concerns. The reduced club of U.S. cocaine manufacturers joined the campaign, led by professionalizing pharmaceutical and mainstream medical interests such as the A.M.A.—in

Cocaine in the United States,” in Jordan Goodman, Paul E. Lovejoy, and Andrew Sherratt, eds., *Consuming Habits: Drugs in History and Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 1995); Mortimer's *History of Coca* presents a dissenting voice, as was Lloyd Brothers, “A Treatise on Coca (Erythroxyton Coca)” (Cincinnati, 1913).

good part to narrow or monopolize the field of professional use and to repair damaged public trust in their reputations. Cocaine, U.S. historian Joe Spillane now shows, had become a glaring national symbol of unregulated drugs and unreformed drug companies.¹³ Cocaine also got caught up with, and sometimes conflated or lost in, surging Progressive-era campaigns against narcotics (with their new medicalized addiction model of abuse) and alcohol (that oldest of American demons). Antidrug reformers stressed that as narcotics became proscribed, so must cocaine, to prevent former opium addicts from embracing the drug. Starting in 1906, the pure F.D.A. acts scrutinized, regulated, and exposed coca patent-medicine frauds and the few cocaine concoctions catering specifically to fiends. Its crusade climaxed in a failed 1911–12 Chattanooga show trial that accused Coca-Cola itself of marketing a fraudulent (since cocaine-free) product, with H. H. Rusby now a prime government witness against coca. In 1914, responding to international treaty imperatives of our own making, congress unanimously added cocaine to the Harrison Narcotic Act (the first federal drug law); in 1922, coca imports came under strict control in the Jones-Miller Act, which banned all cocaine imports. The vigilance of U.S. Treasury agents, State Department officials and later Harry J. Anslinger's zealous rein of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN, 1930–62) came into action.

Subsequently, cocaine consumption in the U.S. and elsewhere fell dramatically off its 1917 peak during the interwar period, in what one pundit calls “the great drought.” To be sure, cocaine found a haven in certain cultural niches: jazz music, horse racing, Hollywood orgies and song, but mainly confined to their realms of folklore. American fiends slowly faded into memory. Cocaine medicinal usage continued to shrink as substitutes like procaine came on line and cocaine research dried up (since it fit poorly with the newly constructed medical or opiate addiction paradigm). And yet notably, almost no

13. On fiends and so many issues in the U.S. domestic transformation, consult the wonderful analysis in Spillane, *Cocaine*, esp. chaps. 2, 5, and 7; Pendergrast, *God and Coca-Cola*, chap 7; Musto has emphasized the race factor, less so Lester Grinspoon and James Bakalar in *Cocaine: A Drug and Its Social Evolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), chap. 2. NA RG 43 Records of U.S. Delegations to the International Opium Conferences, esp. Entry 48, Box 1, for Wright's survey (1909) of national cocaine concerns. See also Alan A. Block, “The Snowman Cometh: Coke in Progressive New York,” *Criminology* 17, no. 1 (May 1979): 75–99—archives from Jerusalem (of the New York Kehillah) shed light on illicit cocaine in the teens. NA RG 59 “Name File of Suspected Narcotics Traffickers” (LOTS File No. 55 D607), 1927–42, is equally “cosmopolitan,” as were pioneer South American cocaine merchants of the 1950s.

organized international network of illicit cocaine emerged after prohibition laws, in contrast to those that coalesced around alcohol, or an even newer ex-miracle drug, heroin. The inescapable conclusion that emerges from a close and critical scrutiny of the era's public health and FBN reports is this: there were fewer and fewer cocaine fiends, and by the 1930s effectively no cocaine was being smuggled from abroad. Confiscations of cocaine were measured in ounces or vials of diverted European medical-grade. No illicit factories came to life and no smuggling sprouted from Andean coca fields.¹⁴ In part, this pattern reflected a constricting U.S. political economy of cocaine production and control: first four, then only two New Jersey firms (Merck and Maywood), who only imported bulky and easily tracked coca leaf to their sheltered and minutely regulated market. The Coca-Cola Company, now breaking into export markets, was still invested in Peru (northern coca-leaf flavoring, decocainized in New Jersey, was critical to its secret formula) and now became a staunch government ally, supplying much-needed intelligence. These firms energetically cooperated with U.S. drug officials, who in turn, promoted their name and causes over the subsequent decades. U.S. borders became sealed to cocaine, which withered away early urban cocaine gangs or "combinations," and sent thrill seekers to other drugs. By the late 1930s, Anslinger trumpeted cocaine not as a present danger (as opposed to his famous "Reefer Madness" antimarijuana campaign of the era) but as exemplar of what hard-nosed repressive policies, not to mention his inspired leadership, could do.¹⁵

14. We have no yet convincing account for the post-1920 drop in cocaine consumption (be it repressive law or substitution by other drugs like amphetamine), and I am not trying to suggest that U.S. prohibitions "worked" during this period. For clues, see H. Wayne Morgan, *Yesterday's Addicts* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1974). Europe was a slightly different story, with cocaine subcultures thriving through the 1920s in Weimer Berlin, London's West End, the sin port of Rotterdam, and the famous Montmartre (prostitution) district of Paris, with "snow" diverted from pharmacies and legal drug firms. For its cultural impact, see Marek Kohn's remarkable *Dope Girls: The Birth of the British Drug Underground* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1992).

15. From study of U.S. Treasury, Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN), annual reports, "Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs," 1926–1940s; and Harry J. Anslinger Papers, 1930–70, Historical Collections and Labor Archives, Pennsylvania State University Library. Richard Ashley, *Cocaine: Its History, Uses, and Effects* (New York: St. Martin's, 1975), chap. 12; on cultural flows, see Joseph Kennedy, *Coca Exotica: The Illustrated History of Cocaine* (New York: Cornwall Books, 1985), chap. 12. The legendary 1960s folk singer Dave Van Ronk covered the 1920s ditty "Cocaine Blues" (pre-Clapton) with a ragged ensemble "Dave Van Ronk and the Hudson Dusters" (New York: Verve-Forecast Records, FTS-3041, 1968)—a layered case of cultural memory, for the Dusters had been a genuine Manhattan "coke gang," extinguished by 1920 (Luc Sante, *Low-Life* [New York: Vintage Books, 1992], 226).

In contrast, the American campaign to internationalize anticocaine prohibitions, much less take it to the source in Peru, did not go very far beyond much spilled ink at international conferences. Other nations did not catch the U.S. cocaine panic, and American incentives to push them in that direction stayed low-key, given a lack of credible domestic cocaine threat by the 1920s. In the 1910s, U.S. diplomats such as Hamilton Wright, acting almost unilaterally, had anticocaine clauses included in the antiopiates 1912–14 Hague Convention. Even as a passive nonmember, American critics pushed cocaine issues onto the agenda of the League of Nations' various Geneva drug conventions of the 1920s and 1930s: for example, the short-lived "Coca Committee" convened in 1934. The politics of coca's inclusion in international antinarcotics efforts are still murky, and seemed to ape the logic and language of opiates (coca bushes were to cocaine as poppy to morphine). The United States, as the principled, mobilized crusader for drug controls, assumed the universalist stand that all abusable manufactured drugs merited a global control. From the start, this meant the suppression of raw-materials production, in which Americans conveniently had no colonial stake. Big-power politics also played a role. Britain seconded this U.S. position, in part stemming from concerns that cocaine would replace opium in China and its Indian colonies (a significantly unknown episode). However, Britain's primary motive in adopting its anticocaine stance was to stymie stronger antiopiates resolutions, knowing that Germany (the world's largest cocaine and morphine interest) would veto all-encompassing controls. Surprisingly, however, the Germans went along with the idea instead, for a variety of reasons.¹⁶ The contradictory results, visible in countless League of Nations reports and resolutions from the 1920s on, were fictional big-power designs on cocaine: spotty statistics mandated and published, an idealistic national import "quota" system, scattered on-off debates, and periodic American pleas for real action. Officials also noticed from the

16. Much is written about the genesis of international antidrug diplomacy in this era, but none focused on cocaine's politics per se (the lesser of drug concerns). See Friman, "Germany and Transformation of Cocaine" (1999) or H. Richard Friman's comparative *NarcoDiplomacy: Exporting the U.S. War on Drugs* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1996), esp. chaps. 2–3. See Great Britain, PRO, *The Opium Trade, 1910–1941* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1974) for big diplomacy; and *Chemist and Druggist* (London) 1895–1910 for Indian cocaine. For U.S. roles, see Arnold H. Taylor, *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Trade* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1969), chaps. 2–4, updated in McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*; on the League, see Opium Commission OC 153 (1923), OC 158 (1923) O.L.198.1934XI, Geneva, 2nd Opium Conference, 1934. Peru's relation to the League and other external prompts were studied in the Archivo Histórico del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores del Perú (MRE, Lima), 1920–40s.

start that Peru and other producers blatantly refused to sign onto these paper controls. By the 1920s, Bolivia spiritedly defended its indigenous coca use in international forums, while Peru did its best to ignore the League and other internationalist pronouncements on drugs. The weak League, focused on opiates, nonetheless did help delegitimize cocaine in global ideological arenas, and defined the drug's shrinking medicinal quotas. This inadvertently sparked a new cocaine network—this time in Southeast Asia.

North American anticocainism filtered through a more complex cocaine world between 1910 and 1940. Two novel global cocaine chains burst onto the scene: first the Dutch-Javanese colonial link (which served European markets through the 1920s), and later (in the shadows of fictive League controls) a Japanese pan-Asian network. Both new mercantilist circuits took Peruvian producers, who considered coca their national birthright, wholly by surprise, and for a two-decade interlude between 1920 and 1940 bypassed the Andes as world cocaine centers.

The Netherlands first experimented with Javanese coca production in the mid-1880s, but like others, these early colonial efforts went dormant. Yet suddenly after 1905, encouraged by colonial officials, the island sprouted dozens of modern and extremely productive coca plantations; by 1912 more than 1,000 tons yearly of high-alkaloid Javanese leaf effectively wiped Andean coca from European ports. Amsterdam's state-of-the-art and state-sponsored NCF cocaine works (the *Nederlandsche Cocainefabriek*), formed as German patents ran out on Ecgonine cocaine-extraction methods, swiftly became the world's dominant and fully integrated producer of the drug. After World War I, and a telling crisis of overproduction, the NCF became a leg of now League-sanctioned European cocaine supply and pricing syndicates. Yet, with such poor legal market prospects, and with pioneering Dutch commitments to ideals of international institutional cooperation (as in *The Hague*), the Netherlands voluntarily moved to dismantle their cocaine empire in the late 1920s. Nevertheless, Java still produced coca in the 1930s, and even Merck N.J. (wary of Peruvian leaf quality) invested in its own corporate plantation there.¹⁷

As the Dutch nexus faded, the imperial sun of industrializing Japan rose—

17. Marcel De Kort, "Doctors, Diplomats, and Businessmen: Conflicting Interests in the Netherlands and Dutch East Indies, 1860–1950," in Gootenberg, *Cocaine: Global Histories*; for a Peruvian optic on Java, see M. E. Derteano, "Informe sobre la coca en la isla de Java," *Boletín del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores* 1919 (Hong Kong, but dated May 1914); Merck Archives (White House, N.J.), "Cocaine" (various), esp. "Tjitembong," 1925–40.

this time, in an Asian response to League and American controls. Japan established its first colonial coca plantations on Taiwan in 1916; by the late 1920s, with leading national chemists like Jokichi Takamine at work, the island was producing upwards of three tons of cocaine a year (half of official world medicinal needs). In 1917, in a fascinating jump across global commodity chains, Hoshi Pharmaceuticals even purchased a massive tract of land in Peru's Hualaga valley, near tiny Tingo María. There it found raw material, and perhaps coca know-how, until the operations were expropriated in 1937. Some of Japan's largest drug firms, manipulating military ties, forged this cocaine (and even weightier heroin) network, which peaked during the 1930s. They survived by faked official drug statistics and retail markets across Asia, some of which evidently involved shadowy or coerced sales.¹⁸ From the start, the United States and the League (alarmed over any cocaine circuit outside of its influence) expressed deep concerns over Japanese cocaine, and narcotics sales later raised serious legal questions at the Tokyo War-Crimes Trials.

In this larger context, the American relation to Peruvian cocaine was changing. Yet one would falsely assume that the United States could easily or successfully "export" its drug policy to Peru, who had dropped out of the League and barely acknowledged its antidrug conventions. The Andean nation continued to make its openly legal cocaine and stood apart from the new regime of international drug control. In 1912–14 American diplomats expressed dismay at Peru's willful neglect of Hague principles and remained wary of Peruvian motives ("interests") throughout the interwar period. But rather than regard Peruvian cocaine as an imminent threat, these officials, soon joined by prying FBN agents, tried to learn more about it through the exchange of information on drug-control law and chemistry with their Peruvian counterparts. In 1931, the chief U.S. consul in Lima mounted a detailed inspection tour of the remnant Huánuco cocaine industry, and by the 1930s Washington likely had developed better drug surveillance in Peru—periodic "Reports on Coca," interviews, news clippings—than Lima's own government.¹⁹ There was

18. Steven B. Karch, M.D., "Japan and the Cocaine Industry of Southeast Asia, 1860–1944," in Gootenberg, *Cocaine: Global Histories*; for the Peruvian link, see Isabel Lausent-Herrera, "La presencia japonesa en el eje Huánuco-Pucalpa entre 1918 y 1982," *Revista Geográfica* (Mexico) 107 (1988): 93–118; "Japanese Quietly Exporting Cocaine from Interior of Peru," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 12 Aug. 1922; and Archivo Regional de Huánuco (hereafter ARH—Huánuco *protocolos* cited below).

19. Based on declassification and study of U.S. National Archives, RG 170 (DEA/FBN), 0660 (Foreign Country Subject Boxes: Peru, 1926–40), Box 19, "Drugs/Beverages"/"Decocainized Coca Leaves," and Box 20, "Coca Leaves." Parallel

also a vital working corporate intermediary: Maywood Chemical (and Coca-Cola officers) possessed their own networks in Peru and were happy to do the bidding of the FBN or State Department officials, in exchange for Washington's support of an open-door low-cost coca import policy. That was one initial reason for the lack of diplomatic pressure to limit or suppress coca. Sometimes such interests got tangled, but the United States was not yet a heavy meddler.

Where did this all leave Peru? Peruvian cocaine fell into an irreparable crisis between 1910 and 1940. This crisis revealed itself in many forms, some influenced from abroad but others of a decidedly national ilk. Peru's legal cocaine network remained depressed, becoming an increasingly regional (Huánuco) rather than national interest. Huánuco's main industry was reduced to a handful of operating or part-time workshops, and averaged less than a half-ton of yearly crude exports—one-twentieth of its 1900 peak—mainly to Germany, Britain, and for a time Japan. Coca leaf, largely of Trujillo origin, had to vie with competing non-Peruvian brands, even in the U.S. marketplace. Coca and cocaine exports, representing less than 5 percent of the domestic harvest, were no longer significant items in the national economy. In the south, coca was diverted toward the still-growing internal market of Indian laborers. Cocaine business leadership in Huánuco passed from the persecuted Durand clan (which found itself on the wrong end of Peruvian politics in the 1920s) to one Andrés Avelino Soberón, a dedicated local merchant-manufacturer who searched fruitlessly for new export market outlets throughout the 1930s. Others briefly entered the field on the price spikes associated with World War I and the coming of the Second (as war drives up medicinal cocaine stocks). Nevertheless, everyone in Huánuco sensed the dim prospects ahead.²⁰ Even so, contraband cocaine was not even a rumor-worthy solution; Peru's cocaine

documents are found in RG 59 State Dept. Decimal Files ("Peru-Narcotics"), 1920s–1940s (series 823.114). Americans might still vaunt the coca trade, as in William Reid's "Coca: Plant of the Andes" (Washington D.C.: Pan-American Union, "Commodities of Commerce" pamphlet, 1918), reprinted as late as 1937. On Coca-Cola's various roles, see Gootenberg, "Secret Ingredients: The Politics of Coca in U.S.-Peruvian Relations, 1915–1965" (New York, 2002, ms.).

20. Archivo Regional de Huánuco (ARH) (Prefectura, Municipalidad, and Sucesiones, Protocolos, 1920s–40s); see also the remarkable 50-page survey by Merck's Emile R. Pilli, "The Coca Industry in Peru" (Rahway, N.J., 1943, typescript) (in DEA Library and Information Center, Pentagon City, Va.); RG 59 DecFile 823.114, "Manufacture of the Derivatives of the Coca Leaf in Peru," Burdett, 22 April 1932.

industry, certainly poorer during this period, remained nationally legitimate, in both senses of the term.

Besides creating a scarcity of buyers, the rising international regime affected Peru in several ways. The Western world's rising antinarcotics ideals quickly registered, and some reforms of a hygienic nature were adopted to fit local needs (for example, moves against Lima's Chinese opium dens, a 1922 narcotics health code, and a regulatory structure for the cocaine industry under Health Ministry auspices during the 1930s). Just as pro-cocaine science had before, modern anticocainism arrived in Peru mainly via medical and the new addiction science. Curiously or not, it focused on Indian coca-chewing (for the true good of the natives, of course). Peru's long modern national "coca debate" began, reversing the relatively positive spin on coca that had dominated since the 1860s. In the 1910s, Dr. Hermilio Valdizán, a pioneering national psychiatrist, diagnosed coca as a cause of the Indians' abject mental "alienation" and cultural-racial "degeneration."²¹ By the 1920s, the anticoca cause became further medicalized and politicalized, with coca painted as causing a mass alkaloidal "poisoning" or "addiction" of Indians, a position advanced by most pro-Indian elite *indigenistas*. By the 1930s, a whole branch of Peruvian science flourished, led by doctors Luis Saenz and Carlos Gutiérrez Noriega, sometimes with American aid and encouragement, with the aim of proving coca's deleterious effects on physical and mental health. In the following decade, the nationalist "Andean biology" of Dr. Carlos Monge and his group turned to work against this hypothesis. Yet modern cocaine (ab)use per se was not a problem—few Peruvians had ever touched it.

In fact, in Peru cocaine continued to be seen as a good thing, evoking serious national calls to defend it. In the 1910s and 1920s, various reformers vaunted the need to modernize the crisis-ridden cocaine sector, to encourage scientific agriculture for improved coca crops, and to upgrade refining into a modern pharmaceutical industry. The ideal was to make pure medicinal-grade cocaine hydrochlorides for profitable final medical markets. A call for state supports was raised—after all, this was still a quintessential Peruvian product—unjustly threatened by world competitors and critics. One remarkable

21. Joseph Gagliano, *Coca Prohibition in Peru: The Historical Debates* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1994), esp. chap. 6 (and orig. texts, Valdizán to Saenz); S. Lorente and B. Caravedo, "Bases fundamentales para la organización de la defensa social contra la toximania" (Peruvian Ministry of Health) (paper presented at the VIII Conferencia Sanitaria Pan-Americano, Lima, 12–20 Oct. 1927); see JoAnn Kawell, "Going to the Source" (Berkeley, Calif., 1997, ms.), chap. 16, on the split of coca/cocaine.

public health figure, Dr. Carlos Enrique Paz Soldán, combined all of these themes into a loud nationalist campaign, heard from Washington to Geneva from the late 1920s to early 1940s. In a radical reversal of American “supply side” antidrug logic, Paz Soldán argued that strictures on cocaine in the West had actually forced Peru’s surplus coca into the nervous systems of Peruvian Indians. Reacting against discriminatory League quota controls, he proposed an elaborate Peruvian state “monopoly” to regulate, promote, and modernize cocaine, one that would deploy its global trade profits to locally wean suffering Indians from their coca-chewing pathology.²² This corporatist project, a possible alternative to repressive U.S. drug designs, sparked intriguing underground international maneuvers and mobilized a national defense of remaining coca growers, mainly in Huánuco and Cuzco, as might befit the 1930s depression. In this contested climate, American sway on Peruvian policy remained slight.

Overall, many paradoxes and legacies emerged from this transitional period from 1910 to 1940. The largest lasting change was the transformation of the United States from a world coca promoter to a would-be global crusader against cocaine. Yet, for a country that vaunted from the start externally focused or supply-side antidrug strategies, the United States achieved greatest success, however understood, in drying up cocaine use within its borders. Abroad, anticocaine notions were spreading (mainly as a conflated lesser kin of narcotics), but were never taken too seriously by allies or the League, much less by actual coca producers. Paradoxically, these international paper sanctions coincided with the swift diversification of world cocaine networks in Java and Japan (though such supply “ballooning” today seems a predicable outcome of drug repression). In Peru, the legacy was a growing schizophrenia between the vilification of coca-chewing and the defense of modern medicalized cocaine, between nationalist alternatives and American designs, between regional economic hopes and the slim market reality of legal cocaine, and between mounting U.S. influences and Peru’s evasive stance on dangerous drugs. Something had to give. But the largest global puzzle was this: the era that saw the greatest plurality of cocaine regimes and ideals—including tolerated active cocaine

22. On the debate, see Gootenberg, “From Reluctance to Resistance: Constructing Cocaine (Prohibitions) in Peru,” in Gootenberg, *Cocaine: Global Histories*, 56–62; see also Carlos Bües (one of many coca reformers), *La coca: Apuntes sobre la planta, beneficio, enfermedades y aplicación* (Lima: Ministerio de Fomento, 1911). Paz Soldán’s polemic is followed in *La Reforma Médica* (Lima) 1929–1939; see also “El problema médico social de la coca en el Perú,” *Mercurio Peruano* 19 (Lima) 1929; and *La coca peruana: Memorandum sobre su situación actual* (Lima: Sociedad Nacional Agraria, 1936).

industries abroad—was actually the least problematic for the United States in terms of cocaine as a genuine domestic social problem.

From Global Prohibition to Illicit Cocaine (1940–1970)

The chief paradox of the following period—from the 1940s to the start of our contemporary entanglement with Andean cocaine in the 1970s—is that the United States swiftly achieved its long-sought goal, a global cocaine prohibitions regime of near universal scope and consent. Peru conceded much of its former independent stance. Yet what followed was the most catastrophic American encounter with cocaine yet: the *illicit* “coke” boom of the 1970s to 1980s (from its yuppie through its crack phases) and our Sisyphean cycle of hemispheric drug wars ever since. The causal links and chains here are deeply tangled, but have much to do with defining cocaine’s new illicit sphere over a transnational space.

In the long saga of American drugs, World War II marks a turning point. Domestically, drug consumption of all kinds (save amphetamines) fell to record lows, given disruptions of traditional supply routes, strict border surveillance, and the era’s high social cohesion. In short, 1945 presented a clean slate for drugs: a paradise for law enforcement (Anslinger’s influence was then at its peak) and a personal hell for individuals in search of highs or new drug cultures.²³ That was to change in the 1950s, as heroin and other subcultures slowly took root in American inner cities, as prescription tranquilizers conquered the new white suburbs, as LSD escaped from secret CIA labs, and as mafia heroin supply networks regrouped, sparking even more punitive federal drug laws (all with a modicum of legal and public dissent). This edifice would implode in the mid-1960s, when the so-called drug culture—a dramatic and novel revival of the “American disease”—brought these repressive norms into cultural relief and conflict.

In terms of American foreign drug policy, the postwar decades were also paradise found. This time around, the United States became the unchallenged guiding hand of a refurbished U.N. global antidrug regime of the late 1940s,

23. Jill Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe-Dreams: A History of America’s Romance with Illegal Drugs* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1997), part 2 (not as “hep” a book as the title suggests); for desperate postwar drug cultures, try William S. Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, *The Yage Letters* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1975 [1953–63]); Jay Stevens, *Storming Heaven: LSD and the American Dream* (New York: Perennial Library, 1988); and Mickey C. Smith, *Social History of the Minor Tranquilizers* (New York: Pharmaceutical Products Press, 1991 [1985]).

now based in New York. The C.N.D. (U.N. Council on Narcotic Drugs) and related bodies, unlike the League's defunct Opium Commissions, went well beyond the big powers, taking pains to integrate rising third-world nations (like coca-producing Peru) into its American-inspired maximalist agenda. International institutions emerged stronger and with more resolve, and now raw-materials limitation became the aggressively pursued cornerstone of the international regime. A common stance prevailed on both sides of the Cold War divide: our mortal ideological foe—the Soviets—took an even harder Leninist line against mind-altering drugs, Anslinger's opportunistic misinformation to the contrary. So during the early years of the Cold War, the old dream of a unified, comprehensive, and universally compulsory drug regime was hammered out by Washington. This culminated in the still-regnant U.N. "Single Convention" of 1961.

Cocaine was still a sideshow here. On the surface, U.S. concerns in the hemisphere appeared more focused on Mexico's opium and marijuana crops. Indeed, within the United States old memories of popular coca were gone (so buried that Coca-Cola could officially deny its use ever), and "snow" (or its dearth since the 1920s) was a mere nostalgic lament of aging bluesmen. One brief domestic "coke scare" in 1949 deftly became another nail in the drug's coffin. Musto suggests this hiatus in U.S. cocaine cultures proved ultimately harmful, as Americans retained no collective cultural memory of cocaine, or its perils, when it reappeared around 1970 as a prestigious and pricey sin.²⁴

Internationally, the slate was also spotlessly cleaned. The year 1945 marked the extinction of any autonomous cocaine networks that had persisted before the war. The conflict demolished precisely the German, Japanese, and Dutch Javanese planters and pharmaceutical sources, and in each zone U.S. occupations laid down the law against cocaine and other drugs. The U.N. further lowered licit quotas (to under 2,000 kilos) and by 1947 the C.N.D. adopted coca eradication itself as a high-profile project. They started with the traveling 1948–50 U.N. "Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf," to win approval where it mattered most, in the Andes itself. Signatories of the 1961 Single Convention, including Peru and Bolivia, pledged to fully eradicate the bush

24. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, chaps. 5–7; Harry J. Anslinger and William F. Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1953), 16–18, 281; on Anslinger, see John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics* (Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1990); for U.N., see vast output on coca by C.N.D. (2nd–5th Sessions), esp. varied publications in the "Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf," Spec. Supplement No. 1 (Lake Success, N.Y., May 1950).

and Indian usage in “twenty-five years” (that would have been 1986, our year of crack).

Thus, by the late 1940s the world’s sole remaining cocaine source—Peru—now faced a confident and focused United States alone. Indeed, the waning of Peruvian autonomy concerning drugs dates to the outbreak of World War II, and from that point on it gets harder to separate the North American and Peruvian threads of the story, narratively or analytically. After 1939, many perspectives shifted. Peru became a staunch Good Neighbor ally, with goods like cocaine strategically and closely (though tacitly) surveilled. The whole notion of “illicit trades” assumed militaristic “us-vs.-them” tones, which melded easily into a later hemispheric discourse of a “war on drugs.” Peru placed unprecedented controls on its cocaine factories and shifted anti-narcotics offices from national health to police agencies. Officials spoke of putting the whole business under a restrictive state monopoly system. Peru began belated participation in League drug-control boards. The United States, for its part, became more and more blunt about cocaine; that is, it finally started meddling in the postwar years, and police and technical cooperation concerning drugs began. In a first move to pressure Peru, the United States temporarily suspended coca imports.²⁵

These changes were quickly felt down the Huallaga valley, where the remnants of Peru’s legal cocaine industry met their last stand in 1947–50. By then, the stakes in legal cocaine had sunk far. Andrés Soberón, the last producer of note, grasped the dismal market prospects ahead; under police pressure he voluntarily closed shop in early 1949. In fact, the whole region was moving in the new direction of jungle “development,” abetted by novel U.S. foreign aid programs. The first real roads reached the tiny Huallaga hamlet of Tingo María in the late 1930s, and nearby hacendados branched out into tea and coffee (Peru’s coca had not replaced them after all). The huge war-expropriated Japanese Tulumayo property was rebaptized as the Peruvian government’s “Official Colonization Zone,” designed to draw landless peasant cultivators down from the high Andes. In 1943, the Americans themselves entered this scene, establishing the “Tingo María Tropical Agricultural Station,” a large model joint-aid program to bring strategic and new commercial crops to

25. The United States continues to import Peruvian coca (from Trujillo state farms) for residual medicinal cocaine manufacture and for “Merchandise No. 5,” the “secret” coca flavoring extract used by Coca-Cola. However, this modest trade is no longer as complicating a factor in drug policy as it was in the first half of the century. For details, see Gootenberg, “Secret Ingredients”; and Michael Miller, “Quality Stuff: Firm Is Peddling Cocaine and Deals Are Legit,” *Wall Street Journal*, 27 Oct. 1994.

the jungle, and studiously ignoring the one already planted there. Under post-war Point-Four initiatives, the scope of the Tingo María project expanded, making it South America's premier tropical extension station.²⁶

In 1948–49, in a dramatic and supremely transnational turn of events, cocaine was finally criminalized in Peru. Many factors and actors converged here, making the crackdown on cocaine production an overdetermined outcome. The well-publicized Peruvian mission of the U.N. Coca Commission (which framed coca leaf as a solvable international social and addiction problem) was largely welcomed by Peru's governing and medical classes, despite a dissenting Andean scientific "Réplica" about Indian coca use. Another U.N. expert mission converged on Peru to advise specifically about narcotics control. The abrupt 1948 shift to the hardline pro-U.S. military regime of General Manuel Odría brought a classic "war" mentality to drugs, including punitive narcotics codes, anticoca congresses, the formation of a national antinarcotics squad, a drive to establish a supervisory state coca/cocaine monopoly (ENACO of the 1950s and beyond), and the revocation by fiat of the last private cocaine factory licences. To top this off came the spectacular mid-1949 revelation of a cocaine-smuggling trail stretching from Huánuco to the streets of Harlem. The dramatic FBN-engineered bust of the so-called Balerezo Gang in July–September 1949 put "Peru's White Goddess" (as *Time* called it) on the front page of American papers. It was not spontaneous: U.S. customs and drug agents had devised the secret Andean anticocaine strategy the year before. Eighty-three arrests occurred along the primitive ship and trucking corridor connecting New York City and Huánuco's jungle. The personnel of formerly legal factories were among those arrested, with more to follow.²⁷ A then-remarkable 210 ounces of cocaine was that year's haul in the United States, but

26. ARH, Prefectura, Leg. 33, no. 463, Soberón, "Inventario de fábrica de cocaína," 1949; Peru, *Acción oficial en el desarrollo agropecuario de la colonización de Tingo María* (Lima, 1947); César Ferreyros, "Tingo María, ciudad adolescente," *El Comercio* (Lima), all July 1949; U.S. NA RG 166 (U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service), Peru Survey/Agricultural Attaches, for data on this project from 1940 to early 1960s.

27. On 1947–50 events, see Gootenberg, "Reluctance or Resistance," 63–72; best sources are DEA RG 170 06600, Peru/Subject Files, all 1947–52, esp. G. Williams to Anslinger, "Peru: Illicit Cocaine Traffic," 17 May 1949, and Box 30, Bureau of Customs, 14 Dec. 1948; parallel documents found in RG 59 DecFiles 823.114, 1947–52; UN/ESC, *Annual Reports*, E/NR "Peru: Annual Report for 1950" (17 Jan. 1952); "Counter-Reply of the Peruvian Commission for Study of the Coca Problem" (Lima: Ministerio de Salud Pública, 1951); "Peru: The White Goddess," *Time*, 11 April 1949. See Ethan Nadelmann, *Cops across Borders: The Internationalization of U.S. Criminal Law Enforcement* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1993) on global cops.

significantly all of it was now dubbed from “Peru.” Anslinger personally called Peru’s ambassadors to task, but such crude tactics proved superfluous, as the operation was declared a triumph. The generals moved in, blamed drugs on the local leftists (APRA), and dismantled the last factories; U.S. drug agents began concerted operations, training, and assistance in Peru. “Drug cops” had crossed borders and both nationalities began speaking the same languages of control. Thus ended seven decades of licit cocaine; globally, the events of 1949 marked the triumph of U.S.-led cocaine prohibitions system.

Aftermaths and Aftershocks

I will not belabor the irony that U.S. officials sincerely believed that the 1949 skirmish was the end of cocaine, period. In fact, by definition it was the birth of *illicit* cocaine, which through a sinuous underground path starting in 1950 would by 1980 make the confiscation of 210 ounces, much less the 10 legal tons of yesteryear, seem like a pipe dream. (By the early 1990s, the best estimates went to over 500–800 tons of cocaine on delivery to northern markets, an income stream surpassing 50 billion dollars and employing untold hundreds of thousands across the Andes, along entrenched networks far dispersed from coca’s home in the Huallaga.)²⁸ Incentives for illegal production got very big, whether one blames a misbegotten global system of drug prohibitions, insatiable American demand, or exceptionally evil and/or entrepreneurial drug runners (the newfangled Colombian “cartels”). Yet, close inspection of evidence suggests a surprising pattern: the return of cocaine as the socially menacing drug of the 1970s was largely the unintended outcome of American drug-suppression tactics and policies since 1950.

There are some real connections here, not just long cultural gaps. Just-opened DEA-FBN files reveal that we’ve actually been waging a secret war against illicit cocaine since 1950, not 1975 (when cocaine hit public radar) or 1985 (when Republicans escalated the foreign drug wars). With no licit spaces or political options left, throughout the 1950s and 1960s aspiring cocaine makers joined desperate peasants, and both in time linked up with an evolving transnational class of Latin illicit traffickers. The kerosene-soaked jungle pasta básica of the 1970s smelled suspiciously like Peru’s old *cocaína bruta*, and local peasant lore indeed cites those roots.²⁹ Sites and smuggling routes shifted con-

28. From Patrick L. Clawson and Rensselaer W. Lee III, *The Andean Cocaine Industry* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), chap.1, table 1.1 and fig. 1.4.

29. NA RG 170, 0660, Box 8 (Ecuador file) “Illicit Narcotic Traffic in Peru,” April 1953; INTERPOL, “Traffic in Narcotic Drugs,” Clandestine Laboratories, 1945–61, p. 71;

stantly as U.S. drug agents frantically sought to damn the dikes at every turn. In the first stage, the cat-and-mouse game of the 1950s and 1960s elicited more dedicated, dispersed, and professional brokers of illicit supply. In the second stage, starting in the 1970s, U.S. price and drug-substitution effects would push these networks into high gear.

The geography of the “illicit” is traceable. It began with those busts in Huánuco: several key prisoners, including Soberón himself, had been respectable chemists and workers in the legal cocaine industry (though rumor is heard of small-time dealing too). By 1951, U.S. intelligence locates Soberón hoarding cocaine bricks in Huallaga hideouts and dispatching working “experts” and recipes off to Bolivia, which had never industrialized its indigenous coca leaf. Networks rapidly extended in the early 1950s, the Andes now officially tagged as contraband territory. Underground labs popped up in deep-jungle Pucallpa and along the porous Brazilian frontier, but above all in Bolivia’s upland Cochabamba valley—a commercial hub remote from the Yungas, the country’s traditional legal coca basket. Passing through stateless disarray following the 1952 Revolution, Bolivians now incubated illicit cocaine, with dozens of tiny labs mushrooming in and out of service and drug scandals tainting the highest authorities. U.S. drug cops spent the decade chasing Bolivians across borders, such as the legendary female trafficker Blanca Ibáñez Herrera, in league with eager Cuban couriers and backers. By the late 1950s, cocaine labs showed up in far-off Buenos Aires and Mexico, as well as Lima, and then back again in the Huallaga’s Tingo María and remote downstream Uchiza.³⁰ By the mid-1950s, hotspots of far more elusive and efficient air transshipment from the eastern Andes developed in Panama, Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, and Cuba. By 1958, Batista’s Havana became the undisputed cosmopolitan capital of budding tastes for cocaine and for inter-American mobsters (both strongly associated with

J. F. Casale and R. F. X. Klein, “Illicit Production of Cocaine,” *Forensic Science Review* 5 (Dec. 1993)—one of a long string of related illicit “formulae”; see Edmundo Morales, *Cocaine: White Gold Rush in Peru* (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1989), chap. 4, for peasant colonization and perception.

30. INTERPOL Reports (1950s–1960s); NA RG 170 (DEA) 0660 Peru and Bolivia, 1953–67; RG 170, Box 54, “Inter-American Conferences,” 1959–66; NA RG 59 “Subject-Numeric” Files, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Panama, Cuba 1963–73; also DEA Library, “Vertical Files”—Andean Region, Illicit Traffic, Routes (1970s); U.N., 28 Feb 1967 (TAO/LAT/72) “Report of UN Study Tour . . . of the Illicit Traffic in Coca Leaf and Cocaine in Latin America.” I am now working on an essay that documents this early war, though some has been oddly out before: Andrew Tully, *The Secret War against Dope* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1974), chaps. 7 and 13.

prostitution). This touristic mix of decadence was soon displaced by the Revolution.

By the early 1960s, U.S. and U.N. officials appeared in quiet panic about cocaine's phoenix-like illicit rebirth. Even public FBN (then BNDD) reports count annualized U.S. border seizures (a proxy of sorts for consumption) in mounting pounds, not ounces: 6 pounds in 1960, 15 pounds in 1963, 26 pounds in 1967, 52 pounds in 1969, and a whopping 436 pounds in 1971. In the early 1960s, INTERPOL tallied cocaine captured from no less than seven Latin American supply points. In 1960, 1962, and 1964 the United States convened three major policing conferences for the region under the cooperative guise of the "Inter-American Consultative Group on the Problems of the Coca-leaf." In fact, the United States was anxious to rally Latin American police to tackle illicit cocaine, as well as to quickly move U.N. coca-eradication programs from pipedream to working reality. A 1966 U.N. Study Tour zeroed in on clandestine Bolivian production, which had now settled in Santa Cruz and the Chaparé lowlands. But by now, cocaine was also returning in force to its commercial birthplace, eastern Peru.

Between 1970 and 1973, illicit cocaine systematically broke into U.S. markets; by 1973 domestic seizures quadrupled to 452 kilos (more than 1,000 pounds), involving some 1,590 cocaine-related arrests. The expensive drug first captured public imagination as a benign 1970s version of the old nervous brain-workers' and sex-workers' salve. But now these brainy-sexy types were glam rock stars, Hollywood elites, fun-bent stockbrokers, and a jaded post-Nixon middle-class revved up on the mounting beat of disco. Cocaine entered by the mainstream; it reemerged as the antithesis of the mellow, introspective, and sometimes politicized "sixties" drug counterculture. By 1973 alarms started to go off: a congressional mission moved to investigate the Latin cocaine connection, crash-course U.S. public-health studies began, and doctors and sociologists rediscovered the lost texts and lessons of the "cocaine epidemic" of the 1890s. Few, however, initially thought cocaine anything more than a new "soft drug." Although U.S. officials in Lima begin to monitor the situation, and the last year of declassified reports (1973) conveys a clear sense of emergency, nevertheless the overall sense was one of supreme American confidence and control. Given the right dose of aid (a local training program of just \$28,000), this illicit bloom of Huallaga cocaine would quickly get nipped in the bud.³¹

31. DEA, "Report of the Federal Cocaine Policy Task Force" (1974); Joel Phillips and Ronald Wynne, comps. *Cocaine: The Mystique and the Reality* (New York: Avon Books, 1980), part 4, "Cocaine Today" makes a primary document on the 1970s rebirth; 93rd

Essential developments also occurred “from below” in Peru. The illicit was born as an autonomous sphere of Andean activity to the degree that official institutions lost autonomy to overseas drug control. Moreover, save for high-level corruption, social agency came mainly from disaffected (and difficult to contain) peasants, not local agrarian elites, in contrast to the legal coca boom of the 1890s. In the 1950s and 1960s, the green montaña districts of Huánuco–San Martín emerged as the fastest expanding rural zones in the country, as land-hungry peasants streamed down for promises of free parcels and new commercial crops. Much still-legal coca still thrived here, since ENACO, Peru’s public monopoly, very gradually gained control over local-market growers. President Fernando Belaúnde (1963–68), the dreamy U.S.-backed developmentalist, trumpeted the central Selva in official policy as the vast frontier in “Peru’s own conquest,” and the future heartland of the nation. The construction of jungle roads accelerated into a national policy, and colonization was touted as a stabilizing alternative to conflict-ridden land reform in the highlands. By the late 1960s, the old U.S. agrarian station had folded, superseded by Tingo María’s (by now the Huallaga’s most dynamic commercial pole) regional technical university. The leftist military regime of General Juan Velasco (1968–75) hoped to intensify the Peruvian state’s presence and services and at last broke the landed estates, but by 1972 the whole national experiment was falling apart at the seams. Jungle regions and thousands of families of colonizing peasants were suddenly left to their own devices, stranded without even much in terms of traditional social authority. In Bolivia, a parallel dynamic of faltered public developmental-colonization projects also lay behind the rise of the Chaparé as the Andes’ second major illicit coca region. Popular memory recalls here the origin of the Huallaga valley coca boom as a return to a reliable staple when nothing else was marketable, amid dashed hopes of better lives.³² By 1974, local papers were abuzz with tales of a brash new class of local “narcos,” based around Tingo.

Congress, 1st session, “The World Narcotics Problem: The Latin American Perspective” (Washington, D.C., March 1973), 39, “Special Study Mission on Cocaine,” NA RG 59, Subject Numeric “Peru” (SOC15), Boxes 3029 and 3105 (1970–73). The relationship of cocaine to 1970s disco culture cannot be stressed enough; among other things, no one could have danced to that music, much less listened to it, without chemical assistance.

32. *La Trinchera* (Huánuco), all 1974–75; Kawell and Gutiérrez reports in “Peru: The Real Green Revolution,” *NACLA Report on the Americas* 12, no. 6 (1989); Cotler, *Drogas y política*, part 4; Deborah Poole and Gerardo Renique, *Peru: Time of Fear* (London: Latin American Bureau/Monthly Review Press, 1992), esp. chap. 6, “Coca Capitalism and the New World Order.” James Painter, *Bolivia and Coca: A Study in Dependency* (Boulder: Lynne

This boundless region, rich with historic roots in coca and an abandoned stateless peasantry, spelt opportunity for whomever bothered to organize them, be they Colombians with Piper Cubs and dollars in the mid-1970s, or the Maoist guerrillas with guns, rules, and protection rackets who would follow. Exceedingly weak Peruvian governments tolerated the trade, as Peru fell into two decades of unremitting political and social chaos, a crisis of state authority and popular survival comparable only to Peru's breakdown following the War of the Pacific (which had bequeathed the legal cocaine industry a century before). The peasant Huallaga—and its expanding coca fields—also lay well off from Lima's highly preoccupied imagination, geographically and politically. So, it is easy to grasp how subsequent Peruvian administrations, such as they were, read drugs as an American “domestic” problem and foreign-policy obsession—a seemingly valid perspective, if only there were anyone up there to listen. The next time the Americans entered the Huallaga Valley, in the mid-1980s, it was to their Santa Marta firebase, the beleaguered H.Q. for a hot regional war on cocaine. Although the “returned value” of coca-paste exports was modest (peasants hardly profited as much as processors, smugglers, bribed officials, money launderers, and dealers higher on the commodity chain), illicit coke as a share of Peru's exports soon dwarfed the legal cocaine of another age. Coca growers hurried down into even more rugged frontiers; by 1992, Peru had some 129,000 hectares under cultivation, and illicit cocaine production surpassed 1,000 tons.

By the early 1970s, the cocaine trail led from the rolling green of the Huallaga Valley and lowland Bolivia to coastal Chile, for processing and transshipments. That route ended with the American-backed dictator there in 1973, finally shifting cocaine's current fate to Colombia in the mid-1970s. Colombia, a society itself unraveled by decades of lawlessness and civil strife in the aftermath of *la Violencia* of the 1950s, possessed vibrant pockets of entrepreneurs in declining industrial Medellín, a tradition of coastal smuggling (first of cigarettes and later marijuana to the United States), and a diaspora of working émigrés from Miami to Queens.³³ Ironically, Colombia had scant

Rienner Publishers, 1994), table 3.10, “Coca-Cocaine Economies in Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia”—in the late 1980s, Peru's cocaine economy represented a “guess-timated” 14–35 percent of legal exports, if less than 4 percent of GDP.

33. On Colombian origins, see Jorge Orlando Melo, “The Drug Trade, Politics, and the Economy: The Colombian Experience,” in Elizabeth Joyce and Carlos Malamud eds., *Latin America and the Multilateral Drug Trade* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 63–96; also, Antonil [Anthony Henman], *Mama Coca* (London: Hassle-Free Press, 1978) lives this shift;

prior coca culture, and had been the Latin state most enamored of U.S. antidrug crusades since the 1930s.

The new cocaine market was, in large part, politically constructed in the North and obeyed an iron law of drugs: suppression of softer stuff leads mainly to the harder stuff. Richard Nixon's politically motivated border war against bulky imported Mexican marijuana (how Nixon loathed the student movement!) and his opportune Hollywood-style crackdown on the postwar heroin "French Connection," helped push drug consumers to cocaine in the early 1970s. So did the era's no longer credible official rhetoric on marijuana (if "grass" was all lies, what about "coke"?), along with the desperate search for substitutes for heroin (methadone clinics became an early locus of cocaine use) and street amphetamines (since "speed" killed). Many thus embraced cocaine as a harmless or soft pleasure drug. And given the squeeze on other drug imports and routes, one didn't need a weatherman to figure out that the future of U.S. drug use lay in high-cost, lightweight, easily concealed cocaine trafficked through a booming "Latin" South Florida. By the late 1970s, the Colombian cartels controlled key processing and distribution points of illicit cocaine, bringing an unheard-of wholesale entrepôt mentality to the trade—for example, the use of corporate jets packed with cocaine. The cocaine glitterati arrived, soon reflected from below by epidemics of illicit-drug violence that left a trail of blood, mayhem, and profit from Medellín to Miami and the south Bronx. All were socially instrumental in coke's later upgrade from "soft" to "hard drug" status—but also, inevitably, in the downgrading of cocaine's racial and class prestige. The new U.S. DAWN medical warning network helplessly detected the coming flood. Cocaine consumption grew by leaps and bounds to the 1980s, and the innovating Colombians, and busy Peruvian and Bolivian peasants, kept up with or ahead of demand.

Francisco E. Thoumi, "Why the Illegal Psychoactive Drugs Industry Grew in Colombia," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 34, no. 3 (fall 1992): 37–64; DEA Intelligence Division, "Worldwide Cocaine Situation," 1992 (Annual, Washington, D.C., Oct. 1993). On Nixon's drug regime, Edward Jay Epstein's *Agency of Fear: Opiates and Political Power in America*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1990) remains indispensable. A keen study of grassroots drug-war paradoxes is found in Jaime Malamud-Goti's *Smoke and Mirrors: The Paradoxes of the Drug Wars* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992); at home, see Philippe Bourgois, *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995).

Postscript with Paradox

The rest, one supposes, is history. The roaring Reagan-Bush eighties became the century's great decade of cocaine: the superficial get-rich mentality of greed and excess led to a surge of cocaine use at the top, while deepening social inequalities were attended by the dreaded explosion of racially encoded retail crack cocaine from below. Scandals over "crack babies" (now much in doubt), militaristic drug testing on the home front, Nancy's never-never land of "just say no," harshly discriminatory crack sentencing, Andean Initiative photo-ops, and ritual certification of good and bad drug allies abroad stemmed neither the use nor the flow. With cocaine, the balloon effect of illicit drugs rules, given the drug's easy mobility and fantastic profit margins (\$100 of peasant coca eventually transforms itself to a Northern "street value" of \$250,000–\$1 million). The entire U.S. antinarcotics supply-squeeze strategy of the 1980s backfired. Although it was meant to raise costs for prospective drug users, between 1980 and 1988 the wholesale price of cocaine in fact dropped from \$60,000 to \$10,000 a kilo since, given the risk premium, suppliers eagerly overinvested in this crop and better smuggling techniques. Thus cocaine became dramatically available to the masses.³⁴ When in the early 1980s U.S. officials moved to cut the Medellín-Miami channel, Cali and northern Mexican drug lords became cocaine's nouveau-riche interlocutors—and tougher targets still, both geographically and politically.

The escalating U.S. war on drugs of the late 1980s brought endless new frontiers and militarized frontlines of coca by 1990. However, in the mid-1990s the new strong-armed Peruvian state of Alberto Fujimori reasserted itself and bore down especially on the Huallaga valley, which substantially reduced Peru's coca and cocaine paste exports. There, coca prices plummeted, risks shuffled again, and exhausted Huallaga peasants switched sides to the renewed Peruvian state. Thus an increasingly authoritarian Peru—Montesinos and all—became one of the "good" U.S. allies. Elsewhere, peasant migrants to stateless guerrilla-run southern Colombia fast learned coca-cocaine culture (and even diversified into high-grade heroin), and this region

34. David T. Courtwright, *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1996), chap. 12, "The Crack Era," 254. I'm suggesting that the retail innovation of converting cocaine into freebase "crack" was not the key to this shift, as often asserted, but rather the price logic outlined here. This downward price spiral also might dispel the popular cry for demonic CIA conspiracies on the rise of crack cocaine, though one needs another leap of faith to grasp the remarkable stupidity of the drug policies that did fuel it.

has emerged as the premiere integrated drug platform of the Americas, on which we're currently waging a war.³⁵ Cocaine remains a buoyant and permanent fixture in the United States—and now elsewhere—though thankfully African American crack use has fallen in recent years for unforeseen socio-demographic reasons, while heroin has seen a visible rebound. An entire generation of young black men have experienced prison, rather than decent education and jobs, on the cross of our draconian cocaine laws. But U.S. drug crusaders, as they have since 1910, continue to interpret these turns of fate as “successes” and slow progress, as the proverbial light in the tunnel.³⁶ Ironically, back in the Andes the hard line against criminal cocaine has come during an era of softer, friendlier views of coca leaf per se—at least among the intellectual set—as an indigenous symbol of cultural survival, worth hawking as a curative world herb and alternative crop, like Korean ginseng or Micronesian kava. The U.N. Single Convention, however, still bars this.

The legacies and paradoxes of this era flow into our historical present and largely speak for themselves. The “illicit” in global cocaine went from nil to ounces, then pounds, and under pressure ran up to what is now measured routinely in hundreds of tons annually. In the core dynamic between the United States and Peru, illicit trade grew historically in rhythm with official Peru's growing loss of autonomy and alternatives in cocaine politics. And the biggest puzzle still bears mention: North American drug policy, driven by demon

35. Cotler, *Drogas y política*, chap. 4, esp. table 6. Peru's coca crop fell by 43 percent in the 1990s (by 1999, DEA claimed a two-thirds reduction in Peru); Bolivia also dropped sharply during this period, while the Colombian crop jumped 98 percent, with further “ratcheting up” (DEA jargon) in the late 1990s. Thoumi offered a thesis of “statelessness” and coca culture; in Peru, this is doubly true given the rise and fall of Sendero Luminoso in same zone and era. Luis Astorga, “Cocaine in Mexico: A Prelude to the Narcos,” chap. 9, in Gootenberg, *Global Histories*; Larry Rohter, “A Web of Drugs and Strife in Colombia,” *New York Times*, 21 April 2000; predictably, Colombian coca has growing alkaloidal strength, and cocaine processing is becoming far more efficient; pressures on Colombia are also leading to a rebound of coca cultivation in Peru, see, e.g., Juan Ferrero, “Farmers in Peru Are Turning Again to Coca Crop,” *New York Times*, 14 Feb. 2002.

36. U.S. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (Washington, D.C.: March 2000); see esp. “Policy and Program Overview for 1999,” 35–45. Andrew Weil, “The New Politics of Coca,” *The New Yorker*, 15 May 1995, 70–80; “United States: Punishment and Prejudice: Racial Disparities in the War on Drugs,” in *Human Rights Watch Report* (New York: Human Rights Watch, June 2000)—African Americans on average suffer 8 times the white drug persecution/prosecution rate (34 times in the District of Columbia), and it's mostly about cocaine.

cocaine, still fought by generals and military metaphors and tactics against a foreign substance-foe.

I am not one to draw historical lessons (much less some specific policy reform) from this long and densely packed history between coca and cocaine, and this long and troubled embrace between the United States and the eastern Andes.³⁷ But training a new “transnational” and “constructivist” eye on cocaine’s last century or more of development does suggest two larger patterns.

First, in mutually entangled ways, cocaine was economically, politically, and even culturally created: first as a modern global commodity (1860–1910), then as a foreign menace (1910–50), and lastly as a truly dangerous and borderless illicit drug (1950 to the present). I’ve tried to give specificity and content to by-now-promiscuous historical notions of “constructivism,” joined with perspectives from drug studies. Such transformations are seen best in their larger transnational relational settings. Few of cocaine’s changes look inevitable and one needs to stress (against current biases) the activities and agency on both ends of a long axis linking the United States and the Andes during all of cocaine’s reinventions. Placing cocaine in transnational perspective helps overcome Manichean interpretive habits: viewing drug problems, for example, as the result of the unilateral export of our (bad) laws, or conversely, as the unmediated product of (evil) profiteering by Andean “drug lords.” From its start, social actors and forces worked in tandem to define cocaine—reflecting, resisting, and remaking each other across distant borders. Second, and tempering the agency just underscored, a striking feature of cocaine’s history here is the dominance of unintended and paradoxical social effects, which weigh stronger than visible and purposeful acts of international “drug control.”³⁸ Few

37. The intellectual foundations for “drug wars” at home and afar are actually long dead—only their powerful politics roll on in eternal afterlife. Public guardians—if they bothered—could profit from a slew of recent books laying out the basic problem: Mike Gray, *Drug Crazy: How We Got into This Mess and How We Can Get Out* (New York: Random House, 1998); E. Bertram et al., *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1996); Dan Baum, *Smoke and Mirrors: The War on Drugs and the Politics of Failure* (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1996); and forgiving a deep misreading of Nixon’s role, Michael Massing, *The Fix* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998). Similar medical-legal critiques were offered and officially spurned in the 1920s, 1950s and 1970s as well.

38. A corrective to today’s constructionist rage is Ian Hacking’s *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999). “Unintended outcomes” of social action is a classical concept of social sciences (from Mandeville, Smith, and Marx to Merton and Hirschman in our age), with much resonance for drug policies. Should our little war in Colombia—“Plan Colombia”—prove remotely successful, the likely effect

suspected that coca and cocaine would become menacing drugs when they were first promoted as miracle commodities in the late nineteenth century. No one planned, nor much appreciated, the more benign multipolar cocaine world of the interwar era, and few would suggest (as I do here) that mounting midcentury efforts to stamp out residual cocaine inadvertently led into the massive and devastating explosion of illicit drugs of the 1970s. Taking clues from Peru and the United States, it is hard to predict then precisely which kind of disasters will erupt from our current campaign against coca and cocaine in southern Colombia. But certainly *not* the results promised in Washington.

(besides carnage there) will be the spread of coca culture and high-tech cocaine networks to novel areas such as Brazil and southern Africa (where routing has begun) and spirals into the twenty-first century.