ABSTRACT

BEYOND POVERTY: A STUDY OF BEGGING IN A MEXICAN CITY

By

Sonia Ruiz Pérez

This dissertation was designed as an extension of Horacio Fabrega's preliminary research in San Cristóbal (1971). His findings suggested the need to explore further the ethnography of begging, ask relevant questions and propose methods for the study of urban under-privileged classes.

The focus of our study is upon professional beggars, defined as individuals who have made regular begging their main source of livelihood. The setting of our research was San Cristóbal Las Casas, Chiapas; it is what Sjoeberg (1965:216) defines as a preindustrial city. The city's functions as a governmental and religious center had already been disrupted at the end of the 19th century, when the seat of political power moved in a nearby rival center, yet it remains important as a commercial center. Thus San Cristobal continues being the classical example of Aguirre Beltran's (1967) Ciudad Dominical, i.e., center of dominance for a hinterland region. Also, the city can

be described as a large market place; there is no fixed market day in San Cristóbal, so the hinterland population moves back and forth regularly. The beggars can be visualized as parasites attached to this market.

The begging population was observed, photographed, and interviewed, so that we obtained data on 76 beggars (56 male and 24 female). Case stories were gathered from a representative sample of beggars for each subtype identified, i.e., Indian male, handicapped; Ladino female, elderly; Ladino male, alcoholic, etc. Information on attitudes toward begging was obtained through a survey of 152 city residents, representing a stratified sample of San Cristóbal population. Observation of the territorial aspects of begging was carried out with the aid of maps, photographs, and an almost daily tracing of beggars along their routes. Information provided by beggars and donors on the use of the city space completed our data collection.

Beggars and donors provided their own perceptions of begging and its legitimacy within San Cristóbal. Both beggars' and donors' perception of charity and the right to beg ascribed a maximum right to beg to the elderly and the physically handicapped. Nevertheless, this did not exclude the able-bodied of the population from being granted alms; the able-bodied formed 43 percent of the total sample.

Most beggars were found to be migrants to town, looking for economic conditions better than in the hinterland. Some of them moved into the city expecting a better availability of alms. Once in the city, beggars tended to concentrate in the areas where they were likely to find available cash or food.

On certain days of the week beggar activity was more noticeable; particularly on Saturday, which is considered a "good day" by beggars. On such days the main areas of concentration for beggars were the plaza, the market, and the bus stop. On other days, beggars spread themselves all over the city in a more or less established routine. Donors reinforced this routine by saving food or the appropriate tostones (twenty centavos coins) for the moment when the beggars came. This custom gave beggars the security of a somewhat predictable income or food. Even though the donor could not always identify the beggar by name, he could do so by some other traits, so that the relationship between beggar and donor was reminiscent of personal acquaintance. It could be said indeed that in San Cristôbal every man had his own poor to provide for.

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Two Beggars

To

Andrea

and

Mauricio

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INTRODUCTION

The Research Problem

An occupational activity, as any other activity, is the subject of change and evolution. Such occupational change is in itself a consequence of an overall process of change in the society where it is performed. For example, change can be observed as spatial displacement within the city: first, from the nodal points of economic activity to the marginal[1] areas, then later on to the suburban and rural areas. Thus, a job or trade may undergo such displacement as a consequence of the increasing technological demands of the society; then it is pushed out of the most urbanized portions to the semi- or non-urbanized areas of the city. When economic development reaches the latter, marginal areas, the trade in question tends to gradually move away or disappear, as the demand for its products attenuates. In other words, trades that are not adaptive to the new society's needs will decline in scope, or change in form.

Urban life in Latin America provides several examples of jobs that had formerly been economically important; then, at the end of Colonial times, they were gradually pushed out of the urban centers

as a result of the transformations brought about by the Industrial Revolution; water-carriers and candle vendors are cases in point.

As a trade, begging has been traced to "the emergency of private property" (Gillin 1951:493). Early accounts of begging behavior (Thomas 1932),[2] as well as recent observations of modern beggars, indicate the extreme persistence of this trade in terms of form and content. Why has a trade commonly defined as a "trade of shame" (Fuller 1936:23) proven to be so adaptive a kind of economic life, still existing in most societies?

We may advance the following working hypothesis: if a whole category of individuals can base their economy on the receiving of alms, then there must be another category of individuals willing to give those alms on a regular basis.

To give is somehow a symbol of power. In the giving-receiving transaction, the giver is exercising his dominance upon the receiver. In these situations almsgiving belongs to the category of overwhelming benefits, where "the recurrent unilateral supply of benefits that meet important needs make others obligated to and dependent on those who furnish them and thus subject to their power" (Blau 1964:112).

Nevertheless, strictly speaking the beggar provides the vehicle for reinforcement of the dominance. In a stratified society

the beggar's function seems to be one of maintaining the assymetry on a societal level. On an interpersonal level, the relationship between donor and beggar would be more reciprocal and independent of the absolute value exchanged than on a pure transactional level.

"Individuals who do favors for others expect a return, at the very least in the form of expression of gratitude an appreciation, just as merchants expect repayment for economic services" (Blau 1964: 314). At such grounds the almsgiver is receiving back intangibles as payment for his alms.

Observing the forms of these relationships in a traditional society (Sjoeberg 1955:1960) would provide an opportunity to see the nature of begging before early interferences in their daily activities, and later on absorption, by State-associated institutions.

San Cristóbal Las Casas was selected as the site for this research for two reasons. First, Fabrega's previous exploration in the area had already supplied basic data on the begging population. Second, there is abundant information on this city, as a regional center showing definite characteristics of an economic organization preserving its traditional colonial structure.

San Cristóbal is a preindustrial city (Sjoeberg 1965:216) where the traditional "sacred" order has been maintained despite national trends of rapid modernization and industrialization. Thus,

it has been caught in the middle of "contradictory structures" and "contradictory functional requirements" (Sjoeberg 1960:192-208).

A certain degree of disruption in the traditional pattern can be observed in the ecology of the city, as modern sectors interfere with the traditional order. In terms of interpersonal relations, we may expect contractual, formal relationships to overlap with the old familistic, informal ones. In the city, as in the surrounding predominantly Indian areas, the relationships between Ladinos and Indians adhere tenaciously to the traditional domination-subordination pattern. In the majority of hinterland towns, the Ladino combines the agricultural activities proper to the region with miscellaneous commerce, in which income is directly related to the indebtedness of the Indians. This pattern is transferred to the city, which is fundamentally Ladino. Dominance-subordination continues to be the style of relationships between Ladinos and Indians. A few newcomers, including the young hierarchy of the church, try to introduce and incorporate a more contractual style without much success.

San Cristóbal has only one industry that can be formally described as such. The textile industry attracts workers not only from the hinterland but also unemployed labor from the closest larger city. The rapid population growth of the marginal areas suggests that we are at the beginning of their formation as marginal belts,

characteristic of Latin America's largest centers. Barrios like La Garita and some of the Colonias (see page 48) are examples of this trend.

Most beggars are in a different position compared to the majority of the residents in the marginal barrios. Through the institution of posadas (see page 77) they are able to attach themselves to the stable barrios which form the core of the city. Other underclassed individuals, juncia (grass) sellers for example, would never be able to achieve such spatial mobility. First, the elementary requirements of their trade would obligate them to stay where the raw material is likely to grow. Second, there is no element of pity moving a possible patron to offer shelter to an individual seller. If they receive shelter, it would be on equal basis with the host, himself a peripheral dweller.

Most beggars come from outside San Cristóbal. Their places of origin are mostly within 30 Km (18.6 miles) from the city. Only two beggars came from places farther than 85 Km (52.8 miles).

Many of them sleep out of town. The beggar's posadas and other sleeping quarters are located mostly in five out of the seven barrios considered to be the nucleus of the city (Table No. 1).

El Centro is not a predominantly residential area, and therefore it is not used as living headquarters by beggars. Thus the night

Table 1.--Beggars' Posadas and Other Sleeping Quarters.

Total	Indian	Ladino		
39	18	21		Out of town
8	3	5		Periphery
28			Barrio	Nucleo
	0	0	1	
	4	1	2	
	6	2	3	
	2	4	5	
	0	1	6	
	0	0	7	
1				No information

profile of the city presents three major empty sectors: El Centro, The Market and The Bus Stop, the latter two obviously due to their specific function and schedule. During the day these three sectors, as working territories for beggars as well as non-beggars, become crowded.

As a rural society begins to urbanize, a series of parallel phenomena arise as social by-products of this transformation. One of the socioeconomic results of growing urbanization and the demands of the new labor market is a progressively increasing migration away from the rural areas. Migrants are not only members of "the latent relative surplus-population" but "even employed laborers" (Marx 1893: 316) attracted by the new economic activities. As the city becomes increasingly industrialized, migration ceases being an individual event and turns into a massive phenomenon.

Not all individuals coming to the city find a place within the existing or growing socioeconomic structures; consequently, a new group of declassed human beings begins forming. These are males and females who, having lost the security of their positions back in their own communities, now wonder around the city without a stable job or residence.

Later on, suburban belts begin turning into slums in order to accommodate these declassed people. The inhabitants are often jobless

and most of the time have severed their ties with their extended families; alone, or with their nuclear families, they now become the basis of an urban sub-proletariat, the lumpen whose life expectations are geared to a minimal subsistence level. There is only one place for them within the stratification of the urban society: as an underclass of outcasts whose services are nevertheless essential (Sjoeberg 1965:217).

As this process of subproletariazation belongs by definition to societies either in the process of industrialization or recently industrialized, it should be possible to observe its inception in a society like San Cristóbal which is just beginning to transform.

Many beggars come to town to beg as their native willages do not provide an adequate setting for successful begging. People in those places are "so poor that they can hardly provide for their own needs," explains a beggar. Thus the city is viewed as the natural place to go in order to find adequate provision for their material needs. Some beggars come following the advice of those beggars who have been successful before them; others have already been in town before they started begging professionally. In all cases, beggars seem to be an example of the above mentioned process of detachment from the old, secure native land in order to come to the city. Migration to town at any point in their careers cuts their original

roots in the hinterland, without providing an adequate new setting to structure their lives.

Our attention was directed to the professional beggar. The occasional beggar, defined as an individual whose main source of income is other than begging, would not be part of our study.

In general, we may identify two broad categories of professional beggars, the able-bodied and the handicapped. The first group is self-defined and includes beggars who can work, but selected to beg instead. Among handicapped beggars we differentiate two major groups, the elderly and the physically handicapped. A third category, the ill, appears sometimes to blend into the above categories, as in the case of the beggars confined in the asylum or those mentally and physically disabled.

In terms of their use of time, beggars can be divided into full-time and part-timers. Among the part-time beggars we find the alcoholic beggars and the load-carriers.

In terms of their use of the city space, beggars have been divided into ambulatory and stationary. The ambulatory beggars which are the majority in San Cristóbal, walk all over the city, along more or less fixed routes reaching the places where alms are to be received. Sometimes they combine their ambulatory work with brief periods of rest, still begging, and soon resume their walk. Very

few beggars in San Cristóbal are stationary, e.g. those who sit down in fixed spots and wait for alms to come.

As a social category[3] beggars obviously are in constant interaction with members of other social strata. How does begging fit within the broader social context? How is begging behavior dependent on this context? Following Becker (1950), Sorokin (1941) and Redfield (1954), we may think in terms of polar types of social or ideological orientations, namely the traditional-sacred versus the modern-secular one. Each of these orientations can be inferred from characteristic types of social relationships and behavior. We can assume that as we move from the more traditional sectors of the city to the more modern ones, some detectable changes in the type of behavior should be evident. Could we then, by observing actual alms-giving and begging in a traditional Latin American city, define the basic characteristic of the relationship between the participants in this interaction? . . . .

Organization of This Work

The first chapter is geared to defining poverty and begging from a historical point of view; also after a survey of available

Social Science literature pertinent to our subject, we attempt to summarize and classify begging and its causes.

Chapter II introduces the setting for this research. The city of San Cristóbal as studied through key informants, writings of Sancristobalenses and foreigners who have visited the city through time, and through participant observation. Attention is paid to the spatial and human components and their interrelation.

The beggars are introduced in Chapter III, which is based in my own observation and interviews (see Appendices I and II), with the help of three assistants: two non-beggars and a former beggar. My camera helped me to identify the beggars in a very short time, to build up a visual kardex of the population I was working with, and to create a role for myself within the city and in relationship with beggars. The case stories were obtained via several non-directive interviews and one long directed session to fill in gaps, whenever possible.

The beggars trade is the subject of Chapter IV. The beggars were specifically asked about their schedule of work, not only in terms of time of the day or day of the week but also in terms of their seasonal routine. Their routes were traced by daily following of beggars at work; each route was recorded upon the city map which was my "notebook." Then this information was checked against pertinent

answers given by the people of San Cristóbal (Appendix III, Part 2, Questions 1 to 8).

The last chapter of this dissertation deals with the beggars and their trade, as perceived by the almsgivers. Their opinions and general attitudes towards begging were recorded through interviews and a questionnaire. In this manner we expect to introduce the reader to what begging is in a traditional city, and try to find answers to some of our questions from an emic point of view.

In order to maintain the anonymity of our informants their names have been consistently changed; furthermore, all Indians have been given the surname Chamula and all Ladinos have been given the last name Ladino.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY CONCEPTS

What Is Poverty?

The Indian nana (nursemaid) in "Oficio de Tinieblas" (Castellanos 1962:29-31), tells a little Ladino girl how men were created and classified into the categories of rich and poor.[4]

> "In the very beginning," she says, "before the coming of Santo Domingo de Guzman and San Caralampio and the Virgin of the Perpetual Assistance, the Lords of the heavens were only four. Each one was sitting in his chair, resting, because they had already made the earth, as we now see it, and filled its lap with gifts. They had made the sea in front of which every observer trembles. They had made the wind to act as the guardian of each thing, but man was not yet made. Then, one of the four Lords, the one dressed in yellow, said 'We are going to make man to let him know us, so that his heart will burn out of gratitude as an incense grain.' The remaining three men approved by nodding their heads, and went to look for the molds to do the job.
>
> 'What shall we make man of?' they asked. The one dressed in yellow grabbed a pellet of mud and with his fingers shaped the face and the arms and the legs. The others watched and expressed their approval. But, when the little man of mud was done and put through the water test he fell apart.
>
> 'Let's make the man out of wood,' said the one dressed in red. The others agreed. Then the man dressed in red tore off a tree branch and marked the features with the point of his knife.

When that little man of wood was done, he too was exposed to the water test. He floated and his limbs did not fall off and his features did not erase. The four Lords were happy. But, when they exposed the little wooden man to the fire test he began to crackle and lose his shape. The four Lords spent the night brooding, until one, the one dressed in black said, 'My advise is to make the man out of gold.' He took the gold he used to keep in a knot of his handkerchief and the four of them modelled a man. One stretched his nose, the other put in the teeth, and another one marked the cochlea in the ear. When the man of gold was finished, they made him pass the water and fire tests and the man of gold ended up more beautiful and shiny. Then the four Lords looked at each other with pleasure. Then they put the man of gold on the earth and waited, hoping that he would recognize and praise them. But the man of gold stayed without blinking, mute. His heart was as the sapota's core, dry and hard. Then three of the four Lords asked the one that still had not given his opinion: 'What shall we make the man of?'

And this Lord, who was not dressed in yellow or red or black, who had a dress of no color, said: 'Let's make the man out of flesh,' and with his machete, cut off his own left hand fingers. The fingers flew up into the air and fell to earth. They did not pass either the water or the fire tests. The four Lords could hardly see the men of flesh because the distance made them look small like ants. With the effort they made in order to see the tiny men their eyes became irritated, and after rubbing them so much, they became sleepy. The one dressed in yellow yawned and his yawn called the mouth of the three other Lords to open. They began falling asleep because they were tired and very old. In the meantime on earth, the men of flesh were coming and going like ants. They had learned which fruits could be eaten, with which leaves one protects oneself against the rain and which animals didn't bite. One day they were astonished at the sight of the man

> of gold before them. His shine hit their eyes and when they touched him, their hands became very cold, as if they had touched a snake. They remained there, waiting for the man of gold to speak to them. Dinner time came and the men of flesh gave a mouthful of food to the man of gold. The time to leave came and the men of flesh left carrying with them the man of gold. Finally the hardness of the man of gold's heart cracked until the word of gratitude the four Lords had instilled rose to his mouth.
>
> The Lords awakened upon hearing their names among the praises. They looked at what had happened on earth during their sleep, and they approved. From that time on, they called the man of gold rich and the men of flesh poor. They resolved that the rich should care for the poor in return for the favors received from the poor. The Lords ordered that the poor should answer for the rich in front of the face of the truth. Therefore our law says that no rich man can enter the heaven if a poor man does not take him by the hand.

Thus stated, the interdependence between these two polar categories on the societal continuum--the rich and the poor--is the basis for the giver-receiver relationship.

When we speak of poverty, we are immediately bound to think in terms of lack or scarcity of means or choices. We are likely to find human beings living, or surviving, at different levels of substandard conditions. It still remains to be determined what are acceptable minimums (Hla Myint 1965:40).

Wherever or among whomever we find poverty, it frequently coincides with low sanitary standards, no access to, or an inadequate use of, the sources of education, insufficient or inadequate food and

unstable human relationships. Poverty has been idealized. It has also been degraded, or has been dissected into a number of common behavioral characteristics shared by those who live in conditions defined as the "culture of poverty" (Lewis 1966:5-9). In spite of the interest that poverty as a way of living has aroused in poets, writers, and anthropologists, among others, we still do not know for sure where the borderline between the difficult life and mere survival lays.

To attempt to determine the intermediate levels between poverty and misery is without doubt a difficult task. This is especially difficult in a society like the one we shall be studying, where the minimum needs are truly minimal. External clues for the outside observers may be little or no footwear and also a few swollen bellies on the children. But, even when we cannot perceive the exact borderline, when we contrast the poor along with the miserable, we find that the first are as deprived as the second and will be compassionate of his fellow creature and even in many cases will offer him material assistance. In situations of this type it is not necessary to beg, to actually stretch the hand, to be a beggar. To be a beggar is not a choice for living but a consequence of living, un devenir.

An observation at the San Cristóbal's market may illustrate the above:

It is about two o'clock. Though there are frightening clouds in the sky, the sun still shines upon the San Cristobal market. From the crowd of Indians, sitting or standing by their merchandise, emerges the dark and tiny shape of a Chamula woman. She appears to be of indefinite age, perhaps a little over forty.

She crosses the market and her attention is caught by the ears of corn put in a pile on the ground. She bends over to get a leaf. Then she walks somewhat insecurely. She moves straight to the fonda (inn) of Doña Maria. She addresses the vendor in her native language. "Do you have rice?", she asks, while handling the leaf she has just picked up. "Yes," answers Doña Maria and while looking for the serving spoon, stretches her hand to take the leaf. Then suddenly the Ladino woman reacts. "How come? You just picked that leaf from the ground and now you want to put your food in it?" She looks for a napkin and puts the rice in it, complaining that her daughter never leaves the serving spoon in the proper place. She turns back to the Indian woman and puts the napkin with the rice on top of the tortillas she is carrying under her shawl and receives the peso that seals the transaction. The Chamula woman leaves, and Doña Maria continues announcing her inexpensive but good meals. "Are you going to eat, marchante? Just one peso! I have dishes for just one peso!" More men and women come and sit down to eat at the small fonda while on the market grounds the noisy haggling, half in Spanish and half in the Indian language, continues as usual.

This is only an example of an everyday occurrence in the San Cristóbal market. It is not unique to this particular setting; instead it is part of a more extended phenomenon: poverty.

Sociologists concerned with the problem in modern society have arrived to the conclusion that poverty becomes a social category only when those who suffer from want are receiving assistance. The economically deprived living in the welfare society join the ranks of the poor only after they have become part of the statistics of the assisting institutions of the State. "They come to belong to the common category of the poor by virtue of an essentially passive trait, namely that society reacts to them in a particular manner" (Coser 1965:142).

When the deprived are enrolled among the listings of the institutional assistance recipients, they pay the price in degradation and stigmatization. Loss of privacy and freedom to dispose of the received monies are part of this process. Welfare administrators, social workers and the like are the acting agents of this degradation. The very nature of the relationship, based mainly on impersonality between these agents and the assistance recipient, eliminates an important element in the giver-receiver exchange, namely gratitude towards the giver.

The personal factor thus eliminated, an asymetrical relationship is established between the powerful dominant giver State and the deprived poor, unable to reciprocate. According to Coser (1965:147)

the lack of opportunity for the poor to give back prevents him from being "fully integrated into the social fabric."

In traditional societies charity is not in the hands of an impersonal bureaucracy but comes from identifiable donors. Charity has a name and surname. Thus the poor can reciprocate directly by being thankful and indirectly by providing the opportunity to give. In accordance with the above discussion, the poor of a traditional society would be better integrated in society, free to maintain their privacy and make personal decisions, than in an industrial society. In most western societies "the poor had the function of affording the rich the opportunity for socially prescribed 'good deeds'" (Coser 1965:141). Each rich man has his own poor man to help him cross heaven's threshold.

To give is one of the recurrent messages of the Catholic Church: to give food to the hungry, to give water to the thirsty. The Catholic Church even makes the giving of alms a part of the established ritual, requesting alms during the Mass. Another example of the Church's relationship to almsgiving are the Franciscan and Dominican mendicant orders among whom institutionalized begging has redistributive purposes.

"Socially prescribed good deeds" are not only directly related to the Church commandment of giving. They can also be seen as status

maintenance activities to maintain or preserve an image of benevolence and a reality of super-ordination.

The giver-receiver relationships resemble a patron-client relationship (Foster 1961) in which the receiver gives some intangibles, for example the above mentioned gratitude, while the patron provides immediate and tangible everyday support. Several degrees of dyadic relationships of the above mentioned type may be established between the beggar and different donors. The center of this network will be the beggar. The quality of the relationship will depend upon the degree of personal knowledge between the participants and the certainty and the regularity of support which the beggar can expect from a patron. We shall return to this point when discussing more specifically begging behavior in San Cristóbal.

Let's turn for a moment to the evolution of attitudes towards begging in Central Europe. Ideally, such study would require some evidence on prehispanic society, which we have not found even in the earliest Spanish accounts. Does this mean that beggars were not an obvious enough phenomenon to capture the attention of early observers? Did prehispanic society provide a place for beggars within its structure as some of the Olmec figurines of crippled people may suggest? Lacking such information, we shall only review the European

and Spanish antecedents which may be relevant to an understanding of begging in a Latin-American society.

Who Is A Beggar? Historical Review of Begging

In Spanish, a beggar is a limosnero (beggar), a mendigo (one who customarily begs for alms) or a pordiosero (one who begs in the name of God). All three meanings are defined as synonyms by the Diccionario de la Real Academia de la Lengua Española (XIX edition, 1970). According to this generally accepted source, to beg is the action of soliciting alms door to door. Alms are limosnas, from the Latin alimosna or what is given in the name of God to help take care of a need. This restriction of the term to those who beg door to door is criticized by Gaya (1962:19) as not covering the total range of situations where begging may occur.

The Random House Dictionary (1969 edition) defines a beggar as "one who begs alms, or lives by begging." According to the same source, begging means to ask for a gift, as charity or as a favor. The name of God is absent in the English definition. Neither of these definitions sheds light as to the social implications of such an ancient way of making a living.

Freund (1925:113) proposes the following definition: "Begging: Any person who wanders about in the streets or from house to house, or who sits, stands or takes a position in any public place and accepts alms from passersby as a result of an appeal expressed either in words, exhibition or a sign, exposure of physical defect, gestures, singing or playing of musical instruments, exhibiting for sale such articles as pencils, gum, shoestrings, needles and other cheap merchandise; also any person who appeals for alms through newspapers, letters or phone calls, is deemed to be a beggar."

Gilmore reminds us that the beggar is almost universally a "stranger to those from whom he receives alms" (1940:3). As early as the Odyssey, we are told that "Strangers and beggars all come in Zeus' name, and a gift is none the less welcome for being small" (Book XIV:216).

Two important social institutions are mixed here, hospitality towards strangers and gift giving. Gilmore directs his attention to the "resemblance between begging practices and the customs of treating strangers found in present-day preliterate societies" (Gilmore 1940:2). This custom is present in most ancient European societies as well. Even in Homer's times there were people who habitually lived on the hospitality of others, being not "strangers in a strict sense" (Ibid. 1940:5). All ancient records refer to public charity

as the customary solution to help the needy. Kinship and neighborhood links were sufficient to provide for the needs of the members of the group unable to be economically productive. Athens, and later on Rome, provided for their needy citizens, while those not qualifying for citizenship were somehow forced to beg. In Emperor Gratian's times, Roman law made the first effort to regulate the activities of beggars and the charity of private donors. "No longer may the healthy beg for food. Those who wish to do good deeds may provide for the aged and the infirm alone" (Thomas 1932:3). Even when the difference between the able-bodied and the invalid beggar is thus established since early times, during the following historical periods we shall rarely find restrictive laws against the sturdy beggar.

Prior to the end of the eighth century, it is very difficult to differentiate between the life styles of beggars and vagabonds. The monastic orders took care not only of the "genuine poor but also of the ever increasing hordes of vagrants" (Thomas 1932:5). The founding of the mendicant orders (Franciscans 1209; Dominicans 1220) and the expansion of the universities "provided vagabonds with a means of specious imposture. By 1400, vagabondage had become a regular business east of the Rhine. Begging was practiced almost less for necessity than for pleasure" (Thomas 1932:6-7).

Vagrancy was particularly attractive and at the same time was socially functional. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, central European vagabonds served as a liaison between the sedentary villages across which he moved. He was a carrier of fresh news from one settlement to the other and his presence provided an important cultural stimulant to young people, as the vagabond himself was space and movement personified (Paultre 1906:2). By no means was the vagabond considered a social evil. The problem of the times was the large amount of unemployed people who did not want to work except under certain conditions and who asked for salaries higher than those being offered by the prospective employers.

Almsgiving to able-bodied beggars (vagabonds were considered within this category) becomes formally penalized in England by The Royal Ordinance of Laborers of 1349 (Gilmore 1940:20). During the same century, beggars, vagabonds and other rascals begin to organize themselves. The Cours des Miracles (Court of Miracles) in France, the Betler Orden (the brotherhood) in Germany, the Brethren Order in England and the Cortes de los Milagros in Spain, are similarly oriented organizations. In the shadow of these organizations, begging became a highly developed profession and the old tricks known by beggars at least since the thirteenth century became part of an organized process of apprenticeship.[5]

In the second part of the sixteenth century the state and municipal governments began to consider vagabonds as dangerous men and beggars as delinquents. The popular feeling vis-a-vis beggars did not change because of this new governmental approach to the problem. It continued to be extremely favorable; the people continued thinking that to give alms was to please God. As a consequence they were basically hostile to any measure taken by the authorities against beggars (Paultre 1906:55).

Despite the efforts of the municipalities to keep the number of vagabonds within control, if not to stop the problem, their number continued increasing regularly. Paultre claims two main causes for this situation. The first, was the idleness of men whose trade used to be warfare, as a consequence of the decline in the frequency of fights between seigneurs and the creation of permanent armies. Gillin (1929:429) points also this situation. The second factor was the closing of the hospitals that existed in the countryside since the Middle Ages. As a result, the poor people of the villages found themselves without assistance in their native communities, moving first to the villes (towns) where they were thrown out by the guards and then to Paris and the few other big towns (Paultre 1906:57). To these specific causes a third and general one is added: the misery

resultant from consecutively poor harvests, which had always been a basic cause for poverty and mendicancy in agrarian societies.

The definition of vagabondage was still very imprecise throughout the sixteenth century. A vagabond could be an able-bodied beggar, a roguish soldier, an adventurer, or any individual suspected of brigandage. The only difference the law was concerned with was the distinction between able-bodied and invalid beggars, thus establishing different rules for each category. At the gates of the city of Paris, incoming beggars and vagrants were directed everyday, either to a place to get alms, or to the public workshops where able-bodied vagabonds could obtain a job for the day. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, as the number of beggars continued to increase, a different approach was taken by the authorities, who ordered the imprisonment of beggars, able-bodied and invalid, in institutions designated for each case. In order to enforce the law, the people were required to stop giving alms, at least directly, to beggars on the streets. Despite all this, the ordinance had no impact at all, for the public continued giving alms.

Furthermore, there was no punishment contemplated for those guilty of giving alms in the streets. Soon the measure proved to be ineffective as the beggars ran away from the hospitals where they were confined and, though facing punishment, returned to beg in the

streets. By 1618, the situation was the same as at the beginning of the previous century.

Similar measures were taken in England, where, in 1528, a law was enacted that said vagabonds and sturdy beggars should be "openly whipped until his or her body be bloody" (Thomas 1932:46). In 1662, residence laws defined the boundaries of local government responsibility towards the poor (Gilmore 1940:22-23). A recommendation in Las Partidas[6] in Spain, deals also with the differentiation between able-bodied and handicapped beggars. This recommendation advised withholding alms from the able-bodied in order to warn them and make them rely on earnings from their own work (Gaya 1962:20).

The Reformation clearly defined the qualifications for beggars since giving to the able-bodied would not please the "reformed" image of God's will. Work was considered a religious duty. Those qualified to beg because of age or physical condition were given written testimony of this authorization, which led to a productive business of making counterfeit seals. These seals, both valid and counterfeit, were also used by wandering scholars as they also needed a license to beg (Thomas 1932:49).

Work houses, which seemed to have their antecedents in the Ateliers Publiques of the sixteenth century, together with night asylums and casual wards, arose in the nineteenth century as a way

to unsuccessfully attack the problems of vagrancy and begging. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the "Report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy" charged the English system with encouraging vagrancy and attracting vagrants to towns, among other faults. The report stated that "free food and shelter can do nothing to check tramp habits, on the contrary, they foster them" (Cooke 1908:405).

The philosophy of the times granted existence to the "decent poor" who would not beg or tramp even though driven by starvation, as opposed to the people of depraved habits who see no wrong in "idleness and vice and consequently would pass these values on to their children" (Cooke 1908:405). In order to cope with the "evils of vagrancy," the aforementioned Committee recommended the establishment of labor colonies in the fashion of institutions existing in Belgium, Holland, Germany and Switzerland. These colonies in conjunction with a governmental policy for "checking the supply of vagrants from the ranks of childhood" were the solutions foreseen at the beginning of the 1900's. Perhaps the immediate causes of poverty were different, but the changes brought by the Industrial Revolution did not interfere with the existence and maintenance of begging practices. Instead, new opportunities for recruitment were provided as a consequence of the new forms of unemployment. Urbanization and the development of the metropolis brought a different kind of beggar than the

one found in the Middle Ages. As Gilmore says, "with more and bigger cities we have tended to get more and better beggars. We have received the practice of begging through the hands of many generations as a disgraced but, by no means decadent profession" (1940:26).

Begging as Discussed in the Social Sciences Literature

While reviewing the scarce literature dealing with begging, we find ourselves confronted with its general conceptual poverty. Until Fabrega's study (1971) most of the work on the subject is mainly descriptive and uses statistics and case studies in order to characterize a social evil for which it is necessary to recommend solutions. Freund's Masters thesis of 1925 is the first example of this type of research. His descriptions and comments on begging and beggars reflect his bias: "begging is unjustifiable because of its useless expense to society in money and manpower . . ." ". . . individuals lose more by its practice than they gain . . . because the problems given rise by begging are soluble by social agencies" (Freund 1925:11-112).

Gillin's article on vagrancy and begging written in 1929 is a general historical review designed to reinforce the author's opinion

that "beggars are a phenomenon of civilized society," as earlier societies had "substitutes for charity, for instance, slavery, remarriage, prostitution, clientage and vassalage" (Gillin 1929:424).

In the foreword to Gilmore's The Beggar (1940), E. T. Krueger states that "begging may be considered a form of human parasitism, as 'natural' in the interrelationships of human world as its counterpart in the sub-human realm" (in Gilmore 1940:vii). Gilmore proceeds to describe these "parasites" as he observed them at an earlier date while working for a local government welfare agency. He compares his observations with the descriptions given by Paulian in the Beggars of Paris (Engl. trans. 1897). In this, he follows Paulian's categories of street begging (either stationary or ambulatory), transport begging, store begging, residence begging and so forth. Possibly influenced by an article in The Nation (vol. 79, Dec. 1904), Gilmore emphasizes the artistic aspects of the beggar's performance. Thus the beggar is described as an actor whose "intangible art" is constantly changing "to fit the times in which he lives" and the particular begging situation (Gilmore 1940:27).

Beggarhood, according to Gilmore, recruits its membership mainly from two types of persons: those who go into begging due to their failure in organized society, and those born within a "begging culture":

> . . . Quite different from the social or economic failure who takes to begging as an adjustment is the person who is born and reared as a beggar. As the royal heir is reared to be a prince or a princess, so he is reared to be a beggar. So deeply is the begging culture imbedded in his nature, that he has a poise and an ease in the begging role which cannot be gained by the person who enters the profession as an adult. He has no rationalization and frequently no philosophy of life which he can state in concrete terms. Indeed he does not need one, for he has no conscience on the subject. He has always begged, his parents have begged before him, and most of his friends are beggars. To him this is a natural way of making a living. None of his intimate acquaintances question the practice, and he sees no reason to question it. Conscientious givers who reprimand him speak a language which he does not understand. If he answers them, it may be with a rationalization which he has learned from others. Neither the reprimand nor the rationalization have any vital meaning for him. From the standpoint of reform he is usually hopeless (Gilmore 1940:168).

Gilmore's book and Freund's thesis share an evaluative approach which tends to bias their research. Begging is bad, therefore we must find why it is so bad, how large the problem is and how to solve it. Gilmore's loose use of concepts such as culture and also his use of secondary sources, including magazine articles written by laymen (The Nation, 1904 LXXIX:516; Belloc in The Statesman, 1924, XXIII:409 etc.) are points of weakness. Thus his work is useful for our study mainly as a complement to our own knowledge on begging

acquired while being a giver or a prospective one, and in developing working hypotheses during the design stage of our actual research.

Juliá's work, the Estudio preliminar de la mendicidad en Puerto Rico is exactly that, without spurious claims: a data bank on begging practices and sociomedical aspects of begging in a given place, Puerto Rico, at a given time, 1934 (Juliá 1934).

Perhaps the most useful material for our purpose has been the one produced in India. The available studies (Kumarappa 1945 and Gore 1959) have put together ideas and actual findings on the causes of beggary (social, economic, psychiatric, medical and religious) (Radhakamal in Kumarappa 1945); the mental traits of beggars, particularly focusing on the beggar's appeal (Sen Gupta in Kumarappa 1945); and a typology of begging that takes in account economic, medical and religious factors (Katayun in Kumarappa 1945). The methodology suggested in Gore (1959) has been particularly relevant for our research in obtaining a count of a mobile population such as the urban beggars.

So far, Fabrega (1971) presents the first attempt to study begging in Mexico. Coming from an ethno-medical point of view, he attempts to examine begging as a type of deviant behavior. Even though our study is not concerned with theory of deviance, Fabrega's work which has been crucial for our research. In his article of

1971, Fabrega posits the medical and psychological conditions for begging and society's perception of the trade. But Fabrega's most important contribution to this study came through discussion with him (as a research director of this dissertation) of his 1969 field data. These data provided the background for the fieldwork design of this work.

Theories on Begging

Historically, vagrancy and begging have been closely related for centuries. As vagrancy has been more extensively and systematically studied than begging, it seems appropriate to begin by reviewing some of the theories developed to explain it. To Vexliard (1957) and Vanderkooi (1966), vagrancy and begging appear to be consequences of specific social and economic pressures acting upon basically maladjusted individuals. Nevertheless, when comparing both lifestyles, we must keep in mind that what may be a transitory activity in the whole career of the vagabond, is the basic resource for the beggar. An ideal vagabond would never be only a vagabond. He might work a little, beg once in a while, and occasionally he might steal. The professional beggar, defined as an individual who "works under a rigid schedule, determined or reserved in time and space" (Vexliard

1957:44), will remain in that role most of the time. Paraphrasing Vexliard, we may say that an ideal beggar will always be exclusively a beggar. He might rove a little, he may steal once in a while, but he always will beg. This point established, we may now go ahead and look into some of the theories on vagabonds.

Vexliard divides the theories on vagabonds into two main types. The first group of theories puts the emphasis on the individual's responsibility. "Si un homme devient vagabond, c'est qui'il l'a bien voulú en dernière instance" [If a man became a vagabond, it is in his own free will] (Vexliard 1957:70). In its extreme form, this approach rests upon an axiom that misery is caused by a fundamental and hopeless vice of the individual. As a consequence, society has to establish repressive measures against vagrancy.

The second type of theory emphasizes collective responsibility and accuses the structure of society as being responsible for the existence of vagrancy. "Si des hommes devient vagabonds, c'est parce que la société les a rejetés" [If men become vagabonds, it is because society has rejected them] (Vexliard 1957:70).

Causes for Begging

The relevance of these theories and their applicability to begging may be discovered using the data provided in the already mentioned studies of begging. In a modified version of Vexliard's classification (1957:96) we may differentiate the following causes for begging:

1. SOCIAL PRESSURES

1.1. Socioeconomic problems

1.1.1. Unemployment. Gilmore (1940:213) emphasizes the fact that organized society cannot provide a livelihood for all persons through employment in socially approved[7] and productive occupations.

1.1.2. Displacement from the fields. Radhakamal gives the "loss of agricultural employment in the villages" as the most common cause for begging and worries about the "increasing proportion by which the workers displaced from the land cannot find employment and subsistence" (Radhakamal in Kumarappa 1945: 20).

1.1.3. Technological unemployment. The labor surplus from over-migration of unskilled labor to the industrializing centers also creates socially displaced human groups. These groups, formed by individuals who had lost security of their place of origin, wandered around the city without a stable job or residence. They were ready to enter the ranks of the social scum or lumpen proletariat (Marx 1848:75-76). Some of the beggars that had an employment history in Julia's study were nonspecialized workers or domestic servants (Julia 1934:57).

1.2. Sociomedical problems

1.2.1. Age. The lack of available jobs for the able-bodied elderly or of adequate care facilities for those unable to work, makes age a socio-medical handicap. The aged represented twenty-four percent of the beggar's population in Julia's sample (Julia 1934). Fabrega's unpublished figures show over thirty percent of his sample falling in the age categories over fifty. General statements on the problem can be found in his 1971 report (Fabrega 1971:281).

1.2.2. Physical defects. The physically defective, such as the blind and deaf-mute beggars, have what Katayun defines as "the surest passport to the sympathy and purse-strings of the

public." Those who have suffered from voluntary or involuntary accidents also have advantages when going into this trade. "No crippled or disabled beggar in India ever dreams of seeking surgical or medical aid. In fact he considers it his special advantage or privilege to beg. Any loss or deformity of leg, arm, foot, eye or sight is at once welcomed as an asset and exploited to the fullest to earn a livelihood by begging" (Katayun in Kumarappa 1945:9). Fabrega reports on about four fifths of his sample as crippled or blind (1971:281).

1.2.3. Mental disorders. As with age, the lack of rehabilitation or care facilities for patients with minor mental illness or mental defects, transform what could be classified as an individual problem, into a social one. In my opinion, we should include alcoholism in this category. Fabrega (1971: 280) and Radhakamal (in Kumarappa 1945) report on this type of beggar.

1.2.4. Illness. Fabrega makes explicit reference to beggars "who claimed a medical illness and appeared ill" and "those who claimed illness but did not appear ill" (Fabrega 1971:280).

2. INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS OR CONFLICTS

2.1. Social parasitism. "The unattached and unsettled individual, and his family (who) . . . have found a way of surviving without participation in the ordered ways of society and have learned to take toll of the fears, hospitality, and humanitarian impulses of settled folk" (Krueger in Gilmore 1940: vii-viii). The mendigos vergonzantes (those beggars ashamed to beg openly) are a good example of these social parasites (Fabrega 1971:283).

2.2. Economic parasitism. Closely associated with the socio-economic category mentioned above. Individual problems are some of the factors "which determine the selection of those who are to be unemployed" (Gilmore 1940:213). Individual motivations may be a partial answer to Gilmore's question on "why part of those who are refused employment in the economic system and some who might secure employment choose to beg" (Gilmore 1940:213). It is possible to assume that this category could be dependent or sometimes absorbed in any of the above.

The following Table No. 2 will serve in the way of summary:

Table 2.--Causes of Begging Proposed by Previous Literature.

1.	SOCIAL PRESSURES	
	Socioeconomic Problems:	Unemployment Displacement from the Fields Technological Unemployment
	Sociomedical Problems:	Age Physical Defects Mental Disorders Illness
2.	INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS	
	Social Parasitism	
	Economic Parasitism	

The aim of this research is not to find out whether begging is caused by social or individual causes; rather, we shall concentrate on the phenomena as given.

Reasons for Giving

One universal reason for the existence of beggars is the support they receive from the givers. "The giver is the complement of the beggar . . . . If the giver would not give, the beggar would not beg" remarks Gilmore, and we must agree (Gilmore 1940:146).

Reasons for almsgiving appear to fall into three classes: the lag of custom, the appeal to reason, and emotional factors. Organized religion and superstition have always reinforced the custom of almsgiving. Even Protestant philosophy, which discourages almsgiving and leaves the support of the deprived in the hands of organized philanthropy, "has not extended its full effects to the laymen . . . when they face the beggar, therefore, they are haunted by the possible consequences of a refusal to give" (Gilmore 1940:199).

The hard-luck stories of beggars appeal to both reason and emotion. Also, the prospective donor may rationalize, as suggested by Gilmore (1940:204-206), that perhaps relief organizations made a mistake in refusing assistance to somebody in real need. Thus the alms he gives become a remedy for such errors. Gilmore also postulates a universal reason for the beggar's success through the ages: "The responsibility one feels for a fellow in need" (1940:29).

Emotions of pity, sympathy and the like are common explanations for almsgiving; need for "release from an unpleasant

situation" and the "need for self-confidence" are also noted (Gilmore 1940:204-206).

Ego-satisfaction reinforcement by the beggar's blessing, hope for personal gain, based on the belief that "a good deed will help obtain the grace of God, are all important reasons for almsgiving" (Manshardt quoted in Kumarappa 1945:163-164).

Sen Gupta, when analyzing the begging appeal states: "Success of beggary . . . presupposes a high degree of emotional naïveté and some surplus cash among people in general" (Sen Gupta in Kumarappa 1945:28).

Thus far we have presented a historical outline of begging behavior and how previous authors have approached this subject. Let us now turn to our particular problem, which is the beggars studied in the city of San Cristóbal Las Casas. In order to do so, we shall first focus on the setting for our study; thus, the next chapter is devoted to the city of San Cristóbal and its over-all population.

Fig. 1.--Map of Chiapas.

CHAPTER II

SAN CRISTÓBAL, CIUDAD REAL EN LOS ALTOS DE CHIAPAS

The City

The bus is moving along the road somewhere between Chiapa de Corzo and San Cristóbal. The landscape, marked by high hills under a striking twilight, helps the tired traveler to reconcile himself with Chiapas. The oppressive heat of the hot country which had not been overcome by the air conditioning system of the bus, the long night riding between Mexico and Oaxaca, the uninviting places called bus stops, are some of the woes that lose importance as compared with the colorful and peaceful sunset.

Very soon night is already upon us. We are now in the valley. The place we arrive at is a quiet sleeping city lit by old style lamps attached to the walls of the houses. The image we get as a first impression is more that of a small town than of a city of 35,000 inhabitants. We have arrived at the former Ciudad Real, known since 1945 as San Cristóbal, Las Casas.

San Cristóbal was founded in the center of the mountain valley formed by the Amarillo River in the Northwest and the Fogótico River

in the South. The valley is in the Mesa Central de Chiapas; it is separated from the Sierra Madre in the South by the Central Valley formed by the Grijalva River, which is the main hydrographic feature of this region.

This section of the Sierra is characterized by multiple rivers and streams which, as the Amarillo, disappear into gullyholes. According to Helbig, the Amarillo never carries less than three cubic meters of good water per second (1961:96). This fact, plus the existence of several springs and streams in its immediate area, gives to San Cristóbal the security other cities in the region lack: having a good water supply even during the dry season, from November through May. On the other hand, during the rainy season, the lower sections of the city become a moor and the fear of a repetition of the Great Flood of 1785 is still in the minds of some people.

According to the Indian tradition the city was founded in a lake bed.[8] Indians used two Nahua words to name the city: Jovel (the high grass) and a less frequently Huey Zacatlan (the land of the high grass). San Cristóbal is a humid, damp place. The relative humidity is 80%, the median rainfall is 945 mm and the median annual temperature is 16° C (about 60° F).[9]

At an altitude of 2,210 m. above sea level (about 7,000 ft.), the valley is surrounded by calcareous tufa, limestone and andesita

mountains covered by woods of pine, oak and madrona trees. The highest points are in the Huitepec at the West that rises up to 2,600 m above sea level; and the Tzontehuitz at 3,000 m. A semi-tropical climate region, the landscape of the city is highlighted by green meadows and orchards. Even within the urban limits in the northeast, we find rich orchards where apples, pears, peaches and quince trees grow.

According to the rigid regulations of the Spanish Crown regarding the founding of cities in the New World, in force at the time Diego de Mazariegos (councilman of Mexico city sent as captain of Chiapa to pacify the Indians) arrived to the valley, the city was designed following a strict grid pattern[10] (Figure No. 2). Following tradition,[11] Mazariegos named the city Villa Real de San Cristóbal in the memory of his home town on March 31, 1528 (Flores Ruiz 1961:235).

The original population of 40 Spanish and Indian families was distributed around a central plaza, where space was provided to accomodate the Cathedral and the Government House. Following the hierarchical principle implied in the grid distribution,[12] the Centro was subdivided into lots for the Spanish families while the Indians who came with them as carriers were assigned lots farther away. The Mexica and the Nahuas were settled in the section known today as Barrio de Mexicanos, and the Tlaxcaltecas in the present barrio of

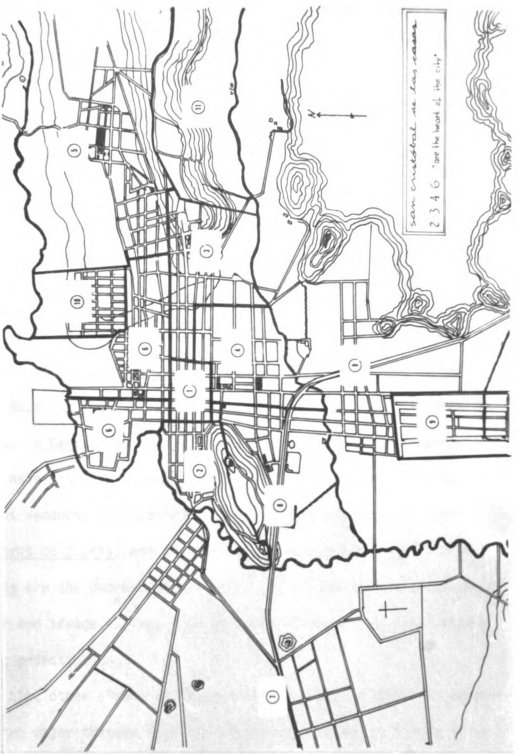

Fig. 2.--Plan of San Cristóbal.

Tlaxcala. Both settlements were in a slight Northwest direction from the central plaza and between them there was a bridge which was destroyed later on, during the second Chamula revolt of 1586. A latter settlement was done by Mazariegos, when he brought a nomadic group of Kachiguelas from Guatemala and gave them the land of what today is Cuxtitali in the northeast of the plaza.

Five more barrios have grown after this original design. According to Trens (1957:173-187), by the end of the seventeenth century the city already had nine barrios, including El Centro. Later on we find the development of Guadalupe in the central area and San Ramon and Ojo de Agua in the edges of the city (las orillas).[13]

Recently, and as an extension of Guadalupe along the road to Tenejapa, La Garita has appeared. Its population is almost exclusively Indian and its inhabitants are unskilled laborers such as itinerant vendors, load carriers (cargadores), carriers of grass (cargadores de juncia) and of charcoal. The housing conditions of La Garita are the poorest of the city, lacking basic facilities such as water and sewage. "They form the lower class of the city" said a Catholic priest.

Like other similarly designed cities, San Cristóbal is encountering two major changes into its residencial ecology. First, it is possible to observe changes within the traditional settlement

pattern, such as the existence in las orillas (the outskirts) of newly built houses which by their quality and style are atypical to the barrio. Enclaves of such houses are important for the material progress of these barrios because they bring sewage, street lights and pavement to the neighborhood. The owners of these houses are successful artisans or small merchants. They are also the younger generation of adults who, in order to establish their own households, must rely upon rebuilding a house from the family rental property. They also include enterprising individuals who plan to build houses for rental or sale in the periphery of the city. The fact that many middle-class citizens can afford at least a used Volkswagen makes it possible for them to live farther from the center. Nevertheless, we must not get the wrong impression; the people involved in these changes are isolated modernizing agents (to use Lerner's terminology, 1964) and they are prototypes of the Sancristobalenses.

Las Colonias are another type of new urban development. They consist of planned subdivisions of private or State-owned lands into relatively cheap small units. The inhabitants of the colonias perceive themselves as being at a higher economic level compared to people of las orillas. Most of them have been Ladinos for more than a generation. Colonias Revolucion and Santo Domingo in the North and Los Pinitos by the Campo Aereo are examples of this type of settlement.

The houses in the Colonias are built recently and in most cases still unfinished, presenting unplastered adobe (mud brick) walls. There are empty spaces between houses, a feature that disappears as we move into the more closely settled barrios. There, the limits of each house are perceivable by the different color of each property. These range from the traditional white and brick-red to the shocking violet that seems to be a new fashion, perhaps diffused from Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of the State, where this color is widely used.

As we move into the economically more advanced barrios, status considerations will also limit the color selection for the houses as some colors are associated, from an upper class standpoint, with buen o mal gusto (good or bad taste). Examples of "good taste" in house colors are the neutral or matte ones; bad taste is manifested in bright, harsh colors. Status aspirations or actual social status of the house owner will also appear in architectural details, such as the recently incorporated forged iron bars on the windows.

Even though the borders between barrios are not as rigid as they originally were, social stratification by barrio still does exist. One expression of this situation is the nickname by which the inhabitants of each barrio are jokingly designated, i.e., those of Guadalupe are naranjeros (orange growers); those of San Ramon are

cabezas de carnero (sheep's heads); those of Cuxtitali are cocheros[14] (pork butchers), etc. This is a reflection of the traditional job differentiation by barrio (see Table No. 3).

Apart from the nickname and trade, each barrio has another mechanism to maintain the cohesion among its inhabitants: the common veneration of a given Patron Saint. Some barrios, like La Merced, founded one century after the Convent of Los Mercedarios was established (Trens 1957:177), have more than one church, but in general a minimum of at least one oratory is usual. In front of each church or oratory there is a plaza where the people gather to celebrate the Saint's Day or other religious festivities.

No matter how many efforts for simplification of the ritual have been made by the new generation of Catholic priests, the ritual is still a complicated mixture of medieval Catholicism and borrowing from the Indians of the region. Time and money consuming cargos (positions related to the Indian civil-religious hierarchy) (Carrasco 1961), cash money raised for cohetes (fireworks), cloth for the saints and consumption items, are the features that maintain the population of the barrio united and in continuous rivalry with the other barrios.

On the basis of what we have been describing above, we could define a barrio as a territorial unit in which the bond between its

Table 3.--Traditional Job Differentiation by Barrios.

No.*	Barrio	Trade
1	Centro	Commercial sector. Ham and cold meat household industries.
1	La Merced	Silversmiths, tinsmiths, candlemakers.
2	Guadalupe	Saddlers. Toymakers. Guitarmakers. Candymakers. Selling of objects bought from the Indians.
3	Santa Lucia	Cabinetmakers. Carpenters. Masons. Cohete makers.
4	Cuxtitali	Fruit merchants. "Tamales."[15] Pork meat.
5	Mexicanos	Weavers. Dyers. Tanners. Title makers.
6	Cerrillo	Blacksmiths.
7	San Ramon	Potters. Tile makers. Bankers. "Atajadores" (west entrance).[16]
7	San Diego	Muleteers. Laundresses. "Tortilla" and "comales"[17] makers.
8	Col. Los Pinitos	Woodmen. Muleteers. Workmen. Fruit vendors.
8	Col. Revolución	Masons.
9	La Garita	"Atajadores" (east entrance). They get firewood, shingle and wood.
9	Ojo de Agua	"Atajadores" (north entrance).

*The number represents the hierarchy established among the barrios from economically and socially best (1) to worst (9) (see next page).

human components is dependent and reinforced by economic and religious affiliation.[18] Some researchers have perceived the barrio as being endogamous (Montagu 1957-58:3) but I would rather attribute this apparent barrio endogamy to the class orientation of each barrio. Marriage and dating are still constrained within each class. This is especially so among the upper class families, but it is also a sign of the aspirations of the socially mobile groups.

In order to establish the social status of each barrio as perceived by the Sancristobalenses (the people of San Cristóbal) we questioned individuals of different social, economic and educational status. The respondents answered first giving a hierarchical number to each barrio. A check-up question then inquired for the barrio in which they personally would like to live most, or least. As a result of the answers of eighteen informants we can list the barrios in the following order, beginning by the best or richest ones: 1) Centro, La Merced; 2) Guadalupe; 3) Santa Lucia; 4) Cuxtitali; 5) Mexicanos, Cerrillo; 6) San Ramon; 7) San Antonio, San Diego; 8) Colonia Los Pinitos; 9) Colonia Revolucion and 10) La Garita. The social stratification of the barrios coincides with the traditional development of the grid and serves as another feature by which one may define San Cristóbal as a Traditional City (Sjoeberg 1955:438-445).

There is a relatively large amount of literature dealing with San Cristóbal. The descriptions range from the very emotional and idealistic ones of Manuel Trens (1957), to the more objective ones of Sidney Markman (1963). A newspaper article (Koch 1972) presents the city as an excellent place for Indian watching. Perhaps this is one of the main reasons for its success as a tourist center although there is also the fact that San Cristóbal is on the Panamerican Highway route to Guatemala and Central America.

There are some remnants of the Spanish Colony in the design of the city, such as the hyperabundance of churches,[19] architectural features, houseplans and so on. Nevertheless, in terms of architecture the few buildings that could better represent this colonial tradition[20] are not especially protected against time and dirt. The same has happened to more immediate historic remnants, such as the inscriptions in Utrilla Bridge, at one of the entrances to the city, where the roads from Chamula and Tuxtla converge. These inscriptions were at one time covered by layers of paint, posters and political propaganda.

The present appearance of the city is one of flat rows of houses climbing up and down along streets which may or may not be paved, according to the relative prosperity of the barrio. During the rainy season it is common to see fast streams of water running

from Guadalupe to El Centro, making the generally difficult task of driving even more so. Cars belong to the new era of mechanization. The number of cars on the streets is evidence of the economic prosperity of the "Coletos" (generic term to designate the people of San Cristóbal, see page no. 62) and large American vehicles must compete for space with the myriad of barefooted Indians who invade the narrow streets from dawn to dusk.

In the small cities and towns of Latin America, the plaza still maintains its role as social, economic, religious and civic center. San Cristóbal's central plaza, known as El Parque and erroneously referred at as El Zócalo[21] is no exception to this pattern. El Parque Central Vicente Espinoza is named in honor of its builder, an architect from Oaxaca who was working in San Cristóbal between 1892 and 1905. On the north side of El Parque there is the Cathedral to the side of which is the church of San Nicolas, patron of El Centro. On the west side there is a covered sidewalk separated from the street by an arcade. The Municipal Palace is behind the sidewalk. The reargrounds of the palace still retain the colonnade that circumscribes the area once occupied by the Municipal Market. The southern limit and the arcades of the East are the locations for assorted commerce, the National Bank and a hotel. This hotel occupies what is known as the House of the Syren, a relic of colonial

civil architecture. In the southwest corner of El Parque there is another hotel established in a house known for its beautiful colonial patio.

At the center of El Parque, following again the traditional design of the central plazas, there is a two-level kiosk. The first level is covered and was used until very recently as a meeting place for the young people of San Cristóbal. There, they could get together to listen to a Wurlitzer while drinking soda-pop or beer.[22] The second level is reserved for invited bands, marimbas and the like to play during special days. When there is no live music entertaining in the evening, the loudspeakers are broadcasting music from the local radio station and propaganda related to current political or civic issues. "Join the meeting to receive Mr. Licenciado so and so . . . !," "Put the garbage in its place!," "Do not walk in the middle of the streets!"

During the annual fair El Parque becomes a colorful and noisy gathering site, not only for the inhabitants of San Cristóbal but for the many visitors coming from neighboring towns and settlements. Shortly after sunset, visitors of all ages begin to arrive at El Parque. As it gets darker the place becomes very crowded. Young people move along tight concentric circles going in alternate opposite directions. Boys throw confetti upon the heads of the girls

coming along the adjacent line. Adults divide their attention among the several varieties of lotteries, roulettes and raffles, or sit down to eat enchiladas and drink beer in any of the open locales. Parents with young children fight for space around the merry go rounds.

The smell of the freshly made food gets mixed with the sweet odor of confection fruit that makes San Cristóbal famous in the region, and the roasted corn ears sold by Indian women sitting on the ground. The marimba, the northern musicians and the Cerveza Corona Band, compete all at once for the attention of the listeners. "All the numbers are prized," "Black the thirteenth!," call the hawkers. And the monotonous music of the Ferris Wheel completes the noisy picture. To one side of the inner sidewalk of El Parque, the photographer of the horse and hat and make-believe backgrounds waits for his clients, while inside the open restaurants and beer gardens, the newcomers, the Polaroid photographers, struggle to take pictures.

During normal days El Parque is a meeting place for employees who sit on the benches to get a shoe shine while reading the newspaper, Indian families sitting under the sun, old and young people passing the time. The east arcade gives shelter to a variety of vendors who assemble their vending tables along the walls by the stores or beside the columns (Figure No. 3). There are the sisters who sell confections, the old man who brings colored straw figures from

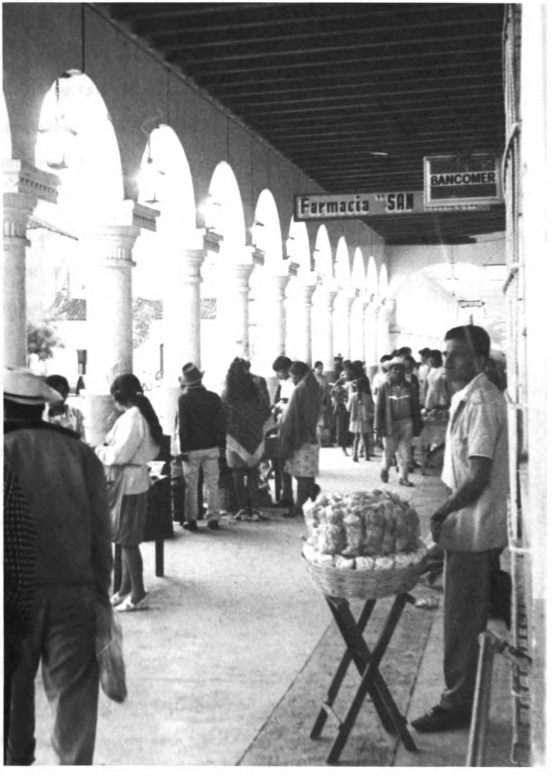

Fig. 3.--"The East Arcade gives shelter to a variety of vendors."

Puebla, the old woman selling bottles as old as herself, the girl who sells mirrors, plastic jewelry and fake amber. Once in a while strolling itinerant merchants come into El Parque to tempt the Sancristobalenses with vinyl children's coats and brilliant low quality watches. The traffic policemen stand talking and joking with the vendors and passers-by while directing the vehicles in their respective southeast and southwest corners of El Parque. The civic importance of the day can be predicted by whether they wear full uniform or not.

Tourist and young American students form also part of this portrait of the central plaza of San Cristóbal, as they must stop in the bank to cash their traveller's checks or come just to take a walk around the plaza. Beggars in El Parque pay special attention to these prospective clients as they are more willing to give alms than the regular Sancristobalense relaxing or walking across El Parque. The stores surrounding El Parque are also important in terms of the beggars' regular schedule. According to this schedule we shall see an increase in the number of beggars in the area during Saturday, Sundays and Fair days.

During the day and special evenings, such as during fairweek, the Indians become part of the human landscape of El Parque. Nevertheless this sector is without question a Ladino stronghold. Except

for few Indians who occasionally sit on the benches and the corn-on-the-cob sellers who sit down in the stairs by the northwest arcade, business in El Parque is conducted by Ladinos. Even the young shoe shine boys are Ladinos.

The Market, on the contrary, is a different world; it belongs to the Indians. Early in the morning they begin to take positions in order to begin business in the permanently demarcated areas on the ground level and display their wares. Most of the stores in the underground area are managed by Ladinos but still, there is a dominance of Indians over Ladinos and the prevalent languages are the aboriginal Tzeltal and Tzotzil. Since it is an Indian place in this Ladino city, the Market daily life begins to fade in the early afternoon, disappearing before sunset.

El Mercado Castillo Tielemans was recently built in the north of the city, close th the barrios Mexicanos and Cerrillo and to Colonia Revolución. There are several vendors in the area near the market. On the streets to the south of the market there are stores of clothing, fabrics, plastic items and food, mainly oriented to Indian clients. Across the streets, in the market proper, there are fabrics, needles, pins and the like, waiting for Indian or Ladino "sirvientas"[23] coming to the Market to shop for their employers (a hacer el mandado).

The fondas are in the back of the market plaza. They have a mixed clientele; Indians, some Ladinos and a few young Americans can obtain a one peso plate or a complete serving for about four pesos (0.32 dollars).

The open area has spaces of one square meter outlined on the ground. Each of these squares is the site for a family or an individual vendor and his products. The rows of squares are separated by pathways filled with people who make movement difficult as they search for quality products or haggle with the seller. The transactions are conducted mainly in Tzotzil which is basically known by most adult Ladinos. The preferred bargaining position is squatting.

About two in the afternoon, this area becomes partially deserted and the only evidence of earlier activity is the huge nets containing merchandise left for the next day or filled with the items which the trader family has bought in town. Every day is market day in San Cristóbal. The best days are Saturday and Sunday, as witnessed by relatively larger crowds than on weekdays. The busy hours of the market are from 9 to 11 A.M., though the activity begins about 6 in the morning when trucks bringing products and men from the Cooperativas Agrícolas (Agricultural Cooperatives) begin to unload their cargoes in the east side of the market plaza.

The underground area shelters grain, meat, fruit and varied products at permanent stands. The attendants have a permit to work on a regular basis. They are merchants, different from the Indians who are primarily peasants coming to town to sell part of their surplus or cash crops. These vendors are mostly Ladinos and live either in San Cristóbal or in the immediate neighborhoods.

In the western section of the basement area there is an altar with the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe and a statue of another Virgin. The altar is always freshly decorated with flowers, ribbons and a votive candle (veladora). Crossing through the semirounded arches, the visitor reaches the parking area. More stores are located here and a loudspeaker makes known where and what is on sale currently. At other times the loudspeaker provides music or gives information about events, such as there being a funeral service for Juanita Perez to which all her friends are invited.

Buses take people back and forth from this parking area to the barrios. The relationship between the drivers and their passengers is very friendly. "Hurry up Doña Juanita, we can't wait any longer," "Don Pedrito, could you wait one more minute? I forgot to buy thread . . . ." Of course this delays the departure, but nobody cares. Sooner or later "el veintero"[24] will begin its route and in

the meantime there is always the opportunity to learn new gossip or take a short nap.

As can be seen, El Parque and the Market are two important meeting places for the people of San Cristóbal. The church and related plaza of each barrio, the Sporting unit, El Cubito (a public swimming hole), the textile factory and El Cerro de San Cristóbal are other reference points within the city. Tourists will look also for the Blom's museum, the arch of El Carmen and the stores in Guadalupe street where Indian crafts are being sold. Beggars prefer to be in the first two places, especially during weekends. On Saturday they can be seen in Guadalupe street as well.

The "Coletos"

There are two versions of the origin of the name coletos, used regionally to denote the people of San Cristóbal. The first one is simplistic and was told to me by a man from Tuxtla, San Cristóbal's rival city. This version states that the term is only a reference to men's hairdo in fashion during Colonial times. The hair was worn pulled back, tied, and left dangling in curls in what in Spanish is a coleta. Aguirre Beltrán (1967:233) also makes reference to the coleta.

The second version refers to the history of the city as told by a coleto friend. A year before Mazariegos founded Villa Real, Luis Marin, another Spanish officer, was defeated by Chamula ambush near today's San Felipe. The prisoners taken by the Chamulas were not accepted within the walls of the Indian settlement but subjected to slavery and sent to live together with a group of Indian slaves in a place at the west of Jovel. This place was named Colet which means by the lake or by the water. The same year of 1527, Diego de Mazariegos was assigned to finish the conquest of Chiapas. He departed immediately from Mexico taking with him several of Luis Marin's soldiers, including Bernal Diaz del Castillo who later was going to write the history of the conquest (1536). Mazariegos entered in peace in Chiapa de Corzo. There, the former injured soldiers of Luis Marin's campaign, were already established and had formed their families. These people helped Mazariegos to cross the river and told him about the valley. Following the trail they showed him, he arrived at Colet. It was already 1528. Mazariegos flanked Chamula and entered the valley without combat. There he presided over the founding of the city. The Spaniards found living in Colet were named "coletos" by the just arriving explorers. Coletos and newcomers worked together in designing the layout of the new city and established

themselves in it, forming with the Indian carriers the original population of San Cristóbal.

Even though the city was located along the only route to Guatemala the population isolated itself and furthermore, it was reluctant to receive immigrants. The neighbors were proud "caballeros" who based their prestige on the possession of land and good breeding stock. Their horses were especially famous for their high quality. As any well born gentleman should, they scorned commerce and trade as being low class activities.

The limited population of the city, the inaccessibility of the external market plus the tendency to accumulate the kind of goods already described, gave as a result a class with empty purses but of a very high social rank (Markman 1963:16). In terms of their social relations to other cities they maintained their isolation even after roads and transportation made distance a less important factor. San Cristóbal is still far from being hospitable to strangers, says a chiapaneco author (Castellanos 1962:100).

The name of the city has been changed several times in its history. There are discussions as to which the exact original name was: Villa Real de Chiapas or Villa Real de San Cristóbal. This name was changed in 1529 to the strange descriptive one of Villaviciosa (Vicious Town) by Juan Enrique Guzman, major councilman sent

to the city by the Real Audiencia de Mexico. He also expropriated the encomiendas of the conquerors, including Mazariegos' Chiapa de Indios (Markman 1963:7).

Two years later its name became San Cristóbal de los Llanos, remaining thus until the city's rank was raised in 1535, when Emperor Carlos V assigned it a coat of arms. A year later it received the title of City and became Ciudad Real until 1824, "year of the separation from Spain" (Helbig 1961:97). It became San Cristóbal, until it was officially given the "surname" of Las Casas honoring its first Bishop, on January 17, 1884. Ninety years later, as a consequence of the anti-religious movements, the first name was eliminated. It was only Ciudad Las Casas until well entered the twentieth century when custom changed it back to the composite name, San Cristóbal, Las Casas; or San Cristóbal de Las Casas (Markman 1963:9).

The status of the city as a Catholic Diócesis, seat of the first episcopate of Chiapas, has been a source of pride for its inhabitants. On the other hand, this pride was seriously hurt by the loss of its privileges as State Capital when power was transferred to Tuxtla Gutierrez in 1893. Whenever it is possible the coletos will complain of what they consider an unfortunate mistake of history. Some consolation is derived from the fact that during the current period a coleto is Governor.

Another factor for their anger at being deprived of what was theirs comes recurrently into the conversation with coletos, especially during the sentimental and communicative stages of drunkenness. The city used to be the seat of the best university of Chiapas, the fifth oldest in America, founded in 1826. The Normal School founded in 1828, the first of its kind in the Continent and the Law school are the only reminders of this brilliant educational past. This prestige is not really evident in today's San Cristóbal, which is closer to Eduardo Flores' description of 1961, "we have in front of our eyes a mestizo city of median culture, deeply religious and of scarce economic resources" (Flores 1961:235-236; written with capital letters in the original).

The composition of San Cristóbal's population a century and a half after its founding is estimated by Trens (1957:167-169) to have been 3,755 inhabitants. This figure includes 560 Spaniards, 1710 casta and mestizos, 755 mulatoes and negroes and 730 Indians. By the eighteenth century there were 5,394 inhabitants, of which only 564 were Spaniards.

This original population has undergone two different developments. One deals with a natural process of mestizaje, the other with a cultural process of ladinization. In the first case the phenotypical characteristics of the interbreeding groups (the

original Spanish, Nahuas, Mexicas and Tlaxcaltecas) became somehow fused into a new type, el mestizo. Nevertheless, in traditionalist and isolated societies such as the one we are dealing with, racial segregation is still in effect. Thus, even today it is possible to find families who proudly will trace their origin to a given Spanish household and carefully hide the black sheep, living evidence of their deviant behavior. The whiteness of the skin and the absence of mestizo features are associated in these societies with gente de bien (good families).

This group of people, the gente de bien have two categories of offspring. One is the legitimate offspring who have all the privileges and rights of modern-democratic-national law. These children are hopefully closer to the ideal phenotype and will attend private schools, enjoy vacations in fashionable places and later on go to college in Mexico City at least. The other is the outcast, the illegitimate children without any surname except their mother's. Only if the odds are favorable, may they be able to go to school and learn Spanish.

Mexico is part of the so called mestizo America. Even San Cristóbal is a mestizo city itself. But this has nothing to do with the fact that, as interpreted by the own participants of the culture,

the more aindiado (Indian-like) a man looks, the more bruto (crude) he is thought to be.

The ladinization process, what Aguirre Beltran (1967) calls the cultural mestizaje, is a more complex one. Using language as an indicator of ladinization, we find that in San Cristóbal 6% of roughly 30,000 inhabitants speak only the Indian dialect and that 32% of the same population is bilingual (Weber 1960). We can assume that part of this bilingual population consists of Ladinos or Indians in the process of ladinization, since Spanish is a prerequisite for acculturation.

In general the language in San Cristóbal is a very peculiar mix: the composition of its basic population produced a Spanish dialect which incorporated a large number of Nahua words, especially those concerning things produced by the earth (A. Beltran 1970:87). This and the archaism of the Spanish are interesting linguistic by-products of cultural isolation.

Ladinos and Indians form two distinct categories and the crossing of the ethnic line is a painful one. Though this crossing is not as hard as reported by Colby and Van der Berghe for Guatemala (1961), el indio revestido (Indian dressed as Ladino) will be alien to the Ladino society.

Factors such as education and money, which are not available for the majority of the Indians, may help the incorporation but in these regions (Regiones de Refugio) it will happen contrary to what's going on at the national level "where the processes of mestizaje and acculturation are conjugating very different physical and behavioral types." In these regions, "the racial and social segregation still persist" (Aguirre Beltran 1967:42). The Indian community will, depending on the case, accept the ladinizado Indian as being a civilized man or, distrustfully, as belonging to the other group, the Ladinos.

Returning to the Ladino society of San Cristóbal, there are clear and generally recognized social class differences among them.[25] Selected informants from different occupational, socioeconomical and instructional levels were asked to establish the basic relationships between occupational categories on the one hand and variables such as education, income, political power and social prestige. "Educación" as a fifth variable is, in Latin America, independent of the other four. A man could be very poor, scarcely literate, with no social or political influence but un hombre muy educado (a very well behaved man). The measure of educación is not a standard one. The expectations will depend on the specific situation. What is acceptable

behavior in a given person will be rejected in another as a symptom of mala educación (bad behavior).

General demeanour, conversational manners, general knowledge of regional, national and international issues, su trato (the manner in which he interacts with other people), su cultura (in a word, all these characteristics together) will be factors to be taken into account.

According to the tradition of the Spanish caballero, the high class, about 5% of the population, is composed of land owners and rentiers. To be a merchant has been accepted as a possible activity especially if it is highly remunerative. But monetary considerations would never interfere as a factor if a decision has to be made between a high income-low prestige activity or a low income-high prestige one. A high class Ladino, or one pretending to be such, will rather maintain a shining facade hiding an empty pantry, than a loaded barn behind an obscure appearance.[26]

The middle class of San Cristóbal is not even emerging as a distinct group. Twenty percent of the city's population consists of bureaucrats, small merchants and successful craftsmen without a clear class orientation. They either aspire to the higher classes, or still belong to the non-important majority of workers and Indians. Furthermore, many white collar workers living in San Cristóbal stay

there only during weekdays or as long as their job assignments require, but have their roots in other cities such as Tuxtla and even distant Mexico City.

Craftsmen, peddlers, servants, mozos and others, impose on the city a dominant tone of decent poverty. The working class, defined as a self conscious group, does not exist within this landscape. The few people who work as hired laborers at other agricultural work are a small and exploited group of individuals. Like the previous group, some of these workers are also non-native.

An important difference between classes is found in their perceptions towards the outside world. Historically, Chiapas has been a different world as compared to the other states of the nation. Bordering on Guatemala and part of that country for several years, its links have been more with the green country of the South than with the Mexican nation to which it belongs as a result of historical circumstances. Thus, Mexico City is a distant reference point. Among the middle class, going to Mexico City is an important and carefully planned event, which will provide a conversational theme to the family and friends for a long time. To the more affluent classes it is only a matter of a few hours to fly to Mexico, and they are really closer to Mexico than to Tuxtla.[27]

For the common man anyway there are very few occasions on which, apart from family problems, he would need to solve his affairs farther than at the State capital. Most of the time he would not need to go beyond the Presidencia Municipal; or perhaps he will never reach such a level, as his problems will be solved or disolved[28] through the efforts of a functionary and an adequate "mordida."[29]

The law is relative; as an example, San Cristóbal's jail is crowded with Indian inmates: one may wonder how in a city of 35,000 no Ladino has ever offended the law as to deserve imprisonment. In any case, there are two government agencies in town, set up to assist the Indian population. One is the Indian Affair Office, whose main task is acting as a legal consultant to the Indians. In most cases it limits its action to land delimitation problems in relationship to the ejido system. According to one of its officers, the main problem they face is lack of personnel and budget for the adequate attention to the numerous complaints.

Another agency, the Instituto Nacional Indigenista, is especially designed and works mainly in the areas of health, education and cultural extension to the Indian communities.

Of the 200,000 Tzeltal and Tzotzil speaking Indians who live in the nearby communities, roughly 55,000 Tzotziles and about 25,000 Tzeltales are in direct and almost constant commercial contact with

San Cristóbal or Sancristobalenses (Montagu 1957-58). They come to sell their agricultural and numerous craft products. The first type of selling is mainly done in the Market and sometimes in the streets leading from the market to the plaza. The corners of the plaza are always the seat for some Indian family selling nuts or fruits. Another gathering place for many daily vendors is the plaza complex of Guadalupe. Indian craftsmanship is mainly sold to the retailers of Guadalupe street who will sell it later to the always in-coming tourists. These transactions can be made only, as said somewhere else, if the Indian has been lucky enough to escape the "atajadoras." Most of the economic activity of San Cristóbal is Indian oriented from the craft products made by the Ladinos, imported goods, and marketing activities to the increasing tourism (Wagner 1963: 156-164).

San Cristóbal's craftsmanship is not of especially good quality. Tinsmiths, candlemakers, cohete makers, toy makers and the weavers of Mexicanos, among others, orient their production mainly to the Indian market. San Cristóbal's leatherworkers are perhaps the most influenced by tourism. As a consequence of the tourists' demands, the leathermakers have created new designs and even new lines of production such as coats. These craftsmen are also the only group that is unionized.

Almost everything, necessary and unnecessary, for the Indian household can be bought at San Cristóbal. The center of the city and the marketplace areas are conglomerates of stores of different categories competing for a limited space. Along two streets leaving from the plaza towards the East and the West respectively, there are also small stores socially differentiated as the street crosses the barrio's borders.[30]

Religion and commerce are closely associated. Even after the attempt of the new church to simplify the Catholic ritual, it has been impossible for its priests to eliminate the popular elements incorporated by the ancestors of these non-orthodox believers. The heavy barrio-related calendar of events provides an opportunity for entertainment as well as for business. Tamales and aguardiente, the main items sold, are not the only ones. Other food stuffs, as well as cohetes, have a secure market in these feasts.

Religious rites of passage, like baptism, communion, confirmation, the fifteen year old mass marriage and velorios (funeral eve vigil) among other events, are occasions for all day or longer parties attended by members of all groups.

The Indians

On several occasions we have been speaking of the different aspects of the Indian participation in San Cristóbal's life. It is time to define the terminology used in Chiapas with reference to the Indians. A historico-geographical mistake ended up with the incorporation of the work *indio* in the Spanish lexicon to refer to the indigenous peoples of America. This global term covers all the cultural groups from the North Pole to Tierra del Fuego. Each of these groups has its own name as a group and is in addition integrated by law into its respective country. The extent to which they fully participate in the national culture depends upon the specific cases.

The Tzotzil-Tzeltal area has about 52 communities dispersed in the highlands of Chiapas. They are linked to each other by closely related dialects, sets of beliefs and life habits. They are primarily agricultural peoples and their relationships to the Ladino towns and cities are mainly economic.

The Ladino is accepted by the Indian as being the Spanish speaking civilized man. An Indian is for a Ladino a rustic, a witch believer and uncivilized person. A pejorative consequence of this description is verbalized in names such as *indio bruto* or *indio pendejo* (Indian boob)--rather common word combinations in the area of our study.

A colloquial form between the insulting "ethnic-free" (Pitt Rivers 1970:26) term indio and the academic, impersonal term indigena is the term indito. Indito is an intermediate being between the irrationals and men. Men shall be understood in our context as the Spanish speaking, European style dressed Ladino. This man is capable of rational thought and decision making. These are the qualities that have given him the right to dominate and order the other inferior beings. The others are the indito, women, children and subordinates.

In the Ladino's mind the indito may be compared with an immature child in its lack of maturity in reasoning (Aguirre Beltran 1967:238). The Ladino child is taught through his contact with servants that he is superior to the slow, dumb Indian. He learns to depreciate the Indian from early age and it is not uncommon to hear a preschool Ladino child insulting the servant as being bruto, estúpido, borrego and the like. At an early socialization stage we see in this practice the prevalent regional pattern of domination-subordination.

Chamula and chamulita are local terms also used in a deprecatory manner. These expressions reflect the dominant behavior with relation to the Chamula Indians, who, if the historians are correct, seem to have had a proud past and been a formidable enemy for the Spanish conquerors.

Indito, chamula, chamulita must be seen in what are deprecatory but not overtly insulting terms. They are used in the paternalistic style of the patron-subordinated serf relationships carried on from colonial times.

Early in the morning, Indians from different parajes[31] begin arriving in the city from the neighboring hinterland. They come walking and carrying their heavy loads, necapal[32] or load themselves along with their products, in the trucks of the agricultural cooperative of each community.

They are the floating population of San Cristóbal and they will eventually leave the city before sunset. Occasionally if they must stay overnight, a Ladino "marchante"[33] will provide them with shelter (posada). Posada is a traditional economic relationship between a Ladino family and an Indian. It may extend itself over generations and very often an Indian will request posada at the house of his father's marchante. The Ladino woman will assign him a place to sleep, usually the corridor or the kitchen. We must not forget that even in the ritual kinship relationships (as compadrazgo) between an Indian and a Ladino, the Indian will still be inferior.

In return to showing a "good heart," the Ladino woman will get priority and a better price on the Indian's merchandise. The Indian feels obligated to his marchante and is very happy to have a

secure shelter for the night and a safe place to leave his belongings while in town.

Apart from commerce, health care, land-related problems and similar affairs, many Indians, especially the young men, take the opportunity of having a bath at the health center facilities or in any of the privately owned public bath houses, or to go to the movies and sporting events.

Where Ladino and Indian Worlds Meet

The rules of the game in the relationship between the Hinterland and the City, between the Indian and the Ladino worlds, are better understood when we follow Aguirre Beltrán (1967) in his conceptualization of the "Region of Refuge" and the mechanisms the manorial city applies in order to maintain its privileged position.

A región de refugio (region of refuge) is formed by the Indian communities organized around a manorial city. A generally adverse ecology complements this picture (Aguirre Beltrán 1967:38).

As mentioned previously, San Cristóbal was founded as a Ciudad Real. Its purpose was the dominance and control over the Hinterland. This domination was to be exercised with the aid of the so called

"mecanismos dominicales" (domination mechanisms). According to Aquirre, these mechanisms can be summarized as follows:

a. A legally sanctioned racial segregation. The castes are spatially segregated. The dominant groups live in the city, the others in the hinterland. These two groups are in a relationship of super-subordination. Although at the national level the members of the dominated groups are entitled to legally recognized nationality and equality, at the regional level they are segregated by anachronistic caste-like relationships.

If you behave as an Indian, then you are an Indian. The more a group or individual tries to maintain its own ethnic identity, the more segregated it is. Cultural segregation must be viewed as different from racial segregation, which forbids a Negro to sit down in a restaurant reserved for whites. In San Cristóbal it would be possible to see an Indian participating in practically every activity in which a Ladino may participate. But he will at least have to act as a Ladino and enjoy Ladino dance, music, cafés, and so on. He must be able to understand at least a minimum of "castilla" (castellano, Spanish) in order to understand what is really going on. He must follow the Ladino rules of the

game, if he wants to participate. Otherwise, he will just attend a Ladino performance but never fully participate.

The pressure to impose Ladino behavior and values is not found solely in the city. If this were the case, we could accept it as another instance of "When in Rome do as the Romans do." On the contrary, Ladino culture is sent to the hinterland to "educate" the Indians; but this culture is brought there by individuals who hardly know the basic elements of instruction. This is especially true of the rural teacher. As an example of mecanismo dominical (Aguirre Beltrán 1967), such system acts to maintain the traditional awkwardness of the poor indios brutos. The theoretically bilingual education is designed to make the Indian child fail. The Ladino "teacher" does not understand his language, neither does the Indian child have any knowledge of the Ladino language. After continued failures, the child leaves school with the complete acquiescence of his parents. According to the law, education is free for all citizens, but this does not seem to apply in the hinterland. There, the price for the Indian child is too high to pay.

Sooner or later these hinterland children will be confronted with the city. They will not understand it, but

curiosity will move them to stay and find out about the Ladino ways. They will increase the number of unskilled laborers living in the peripherial sectors, undergoing the painful process of ladinization, because in Chiapas to be a Ladino is the only successful way to become a man.

b. Political control exercised by the dominant group. This control is based upon the theory that "the natives are incapable of self-government" (Aguirre Beltrán 1967:13). When by chance a political leader develops he will immediately be sentenced and failed (Aguirre Beltrán 1967:13). For a regional leader, jail is a good solution, as in the case of Antonio,[34] a most powerful and charismatic leader of the Chamulas. Accused of a murder he did not commit, he was taken away from the political arena and replaced by a more manageable individual.

c. Economic Dependence. Based upon the denial of rationality to the Indian economic orientation (Aguirre Beltrán 1967:13), the economic dependence of the Indian is basically maintained through two mechanisms. The first is migratory work. This consists mainly in the transfer of workers from the subsistence sphere to an economy of salary; its immediate

consequence is destroying the cohesion of the Indian family, which in the subsistence economy is an integrated unit of production.

The salaries are based on a theory of limited needs of the Indians.[35] Thus the Ladino find justification to pay limited salaries not in consonance with the real value of the Indian work. El enganche[36] and the role of the dominical city as a source of labor itself are the practical aspects of this migratory work mechanism.

The second mechanism, in close relationship to the first, is the existence of usurious credit, which forces the Indian to accept the conditions of the enganchador, in order to pay his ever increasing debts. This usurious credit system does not wait for the Indian to come to San Cristóbal and apply for it. It is introduced into the community by the Ladino merchants living in the rural villages.

d. Unequal treatment. Health services, education, legal rights and so forth, are more readily available to members of the dominant groups than they are to the subordinated.

e. Maintenance of the Social Distance limits the contact between the groups to stereotyped situations and behaviors.

f. An Evangelization Action. As in the case of Las Casas it serves a different purpose than the egalitarian one of the Christian theory, becoming instead an instrument for domination (Aguirre Beltrán 1967:16).

The basis for survival of these societies is in the maintenance of controls like dominance-subordination in relationship to the agricultural and artisan surrounding societies.

The framework provided by Aguirre Beltrán suggests a possible application, in terms of the relationships of dominance-subordination within the city, between the center and the periphery. The center of the city is the Ladino stronghold. As the city still maintains its traditional urban and socioeconomical pattern, the center it is not only the business, but also the residential and the recreational center. The periphery is the place where the subordinates classes (Indians included), live, work and practice their trade. By looking at their relationships in terms of the dominical pattern, we may suggest the existence of an in-city dominical mechanism.

CHAPTER III

THE BEGGARS OF SAN CRISTÓBAL

The Sample

During my fieldwork I obtained basic information on 76 beggars. This is similar to the sample reported by Fabrega (1971: 278-280), which possibly indicates that an average of 80 beggars may be found regularly on the streets of San Cristóbal. As in Fabrega's research, male beggars were predominant in my sample, being sixty-eight percent of the interviewed population. Furthermore, sixty one percent of the male beggars were under fifty years old, while only twenty percent of the women fell in that age category.

Forty six percent of the beggars in the sample were Indians. Regarding ethnic affiliation, it is my opinion that ethnic stratification, otherwise important in the social relationships in San Cristóbal, is not significant in the beggars as a group. To support this opinion, we have to note that even though the social relationships among beggars are largely limited to occasional encounters, there is no evidence that interaction is limited to the beggar's own ethnic group. Also, there is no evidence to suggest restricted areas

where Indian or Ladino beggars would operate to the exclusion of the other ethnic group. Finally, when dealing with the subject of pity for beggars, it seems that the ethnic affiliation of the beggars is not an important issue for the donors of San Cristóbal in allocating their alms. This doesn't exclude the fact that a beggar usually defines himself as an Indian or a Ladino, whatever the case.

Sixty six percent of the total beggar's population are handicapped by a physical defect, age or illness. The rest are able-bodied, e.g. physically able to work, but have selected to beg instead.

Fifty-four percent of the San Cristóbal beggars are full-time beggars. This means that they beg regularly on a more or less fixed schedule as the only way of making a living. Among the part-time beggars we find some of the alcoholic beggars (25% of the total sample), and the cargadores (load carriers).

Able-Bodied Beggars

I found nineteen able-bodied male under 50, who made begging their profession (see page 33). Of these, twelve were Ladinos and seven were Indians. There are only one Indian and four Ladino women under 50 in the able-bodied category. Within the able-bodied

category we have alcoholic beggars, mendigos vergonzantes and load carriers.

The Alcoholic Beggars

We may differentiate two main categories of alcoholic beggars: full time beggars who are concomitantly alcoholic, and those who become beggars during their drinking periods only.

Most alcoholic beggars belong to the latter category. They beg only during their drinking periods, and return to their former jobs afterwards. While considering alcoholism as an illness, I have nevertheless included the subjects into the able-bodied category, since most of them can, and often do, perform tasks requiring physical effort. Some of them actually do work during periods of abstinence, but turn to begging only in brief intermediate phases.

The full-time alcoholic beggars are individuals who once had some trade, but the degree of physical and/or psychological dependence on alcohol was such that it made them unable to keep a steady job. Others, who can still work, take part-time, non-specialized jobs and become part-time beggars.

All in all, most of the alcoholics are only able to abstain for short periods of time; once they begin drinking again, they are

unable to control the quantity of intake and the duration of the drinking period. These drinking periods are called "la carrera" (the race), or "el viaje" (the trip). When they are "racing" or "travelling," beggars stay inside or around illegal drinking places or bars ("cantinas") most of the time. The alcoholic beggars identified in this study get together in about 16 cantinas which form a belt around the central barrios of the city. These clandestine places are different from the legally established ones in that only customers known by the proprietor are allowed in to drink.

Professional, full-time beggars share these cantinas with others who only beg when drunk and in need of money to continue the "trip." Most alcoholic beggars are Ladinos with the exception of one man--the only Zinacanteco known to beg in San Cristóbal.

Alcoholic beggars do not move around the city as many other beggars do. Most of them stay in the areas where they are known. Only occasionally are they seen in El Centro. "The good people who care" give them money and perhaps food. Most of them can get food at particular households where they have found patrons. Whatever money they make is spent on liquor, called "trago" (drink), almost always a very strong distillation of grain or cane. The source of trago for most of the illegal cantinas are the Indians who are cornered (atajados) by bar owners and intermediaries (see note on

atajadoras, Chapter 2, footnote 16). A glass of trago may cost anywhere between forty centavos to one peso, depending on the quality of the liquor and the water dilution. An average daily expenditure in those cantinas amounts to approximately 4.50 pesos. The largest amount ever spent by a customer there has been, to my best knowledge, about ten pesos. As a trip may last from three to forty five days, the amount of money spent tends to be high, considering that the beggar makes about ten pesos on a "good" day.

Friendship is based upon drinking comradeship and this is a big point of differentiation among the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic beggars. Drunkards get together in fixed locations and stick to selected drinking partners. There is plenty of conversation in the cantina as opposed to the silent atmosphere and isolation of the beggars sharing the same posada. The recurrent themes in these conversations revolve around overcoming last night's hangover and intending to return to work tomorrow. To the alcoholic subculture, a hangover is best cured by drinking. Given this pattern, the cure turns into a new hangover and the process becomes a circular problem.

Non-alcoholic beggars get together for a drink occasionally. Sometimes on a good day when several friends find themselves under the same shelter, they would take a break from the daily routine of isolation . . . "I talk to my friends Jose Chamula, Pedro Chamula,

the old lame Ladino and Julio Chamula . . . . How are you? How much did you make today? . . . . Are you going to spend some for a drink? . . . . We go and drink and then we talk. We are friends," says Julio Segundo Chamula.

On other days they buy a quart[37] of liquor and drink it alone, before going to sleep.

Los Mendigos Vergonzantes

Another group of beggars to be included into the able-bodied category are los mendigos vergonzantes. They could be defined as those who, ashamed to beg openly, live on the charity of the people who know them. As opposed to the alcoholics, this category is mostly composed of women, some of whom are closely associated with open, full-time beggars. It seems interesting to note that these relationships are usually of a consanguine nature, such as mother-daughter, aunt-nephew and the like; the older generation is vergonzante, while the younger tend to beg more openly. This group of beggars are also predominantly Ladino, as was the case with the alcoholics.

As mentioned before, silence surrounds this subject and makes it difficult to study. It was possible, however, to identify several cases of vergonzantes living on friends' charity, or the help of

schoolmates and relatives. One of these persons, Carmela, used to receive about 47.00 pesos weekly, plus food and clothing, from two relatives, two ex-schoolmates and a long time friend.

In some cases the vergonzante will do some occasional work, as was the case with the late mother of Leonor. She took occasional jobs as laundress, or did some ironing. She made about seventeen pesos a week. She also used to receive clothing and food from her clients. This supplemented the help she was given by friends and relatives and helped her believe that she was not a beggar. Then, after she died, her daughter Leonor became a full time beggar. People who knew both women used to criticize Leonor for her "lack of pride," but continued giving her alms.

The vergonzantes may not be truly beggars; nevertheless, from an economic point of view, they have selected a style of life and earning which is on the borderline with professional begging. They survive as parasites of a social class which, in order to maintain its prestige keeps them hidden from the eyes of outsiders. Thus most people of San Cristóbal are aware of the existence of the vergonzantes as a category, but few are able to identify them.

For the purpose of this study they shall only be mentioned as part of the general typology of beggars. It remains for further inquiries to focus on this aspect exclusively.

The Load Carriers (Cargadores)

The next category of able-bodied beggars to be discussed here are the load carriers (cargadores). They are part-time beggars: men and women who carry groceries from the market to the buyer's house. They accept tips for their services, making an average of two pesos a day. In the afternoon, after the rush at the market has ceased, or on their way to the market to get a new customer, they beg in order to meet their daily expenses. Some of these people begin loading early in their lives and keep on being cargadores for as long as they are able to.

I only spoke to cargadores who begged overtly. Nevertheless, it could be said that the whole occupational category is on the borderline of begging. The limited income, the randomness of the jobs and irregularity of payments, and also the fact that the carriers do not place value on their work, but accept whatever the customer offers, establishes a definite similarity between their, the cargadores' existence, and the life of our subjects, the beggars. There is one subgroup in this category which enjoys an economic position better than most carriers. These cargadores have small carts and negotiate the payment with customers ahead of time. They work for the stores, at bus stops and also in the market. They do place a

definite value on the service they offer, which differentiates them from the rest of their fellow carriers.

All in all, most of the carriers beg only occasionally, and will not be considered as beggars for the purpose of this study. In our sample of beggar-cargadores, we have found only three distinct cases running against the general trend of being a carrier first and a beggar only second: Maria Ladina, Juanita Chamula and Gregorio Ladino, all three of whom are professional beggars and also part-time carriers.

The carriers of grass and garden soil are also candidates for the category of part-time begging. They live on the edges of the city and pick up grass and soil for door-to-door sale. They alternate this trade with begging. Finally, a "part-timer" could be anyone alternating begging with another trade, or working in the field, i.e. any of the peones (non-specialized day laborers).

Thus, it will appear that any person could become a beggar if the opportunity presented itself.

Let us now see who the able-bodied beggars of San Cristóbal are, through some of their own case stories.

1. Elías Ladino, age 55, alcoholic, full time beggar.

Elías Ladino has been drinking for eighteen years in his 55 years of life. He is married and has nine children,

some of whom are grown up enough to take care of their mother. He lives with his wife, but begs for his food and drinking money. "I don't like to bother the señora with my problems. People who know me give me twenty, forty, fifty centavos . . . sometimes un peso." He says that people give him this because he is well educated. And indeed he is very polite. He gets his regular meals at the houses of two well known Sancristobalenses, where he is well treated (considerado). When he has enough money to treat, he offers a drink to Julio Ladino. "Julio is an old man. I respect him because he is an old man; that's why I invite him."

La Cantina (bar), is a place for friendship and good purpose. The conversation which follows is an example of both.

"I'm getting cured maestro.[38] See how bad I look today with this hangover. Look, I'm even vomiting. That's why I'm having these drinks." Courteously, Mario offers a drink to "el maestro." "That's how life is. One has to get cured before going to work. Right, Joselin?" Joselin nods, "I'm getting cured too, to see if I can work." Joselin asks the barman to serve him two pesos worth of food.

"It's good that you are getting cured, brother" intervenes el Güero (the Blond). "Yes, sure," answers Joselin,

as he receives a glass offered by el Güero. Agustín Zinacanteco asks for a glass too. "Well, I would like to have a drink, but, I haven't worked to get the money for the cure." El Guero gives him a drink. "Have some, man, and go on with the cure . . . ."

Mariano was waiting for a chance to continue arguing with the group, as he was doing before the above conversation took place. "What's going on here?" he says. "What do you mean?" Agustín looks up at him. "I want a drink," says Mariano insolently. "What's stopping you from having one?" "I don't have any money," insists Mariano. "Then Work!" comes the final remark of Agustín, the beggar.

The argument does not develop into a quarrel as el maestro invites everybody to come outside and have their picture taken. All the participants in the group join for a toast to el maestro who, they say, is a "good man and a good friend."

Conversations of that kind occurring in and around the cantinas illustrate the choice of partners and the invariable theme of getting cured and going back to work. Photographic evidence showing the human landscape around the cantina in the morning after such a conversation is a demonstration of the vicious circle these people follow. None of the good

intentions stated the previous evening are accomplished (Fig. No. 4). On the contrary, as soon as they wake up, they will return to their drinking place, perhaps stopping to beg on the way, in order to get some money.

2. Rosaura Ladino, age 25, vergonzante.

Rosaura comes from a respectable family. Her father was a prosperous merchant and her elder brothers went to college and became professionals. Her sister is said to have made a good marriage. When Rosaura had "the failure"[39] she was still in high school. As a consequence, she had to leave the city and deliver her baby far from the place where she was known. This incident precluded the possibility for a good marriage, yet the only training she ever had was in the direction of becoming a housewife and perhaps a good mother. Studies going further than preparatory school were never in her or her family's plans. Thus Rosaura found herself in need for work while having none of the qualifications required for the jobs she aspired to. She did her best. After all, nobody knew the social background of the little laundress. The job was hard and the money insufficient. She went back to San Cristóbal to live on the property she inherited from her mother. Here, in her own city, it was more difficult to

Fig. 4.--"The human landscape around the cantina . . . ."

work as she was never dressed well enough to get out and ask for a "decent job."

By a decent job she still means what she meant when she ran away. She cannot offer an exact definition, but her friends and neighbors take it to mean any white collar work. Friends are willing to help until that "decent job" materializes. They provide for the woman and her child; their help and the occasional help of her family keeps her from the stigma of working at some job which would not correspond to her social level. The problem remains, however, that in the meantime she is not getting the training needed for the jobs considered good for her.

3. María Ladina, age 28, cargadora and beggar.

María worked in a house as a servant since she was brought from her paraje as a child. Later, she got married, had a child and had to start working when her husband died. When I met her, she had been carrying loads in the market for about 11 years. She does not consider herself a beggar, but she attends regularly the Rosary meetings and other people in the neighborhood look upon her as a beggar. Most of the time one could agree with her self-image, i.e. she does not

beg; rather, she accepts what other people give her. As a matter of fact, many full time beggars refuse to accept the label of beggar for that very same reason, they do not ask, they only accept whatever they are given.

4. Yayita Chamula, age 30, beggar and cargadora.

Yayita comes from a distant hinterland center, on the frontier with the woods. She has been in San Cristóbal since adolescence. She was married to a man 30 years older than herself and had twin girls. Then her husband and the daughters died. "That's why my heart is sad." He was an enterpreneur beggar and a good man. Together they walked all over the city, and on Friday they had some money to save. He didn't go to the bank himself. Instead, he asked his former patron to put the money in the bank. One day, tempted by a good prospective investment, he went to his patron and asked him to withdraw the money. Nobody knows exactly what happened afterwards. Perhaps, in between drinks he talked too much. On his way home he was attacked, robbed and killed. Now she lives alone. She gets shelter in Mexicanos. There was no reason to go back to her town. She was used to begging and says it was not that bad after all. She also carries bundles from the market once in a while, but she is mainly a

a beggar. She speaks some Spanish but still wears her Indian dress. She is young and healthy, "people are of good heart" and she makes a fairly good living.

Handicapped Beggars

In our context, physical handicap and age are two legitimate reasons for begging, accepted by beggars and non-beggars as well. "You cannot work any longer so it is not shameful to beg. You are too feeble and cannot make any effort." This, according to a fifty-six year old beggar, was the advice a physician gave her when she still worked as a laundress. Other informants express in various ways the same idea: to beg is a right for the aged and the disabled.

Forty seven per cent of our sample is over age fifty. This age was selected as a demarcation point between the young and the aged, based upon informants' opinion that after fifty a person has lost the physical strength and energy to work efficiently and steadily.

Twenty five per cent of our beggars have some physical defect. We shall divide these physically handicapped beggars into two sub-groups. The first group includes beggars unable to walk or move well, such as the paralytic, the lame, the maimed or any crippling

ABLE BODIED BEGGARS

MALE LADINO YOUNG	MALE INDIAN YOUNG	FEMALE INDIAN YOUNG	FEMALE LADINO YOUNG
MALE LADINO ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR FULL TIME)	MALE LADINO ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR FULL TIME)	FEMALE INDIAN ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR FULL TIME)	FEMALE INDIAN ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR FULL TIME
MALE LADINO ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR PART TIME)	MALE LADINO ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR PART TIME)	FEMALE INDIAN ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR PART TIME)	FEMALE INDIAN ALCOHOLIC (BEGGAR PART TIME)
MALE LADINO PART TIME BEGGAR CARGADOR	MALE LADINO PART TIME BEGGAR PEON	FEMALE INDIAN PART TIME BEGGAR CARGADORA	FEMALE INDIAN PART TIME BEGGAR LAUNDRESS

Empty Cells = No Identified Cases Available.

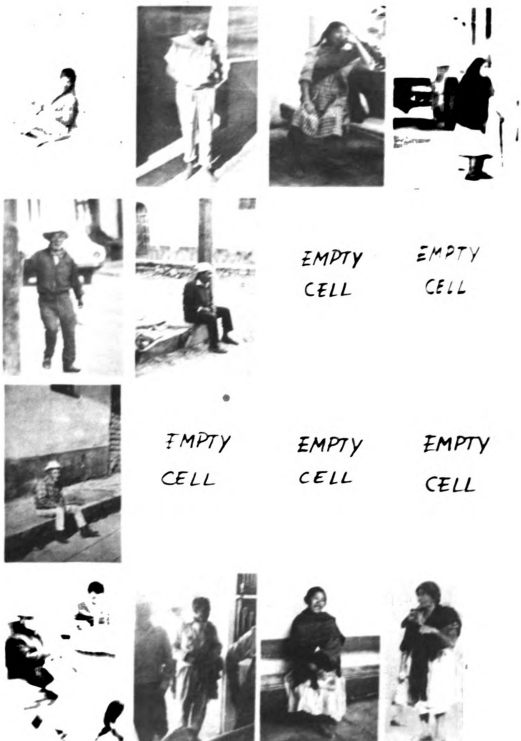

Fig. 5.--Able-bodied Beggars.

of the kind. The second group includes beggars with eyesight problems, e.g., the blind and the semi-blind. Both types share in common their inability to obtain or to perform available work.

Table No. 4 shows the distribution of our sample according to age and physical handicap.

The Elderly

The view that age is in itself a passport to begging manifests itself on Table No. 4: fourteen male and sixteen female beggars (or roughly 40% of the sample) have age, over 50, as their only handicap.

Case stories suggest that age is related in many cases to the lack of a patron or family of one's own to rely upon. Loneliness thus emerges as an important factor in becoming a beggar, for the Ladino as well as for the Indian. When age or physical handicaps are added to the lack of a partner or family, then begging is a socially acceptable solution.

Ricardo Pozas (1959) describes the strong cohesion and interdependence among Chamula marriage partners. It is difficult for a solitary individual to survive socially and economically within the community. He must either build a new marriage association, or move

Table 4.--Distribution of the Sample According to Age and Physical Handicap.

AGE GROUP	MALE (52 cases)						FEMALE (24 cases)						
	HANDICAP: EYES		HANDICAP: LEGS		NO DEFECT		HANDICAP: EYES		HANDICAP: LEGS		NO DEFECT		
	INDIAN	LADINO	INDIAN	LADINO	INDIAN	LADINO	INDIAN	LADINO	INDIAN	LADINO	INDIAN	LADINO	
Up to 20	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	40 Young
21 to 50	2	1	4	2	6	12	0	0	1	0	0	4	
51 to 80	3	0	1	2	3	9	0	0	0	0	5	7	36 Aged
Over 80	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	
	5	1	7	5	13	21	0	0	1	0	9	14	

back to the extended family through any of the mechanisms provided. In some cases the individual may migrate to the city, possibly forever. In many cases this move is the ante chamber for begging.

San Cristóbal has two nursing homes, which are quite reminiscent of asylums according to beggars' descriptions. One of the nursing homes is run by five nuns. It is a neat place with provisions to take care of twenty-five elderly people. At the time this study was being conducted, the establishment had admitted about twenty people. All but five were women. "Men do not like being locked in," remarked the nun as she was explaining the closed-doors regime at the nursing home. The occupants can go out only twice a week. Most of them are beggars who were taken to the place by people that found them in the street. They are in advanced stages of senility or quite physically ill. Those who are able to move by themselves usually leave the place as soon as they feel a bit better.

The State asylum's facilities are not quite as good as the nun's establishment. The rooms are large, arid, almost bare, the walls show leftovers of what was once wallpaint. They open to a defoliated patio where the inmates sit and let the time go by under the sun. The general atmosphere in the place is depressing. The State asylum can also accommodate about twenty-five people. They come and go freely as their physical condition would allow.

Outside the asylum, the older beggars have created a whole mythology about the life inside the nursing homes, based upon the stories of those who have been lucky to come back into the trade. It is believed that "they kill the little old people in there," that "they give you food only when you are about to faint with weakness." "They scold us so much, they called me dirty, stinky and don't give enough food." These and other terrible happenings worry the old men who prefer the continued wandering on their own, rather than accept being confined within the asylums. The same beliefs are shared in regard to regular hospitals, especially the hospitals run by nuns. So, the beggars prefer to seek medical assistance as ambulatory patients at the Health Center or with the physicians on duty in La Cabaña, if they are Indians.

The Physically Handicapped

Twenty-five percent of the sample were physically handicapped beggars. The most common defects are related to the ability to walk or move. Nevertheless, if we were to classify beggars as ambulatory or stationary, we find that in spite of their physical handicap, most beggars in San Cristóbal are mobile. This means that rather than remaining in fixed spots and waiting for prospective

donors, they would walk all over the city in search for them. The beggars refer to their ambulatory activities in an accordingly illustrative manner; they say, "I am going to take a walk" whenever they prepare to go to work. Somewhere along the way they may sit down and rest; actually they continue begging while resting. Even those beggars who, due to physical handicap, cannot walk long distances, do alternate short paseos (promenades) of five or ten blocks with resting periods in between.

We find that physically handicapped beggars are a male group, with the exception of Juana Chamula, whose story we shall cover later on. So, we could explore the suggestion that many activities performed by men are more likely to cause crippling accidents and prevent them from continuing on the jobs they used to do. A society like the one we are concerned with does not provide many alternatives for these men, in selecting a new form of economic activity; thus begging emerges as a most frequent solution for them. Besides men with acquired handicaps, the above proposition should also be valid with regard to beggars born handicapped.

For illustrative purposes we shall next present a case story of a physically handicapped beggar, based on his own statements.

Pedro Chamula, age 40, lame. Pedro is an example of an ambulatory beggar. Only in the extreme case, when the pain in his

legs is too strong, will he remain stationary. Thus even when his paralyzed legs hardly support his body, he manages to walk an average of twenty blocks round trip. Ten blocks one-way is the farthest he can go. He walks this far only on days when he feels all right. Then he reaches the Parque and turns south to the Health Center, returning by the same route.

The street where Pedro lives is on the edge of La Merced barrio. There is no pavement and when it rains it is almost impossible to cross from one side to the other. La Merced is a good barrio, one of the best in town. Most of the people living there have houses and good food. Some of them have two cars parked in front of the house. But, to get to the good section, Pedro has to cross his own street, where walking is difficult because of the many pot holes and the uneven terrain. Walking has always been a difficult task for Pedro anyway. Each step forward is an effort. First he pushes his crutch a few inches forward, then his foot will follow. The other crutch moves next, and finally the other foot. It takes a long time to advance one yard.

Still, he manages to smile at the few people who are walking to their jobs at that time in the morning. Actually, Pedro is always smiling, and the smile lights up his tired and dark face. "Estoy

jodido pues" (Well, I'm ruined), he repeats sadly. But that is a fact and nothing can be done about it.

It was not always like that. When he was a child in his paraje "there in the hills," he spent the morning working in the fields. In the afternoons he played marbles with the other children. He even went to school for four years, but didn't learn too much--just the five vowels.

"We were six children," his two elder brothers, the older sister, Pedro and the younger children. "When I was two, my father was killed. My mother went to live with another man, but after three years she also died. Later on, when our step father also died, we (the children) were left alone." His father never married his mother. That is why Pedro prefers to use his mother's surname.

At 21, he married Juana. He lived with her for eighteen years until he could no longer care for her and their children. The last four years of their life together were bad. He had an accident and his legs began to lose strength day after day. They spent all their money on curers and medicine. They even went to the Ladino doctor and spent 50 pesos on medicine, but nothing helped. His wife stayed and took care of him for a year. "But," he says, "a woman wants the man to take care of her needs. If I were healthy I would have my woman; since I'm screwed, nobody loves me."

He does not beg, "I receive whatever the people give me." He knows where to go for lunch, and where to get his tortilla. Everyday he walks along Mazariegos street towards El Parque. It takes a long time to arrive at the candy store where he gets his lunch. He must sit down for a rest several times before he finally arrives at his destination. Finally, with good luck, he will be there by 11:00 A.M. in the morning. These are good days, and he can eat properly. In the evening he returns to his posada by walking Guadalupe street. He stops in the refreshment store by the cinema and the girl there gives him some food. Food was one thing he did not like when he was at the hospital. That was years ago. It was not good because they gave him only three tortillas to eat. "I don't get full with three tortillas. I eat a lot." The only thing he wanted was to get his medicine and not to stay there. It was different in La Cabaña (colloquial name of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista headquarters). He spent fifteen days over there. "They treat the people well over there." But he didn't get cured either. That was when he returned to his village.

Now he goes back to the village once in a while. There he stays two, three weeks, sometimes a month. But he must return to the city. The people in the village are poor and it is difficult for

him to get food or money. Here in the city he can at least buy some food, and once in a while, a quart of trago at his posada.

Sometimes he feels very bad. His legs hurt too much and he cannot walk at all, so he must stay at the posada. That is not good; he has no friends there. He talks with the other limosneritos,[40] but they are not friends like the ones he has at his village. He feels lonely and helpless. Even when he has some food, he cannot cook his own dinner. "That's why I asked through the Department (Office of Indian Affairs) to get my eldest son to come and help me. I have three children alive, a boy and two girls. I had five, but the other two are dead . . . . The Department rejected my petition." His wife has a brother "who is a school teacher and both of them lied," saying that he hit the woman and the children. Now all the children are with her in what used to be his land on the hills. "Perhaps she has another man. How can I know?" Even when he goes to the village, he is not able to walk up and see them.

When he gets some money, he can buy medicine. He drinks two drops in a glass of water and that helps to stop the pain.[41] When he feels better, he can try and climb the stairs to the church. He likes to go and pray. He believes in God. "We are all Christians," he says, "Indians, Ladinos, we are all the same. All poor. Nevertheless there are bad people, those who treat the Indian badly."

And when he falls down in the street, those people would not stop and help him. He smiles sadly. "I'm screwed. How am I going to get better?"

The Ill

As mentioned before, illness appears in most cases as part of a general picture of handicap. Juana Chamula illustrates such a case.

Juana Chamula, age 23, mentally disabled and paralytic. The hardships of a physical handicap, stagnated mental development and an incipient alcoholism may produce a condition of extreme human misery difficult to overcome. The story of Juana Chamula is case in point. She is twenty three years old. When she was a child, an evil spell "was cast upon her legs." Already ill, she came to San Cristóbal to beg. Nobody gave her the idea to beg. "It just occurred to me." She did not even speak the language of the Ladinos. Now I work hard, walking all day with the aid of the stick, and collecting money to buy milk for the little baby." The woman who gives her posada takes care of the child, she also manages all that Juana earns.

Juana does not remember who was the man that "did her wrong" the last time. Actually, she never knew who he was. She did not

know who it was the first time, either. She gave away the first child to a Ladino woman. The second child she kept, supporting it now the best she can. Sometimes she takes the baby with her during the day. Life is hard, so once in a while she gets herself a glass of trago in the nearby cantina. She smiles at the memories of good moments in the past. "Life is hard" but she will never consider the idea of working for anybody. "The way things are is good enough for me. No. I wouldn't work for anybody else." She likes being free the way it is now. After all, "the people are good to me." They give her money for milk and for herself. Both men and women are helpful. They give tostones,[42] but "the best people are the gringos, they give pesos." The worst people are those in her home town. They don't give.

The idea that the paraje is a bad place for soliciting is shared by most beggars, along with the idea of avoiding, whenever possible, begging on the edges of the city. The reason is that people in both places are so poor themselves that they have nothing to give away. Nevertheless, there are some beggars who hold the opposite view, saying that just because people are poor, they can be more compassionate with the poor beggars. In terms of the philosophy that where two can eat, there is room for a third, this may be a correct interpretation. In any case, the predominant use of the city by most

HANDICAPPED BEGGARS

LADINO MALE PHYSICAL HANDICAP	INDIAN MALE PHYSICAL HANDICAP	INDIAN FEMALE PHYSICAL HANDICAP	LADINO FEMALE PHYSICAL HANDICAP
LADINO MALE AGED	INDIAN MALE AGED	INDIAN FEMALE AGED	LADINO FEMALE AGED
LADINO MALE ILL	INDIAN MALE ILL	INDIAN FEMALE ILL	LADINO FEMALE ILL
LADINO MALE ILL (ASYLUM)	INDIAN MALE ILL (ASYLUM)	INDIAN FEMALE ILL (ASYLUM)	LADINO FEMALE ILL (ASYLUM)

Empty Cell = No Identifiable Cases Available.

Fig. 6.--Handicapped Beggars.

beggars indicates that they concentrate in more affluent sectors, or where food is obviously available, as we shall discuss later on.

The Occasional Beggar

Before closing this chapter we should mention the occasional beggars, even though they are not the subject of this study. That is, occasional beggars do not fall into the category of professional beggars, as defined previously by us; but they certainly give expression to some latent tendency to begging behavior, easily brought to the surface by stimuli such as the tourist, the foreigner in town, or special events like the fair. Sometimes, what started as a funny game turns into a profession, as in the case of Rolando Ladino:

"When I was about six or seven years old, I began working as a shoe shine boy. It was at that same age when I found out how easy it was to beg alms from people. I started going to the cinemas, bars, restaurants and the hotel. Whenever the hotel manager would scorn me, I would cling to the Americans for protection and money. I was a very annoying little thing."

Rolando, who described his childhood in this manner, was attacked by poliomelitis at the age of two. He became an invalid. Soon he learned to move by himself using his arms, which became very

strong. Later he was given a cart by the Lyon's Club. The cart was very important to his life. It gave him freedom over his disabled legs, it gave him speed and it was the symbol of his power over the other children who used to wander around with him. He learned to beg just because it was easy and it was fun. "I did not ask for alms given with pity, I was insolent . . . . 'Will you give me my cinco?' Ya pues, arreéme mi quinto!' . . . . Usually they did not only give a cinco, but a peso. And if they did not give me anything I felt somehow angry. I guess I thought it was their duty to give. I never said thank you, anyway . . . ."

For the occasional beggar, the transition to full-time begging is only a matter of time and energy dedicated to the trade plus the presence or absence of another factor--a job, any other job. Thus several full time beggars who state that they do not beg every day but stay at home "descansando" (resting) most of the week, are undoubtedly full time beggars since the trade is their only source of income.

CHAPTER IV

THE BEGGAR'S TRADE

The Daily Routine

Twenty-nine beggars in the sample go to work every single day. Five of the seventy-six beggars take a rest on Sunday, while five work only on weekends. The remaining thirty-seven work irregularly: these are mostly part-time beggars, including the alcoholics and the load carriers.

In terms of their time schedule, forty percent of the beggars work all day, while the remaining go out into the streets irregularly, either in the mornings or in the afternoons.

An average work schedule begins early in the morning. The exact time will vary with the season of the year and the age of the beggar.

Let's follow some of our beggars in their work.

1--Miguel Chamula is twenty-seven years old, half blind, with a defect in his left foot. He says "I always walk down about nine in the morning, because it's too cold earlier than that. I begin to walk back home about five or six. I go to bed around eight, after having

eaten my tortilla." Miguel Chamula's schedule is not very different from the one most other beggars have. Neither is his appearance. The once-white hat that protects his head is a part of the outfit most male beggars wear. The same can be said about his walking stick and the bag or morral, hanging from his shoulder. All these elements are important and useful accessories when one's trade involves walking all day long under the sun or in the rain, collecting items for future consumption. Women beggars wear a shawl that could serve as a head-cover, a robe, or a carrying bag.

Miguel Chamula walks barefoot. Most Indians, including non-beggars, walk barefoot. He lives in a posada in the east side of the city. During weekdays he walks regularly to El Parque and then goes for a few blocks south to the bus stop. This is a preferred spot for beggars. People coming and going from the nearby towns always give five or ten centavos. The corner is busy. Across the street, where the bus stops, vendors are crowding up, offering food to the travellers. The small plaza of the San Francisco Church is close by. Manuel and other beggars come to the stop, sit down and rest, waiting for alms.

As mentioned previously, most beggars will insist that they do not beg. This is partially true in that they don't verbalize request. Rather they act solely by their somewhat appealing presence. Even when

begging in the stores, they solicit more by sheer presence, rather than making a formal request. In many cases they don't even have to enter the store. At the sight of the beggar the storekeeper often comes out with the money ready in hand.

Miguel is one of the few beggars using specific request in order to obtain his coins. After resting at the bus stop, he goes back to El Parque and starts begging from the vendors on the sidewalk. He approaches them one by one and stretches his hand (Figure 7). The vendors would drop a few cents in his palm, or give him cookies and candy out of their stock. When someone ignores his presence, Miguel just remains there, his hand stretched out, his head, bending down reinforces the appealing gesture, with the eyes raised up toward the donor-to-be. A year ago he broke his foot and now has problems walking long distances. He comes to San Cristobal every other month, stays until he makes enough money to buy food for the family, and then goes back to the paraje. While begging, he eats whatever people give him. That's how he saves money to buy corn and other food to take back home. He is able to collect about 2-3 pesos in a week. Then comes the week-end, which is different. On Saturady he goes to the stores, "The young ladies's hearts are good, they give more." Old people also give, but sometimes they will tell him to go to work.

Fig. 7.--"He approaches them one by one and stretches his hand."

Most beggars go to the market at least once a week. The generalized pattern of begging at the market is very much the same as at the stores. The beggar stands in front of the counter and waits. When the seller has finished with her customers and has a free moment, she will give him some food, salt, a bunch of bones to make soup, an apple or the like. Very seldom the vendor and the beggar would exchange a few words; most of the time the transaction goes on in silence.

2--Juan Ladino is considered by his peers as a very successful beggar. Organization seems to be the key for his success. He is 50 years old and has been begging for thirty-five years. He was born with a partial paralysis in the legs. He walks slowly but steadily with the aid of his crutches. His mother takes care of his clothing and food. She also administers his earnings and invests his money through a lending business where she charges 5 to 10 percent monthly interest. Most of her customers are Chamulas and people from the edges of San Cristobal.

Juan is a cash-specialized beggar: he accepts only money. As most beggars who are mainly interested in cash, he is not likely to beg at the market counters. He would rather stay at the nearby stores or beg from passers-by. He begs using an elaborate formula. "Would you be so kind and give me something in God's name? God will be kind to you if you give." Variations of this theme are used whenever Juan begs from the city people and from the tourists.

He leaves his house everyday at 6 A.M. He lives with his mother in Cuxtitali, and the house is his own. He dresses neatly in white Indian clothes and wears a white hat as clean as his dress. His schedule is fixed and regular. Every morning the relative in charge of his food knows in advance where to find him at midday. Juan walks all over the city, a barrio per day. The three barrios he frequents most are La Merced, Guadalupe and Santa Lucia, which he covers in about four days. If he does not finish working in a given barrio during the scheduled day, he returns there the next day to complete his rounds. Saturday and Sunday are spent around the stores, hotels, and the bank. On any of these days he works from about 7 A.M. to 8 P.M.

Many beggars work on similar routes, but no one is as organized as Juan. Other beggars consider him to be the most successful beggar in town and he seems to deserve this opinion. His father died ten years ago. His brothers are small coffee growers, economically successful. They know he is a beggar. In their opinion, there is nothing wrong with being a beggar if one is unable to work.

The Beggar's Use of City Space

A major aim of our research was to discover the way in which beggars and begging activities were distributed spatially in the city. In other words we wanted to find out the existence (if any) of

delimited territories as the specific domain for some individual beggars. We may define territory as a spatial zone, explicitly or implicitly delimited, but always recognized differentially by the population which dwells, visits, or exploits it. In terms of their use by beggars, the barrios, The Market, The Central Parque, or private territories such as households, posadas and cantinas, are all examples of delimited territories.

Territoriality can be defined in terms of the various functions a given territory plays for groups or individuals who recognize its existence. For the beggars as a group, the city is formally divided into the same sections accepted by all other categories of the population; i.e., barrios and their classification in terms of their economic and social standing are shared by beggars and non-beggars alike. However, the classification of barrios into good or bad ones to work in belongs only to the beggars and their definition of San Cristobal.

The city and its barrios appear to be a broad territory in which the beggars operate (Figure 8). Most full-time beggars do share the same space within the city plan. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe a clear division of space between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic beggars. No drunkard is likely to be seen begging in the central plaza or the surrounding barrios except for isolated examples or on especially joyous days. Most likely they are found in their own barrios or around the cantinas.

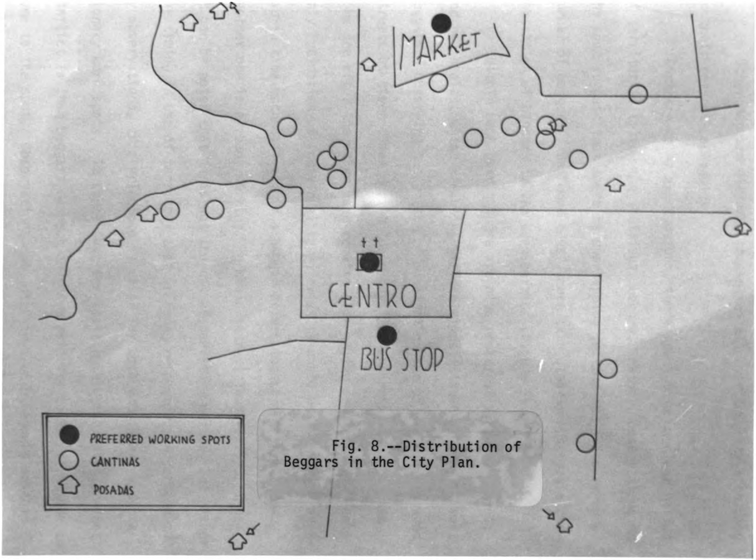

Fig. 8.--Distribution of Beggars in the City Plan.

Other beggars disperse themselves all over the city according to their personal schedules.

Contrary to my expectations, there seems to be no clear notion of territoriality for the individual beggar. Rather, observations on the spot suggest that there is overlapping in time and space among a number of beggars. On "good days" there is a clearly observable concentration of beggars in the best barrios (Figure 9).

Within each barrio there are also preferred streets, stores, and households, which are being visited almost simultaneously by most beggars. Observing the rhythm of movement on one of the most crowded streets at given times during "good days" demonstrates that beggars come one after the other, and receive alms at the same stores. The only indication of individual territoriality could be seen if an overlap in time occurs; i.e., if a beggar enters the same store where another one is already working, he would retreat temporarily. Thus it can be noted that it is not the use of territory per se, but rather the timing in use of territory that is being respected. According to my observations, this principle is valid for both ambulatory and stationary work spots. It seems that the tacit rule which helps prevent conflict is that beggars respect and give priority to the first one to come to the spot. Observations and interviews with beggars on this subject are exemplified in the situation reported below, which is also

Fig. 9.--Areas of Beggars Concentration on Saturday.

an example of the dominant themes and style of interaction among beggars on the streets.

Julio Chamula and José Ladino share the space for a short period of time. Julio begins to move slowly toward the spot where José is sitting down, waiting for alms. It is Sunday afternoon on a street where José is used to sitting down regularly. They do not know each other and it takes time to establish some communication, even though both seem willing to talk. After a few minutes, they glance at each other, and Julio begins the conversation.

"How are you?"

"Fine."

"How is everything? How is the street today."

"Look. Everything is very slow."

People begin to pass by and they begin to beg, each in his own style. Julio stretches his hand while repeating "A blessed alm in God's name. I am already old . . . ." José has a bowl on his legs and raises his eyes to the people while making a guttural sound. When the flow of people become fewer on the street, José asks,

"Well, where did you go today?"

"I was walking around . . . ."

"How was it?"

"Oh, it's very slow. If you work hard they give you some food. They don't give money anymore. Their hearts have changed. And how are you?"

"Well, bad, because I work from morning to sunset but it doesn't help. I can hardly get some food around here."

People start coming again and they begin to arrange their things. While Julio, who is still standing, organizes the bag in which he carried food, tortillas, toasts and papers, the other man counts his coins. Julio begins the conversation again.

"What do you think, will it rain?"

"That's how it seems."

"It will be bad then."

"Oh, sure. Well, are you going to take a walk during the feasts?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Because they hurt me."

"Who?"

"Some drunkards."

"Why?"

"I don't know the reason."

"Where were you?"

"I was crossing in front of the place where they were drinking."

"What did they do to you?"

"When I was begging for my alms, they pushed me out. They told me to lend them money to have a beer. They pushed me. They almost threw me on the stones. Then I came here."

Another stream of people came by. They don't look at each other while each grabs for donations. At this moment José begins to show his impatience as Julio is interfering on his territory.

"There are almost no people coming. I'll move to another street," José says.

"Oh, aren't they coming any more?"

"No. Not anymore."

"Well, I'll leave." Julio grabs his net with his belongings. "I'll see you . . ."

"Are you leaving?"

"Yes. Right now."

When he left, José moved only about thirty meters from the place where this conversation took place. The street was all his again.

Observation of the beggars' routes shows the Central Parque as being the convergency point of the beggars' movement. This convergence of beggars and non-beggars in El Centro in general and El Parque in particular is a clear resultant of the grid design of the city (Stanislavski 1946; 1947). This design forces the users of the city space to pass through El Centro in order to reach their ultimate destinations; the stores, the Market, the Bus Stop, and the public offices are all

connected with and spatially dependent upon El Centro, thus contributing to this convergence of human activity.

Let us note that the use of space in the three major areas of concentration is regulated on the same economic basis for both beggars and non-beggars. The Market is a center of distribution as the city itself is; the plaza is a center of economic and social life, while the Bus Stop is an important element of economic activity. As such, all three serve first to attract non-beggars and, as a result, attract beggars as well.

Defining the entire city of San Cristobal as a large market place, an arena where commodities are exchanged for cash or other commodities, allows defining the concentration areas as sub-centers within it. Beggars are, with few exceptions, outsiders who come to this market place in order to attach themselves and get hold of surplus money and commodities available there. Within this area, they are likely to stick to the specific sub-centers according to their individual needs or specialization as beggars. Thus, cash-oriented beggars (see page 121) would prefer the sub-centers where money is available while non-specialized beggars would move all around.

Perceived this way, beggars become inserted as parasites into the process of circulation of money (Marx 1893:23-120). This insertion can occur in any stage of the circuit but is most likely to occur in the last one where surplus is available.

This situation is consistent with the historical evidence on the emergence of begging as a massive phenomenon. Beggars were first attached to the monasteries and profited of the wealth surplus of the monks plus the halo brought into begging by the begging friars. At the closing of the monasteries, beggars, along with surplus labor, moved into the developing towns and manors where money was available. It was the period of economic prosperity previous to the Black Death, when the labor market began taking shape. Increased money circulation and expanding trade, brought about by the development of German silver mines and the comeback of the crusaders, maintained these centers as logical targets for beggars. After the Black Death, the Ordinance of Labourers tried to compel those offered work to stick with working, but the ordinance was not being strictly enforced in the towns (Gilmore 1940:21). So vagrants and beggars continued to migrate into towns in large numbers.

San Cristobal beggars therefore are more likely to resemble beggars in 14 century precapitalistic towns, than the beggars of a contemporary metropolis. It will appear that an entrepreneurial beggar would have better opportunities in Tuxtla Gutierrez, which is not only the political center of Chiapas, but also in a more advanced stage of capitalism, industrialization and modernization than San Cristobal. Collecting factual data along these lines remains for further research.

Back to the use of the urban-economic space of the city by beggars, it seems that there is no restriction to the beggars' access to either of the three concentration areas, nor to other working areas of the city. It must be noted, however, that the open part of the market plaza, which is the section of the Market occupied mostly by Indians, is less attractive to beggars; also, the alcoholic beggars' tendency to stay close to the cantinas can be viewed as another differential use of space. On the other hand beggars have been seen rejected from places like the department store known as La Cooperativa.

Thus, a cash oriented beggar will tend to stay away from the areas where chances are that he would receive alms other than cash (see page 121). Proximity to the cantinas and also being well known within the barrio tends to keep alcoholic beggars in determined sectors.

This spatial attachment, however, does not imply as was expected, any major changes in the beggars' style of work and relating to prospective donors. Whenever interaction occurs, even in the more business oriented sectors of town, the dominant style remains far from being formal or contractual. This is not a feature typical to donor-beggar relationships only, but tints the whole gamut of human relationships in San Cristobal, from politics, to business and everyday contacts.

The attachment of given beggars to certain routes, corners, and general sections of town, other than those already mentioned, is also an important element in building up closer relationships with regular donors. Building up these minimal ties would definitely help the beggar to secure subsistence on a regular basis. Thus, the circulation of beggars could be interpreted in terms of two guiding factors: the patterns of circulation of appropriable wealth, and the residential pattern within the city.

One may expect that similar distributions of space will occur in cities that are socioeconomically and physically similar. We may also expect similar tendencies in the style of interaction between people. Nevertheless, there are almost no urban studies dealing with Andean Hinterland cities that could be considered comparable to San Cristobal (Aguirre Beltran 1967). No available study was focused upon the underclassed beggar population and its relationship to non-beggars. Thus the problem remains open if generalization is to be made.

The questions regarding relationships between the beggar and his own community of origin are especially interesting for further research. We know that most beggars do not "work" in their own communities or towns. Reasons brought forth in explaining this fact included the general poverty of the communities. It has also been suggested that shame to beg prevents them from begging on hometown

territory (Fabrega 1971:284). Still, observations and reports obtained from beggars who at some stage in their "careers" have begged in their places of origin, and also the preferences stated for begging in one's own barrio, lead me to question the importance of shame as a deterrent factor.

The fact is that many beggars move back and forth from San Cristobal to their own towns. Those able to work are likely to undertake their agricultural jobs and, if having a family, remain with it. Is begging a pendular migration for the purpose of obtaining cash, or is it the result of "personal or cultural misadjustment" of certain individuals, as suggested by one of my ecclesiastic informants?

It is in this direction that further research would be especially valuable, as San Cristobal's boundaries lie far beyond the city limits. The study of human circulation between the hinterland and such a center of an economic area becomes particularly interesting.

CHAPTER V

THE CITY AND THE BEGGARS

In order to obtain a general picture of the Sancristobalenses' opinions and attitudes toward begging, we surveyed 152 respondents, representing a proportionate sample of the nuclear and peripheral barrios of the city. Thus the predominance of Ladinos over Indians in the human composition of the city is evident in the majority of Ladino over Indian respondents, the later representing only eight percent of the total population.

All households were approached for interviewing during working hours, which explains why 65% of the respondents were women. In terms of age, the respondents were evenly distributed among five age categories (see Appendix III, Part I, question no. 7).

The questionnaire was in two parts. Items such as preferred barrios, schedules of work, goods requested by beggars and the like, formed the informative part of the questionnaire. It served the purpose of validating the information I had obtained through observing beggars and through their own descriptions of their use of space and

time. The perceptions and opinions of the Sancristobalenses about beggars and begging formed the other part of the questionnaire.

We shall now review some of the questions explored by our survey. The information presented hereafter was obtained through the questionnaire and also some informal interviews with Sancristobalenses of varied socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Among them, municipal and religious authorities, and also informal political leaders helped with their knowledge and views on the problem.

Do Givers Know to Whom They Give Their Alms?

Most beggars take certain pride in their "personal acquaintance" with certain people in town, as expressed in their reference to places and households where they beg regularly. In many cases a relationship has been established between the beggar and the donor long before the beginning of the beggar's career as such, and while he or she was working for the household.

When formally asked about the quality of their relationship with beggars, most respondents in San Cristobal were able to identify the beggar by his external characteristics, rather than by name. Nevertheless, in informal conversations it is not rare to find that everybody has a detailed knowledge of at least one case history of

begging. It could be the case of a former farm worker, or a servant of the family, or the beggar who used to come every day for years. In a sense, every man has his own beggar to take care of and depend upon for the salvation of his soul, and for the maintenance of his prestige as a man of good heart.

Castellanos illustrates this quite aptly: "Once the Indian maid had finished her story (see page 13) the little girl asked, 'Who is my poor, nana?' The nana answered while helping the little girl to rise from her chair, 'You still don't know. But, if you look carefully, when you get older and more mature, you will recognize him'" (1962:29).

Many beggars rely upon a given donor or household for specific purposes. They know they will receive lunch or dinner at one place, while a couple of cents are guaranteed at another place on a specific day of the week. In the same manner, the posada is a secure shelter for one or more beggars.

Assuming that one important condition for beggars to exist is the existence of an adequate number of regular donors, the immediate question becomes, why people give their alms?

Why Do People Give Alms in San Cristobal?

When the people of San Cristobal are asked what they think moves people to give, pity appears to be the main explanation. Why pity and not sympathy or compassion, or any other similar feeling? Pity is defined in the English Dictionary (Funk & Wagnal's:1940) as the "feeling of grief or pain awakened by the misfortunes or sorrows of others." Sympathy is defined in the same source as a term implying "some degree of equality, kindred or union." Pity, on the other hand, is defined as being "reserved for what is weak or unfortunate, and so far, at least, inferior to ourselves." This comparison points directly to the general assymetry in the relationship we have been talking about, when referring to the dominance-subordination pattern between the Ladino and the Indian.

It is not compasión, but, lástima that moves the donor to give. The same pity he may feel for an overdriven horse or a hungry dog moves him to spare a cent or a piece of bread for the beggar. When the beggar is an Indian, it is possible to make this pattern fit the Ladino-men pity toward the Indian-thing. But, when the beggar is a Ladino it doesn't fit. Is it possible that being a beggar, an under-classed member of the society, overrides the fact of being a Ladino? This reasoning is consistent with the definition of ethnic groups at play in the area under study, and also with the dominical relationships

particularly predominant in Ciudad Real: e.g., if you behave as a Ladino, then you are a Ladino. But what happens if you are a beggar?

Generally speaking, when we think of beggars, the image is that of a dirty, despicable thing that produces displeasure in other people. We asked the people of San Cristobal if displeasure or nausea could be considered reasons for giving. Only two respondents accepted this as a possibility. Also, very few respondents thought that the need to get rid of the beggar's presence should be considered.

Contrary to what was expected before fieldwork, Christian charity does not seem to be an important motivation to give. Only indirectly and in isolated cases we do find any relationship between almsgiving and religion. The religious associations of ladies who give money in front of the church every Tuesday and the lady who gives food in exchange for the beggars' prayers are, in my opinion, the most outstanding examples of this type of almsgiving.

The only institutional relationship of the church to beggars seems to be the church-run asylum.[43] As a matter of fact, there are occasions when the church appears to be competing with beggars for the attention of possible donors. The women carrying the images of saints[44] around the city and the institutionalized almsgiving to the images exposed in the churches during Holy Week's Good Friday are examples of this competition. In the case of the Holy Week images,

there is explicit interest in facilitating the donor's task, as there are specially assigned volunteers to give change to the people who do not have small coins at hand. Thus, Holy Week is a bad week for beggars. Nevertheless, the forthcoming week brings about compensation, as the city Fair brings newcomers and potential donors to town.

Ironically, the church is even physically inaccessible to most handicapped beggars who are unable to climb up the stairs that separate them from the House of God. Among others, Pedro, Manuel, and Juana Chamula pointed out that they would like to go to church (they "even know how to pray to the God of the Ladinos"), but they seldom go because it is painful to climb the stairs.

The beggars believe in God and they use God and the Saints as assistants in their request for alms. Every day of the week is traditionally dedicated to a Patron Saint. On Monday the request will be made in the name of the souls in Purgatory, on Tuesday it will be made in San Antonio's name, on Wednesday it is in San Martin's name, and so on. Saturday's request will be sponsored by the Holy Virgin Mary. Most of the beggars who keep using this traditional request form are old and use it primarily in door-to-door begging.

Returning to our question of why do people give alms in San Cristobal, we might suggest that the first time a prospective donor is faced with a beggar, his main motivation to give is a feeling of

pity. Then, he will get used to a given beggar, ending up in a situation in which the beggar becomes a thing, a given part of the city's environment. This "cosificación" (objectivization) of the beggar and the habit of seeing him frequently would develop into a compulsion to give without discrimination, as we shall find later on.

Who Deserves More Pity?

We have seen that disabled and elderly beggars are likely to perceive themselves as having an acquired right to beg. Prospective donors share this opinion as they are more likely to feel pity for the elderly. The sex of the beggar doesn't seem to make any difference, so old men are as pitiful for the Sancristobalenses as old women are. Second as subjects of pity are the disabled beggars. In this case, pity is mainly directed to invalids and lame beggars. If we think in terms of the agricultural environment that surrounds the city and from which most beggars come, it may be possible to understand this tendency as the chances to survive for a man who is unable to ride a horse or to walk behind the plow are in jeopardy. Most of the beggars' work histories support this issue in statements as the following ones: "Long ago, when I could work, I used to go to the farms for the harvest" . . . "I used to work then, even after my legs were sick. I worked but I

couldn't ride the horse. Then I began to beg in my paraje" . . . "I used to work in agriculture. Then I couldn't work any longer."

Contrary to what can be expected, especially when the observer is more familiar with the special attention given to the blind in terms of rehabilitation institutions, schools and the like, the blind rank third in the perception the sancristobalenses have of the reasons for feeling pity. The blind are considered by respondents as deserving only some pity, possibly because they are perceived as having better chance of survival within the system, as compared to the elderly, the lame, or the ill. Further inquiries in this direction are suggested.

Opinions regarding children beggars are diverse. We asked respondents to evaluate how much pity each category of beggars deserves (see Appendix III, Part 2, question 18). A little over a third of the respondents felt that child beggars deserve some pity; one-third felt that they deserve plenty of pity, while less than one-third felt they deserve a little pity. In general, as suggested earlier in this work, children do not beg professionally on the streets of San Cristobal. Child beggars are mostly occasional beggars. The few cases of professionalism are children begging directly under the supervision of their parents or other adults.

According to my informants, there used to be much more child beggary than nowadays. The few cases I observed in San Cristobal are

isolated examples of the wide variety of child's exploitation, reported also in studies done in Europe and India and observed by me in metropolitan areas of Latin America. For example, there is the little blind girl carried around by her parents or her mother. In some cases she is pushed toward the prospective donor. Some other times one of the parents makes a request. There are also the children of the alcoholic couple, who send them to beg while they sit in a corner, drinking. A third case of child beggar is found in San Cristobal: the guide of the old blind beggar. Sometimes the boy is begging for his grandfather and other times he only guides him to the right door. Early in the morning they come to town from a nearby Chamula paraje and walk slowly to the Centro.

To Whom and What Do People Give?

While 49 respondents state that they give only to some of the beggars, ninety-three respondents said that they give to all the beggars who come to their homes. This lack of selectivity shows again when the question is phrased differently asking to whom would they prefer to give. Fifty-two percent of the females and fifty percent of the males answered that it does not matter; they would give to anybody.

The remaining population said that they prefer to give only to the disabled and the elderly.

Food is the preferred item given. Contrary to the working hypothesis regarding this point, there is no significant differentiation between male and female attitudes toward giving money. The age of the respondents did not make any difference either. When money is given away the rules of the game are strict. Not just any coin will be accepted by the beggar. As said earlier by an Indian beggar, San Cristobal people give "tostones," the twenty centavos coin. If less than that is given, chances are that the alm will be rejected and the beggar will become angry. The sancristobalenses obviously know the rule. Foreigners, especially non-nationals, will tend to give more. As stated by the beggar quoted before, "gringos" are the best people as they give pesos. This generosity may be considered one reason why, for the outside observers, the number of beggars in town seem to be much larger than what actually is: the expected generosity of the outsider increases the number of occasional beggars requesting alms from them.

In general, except on special feasts, beggars do not stop the people of San Cristobal on the streets. They request in public places as the restaurants or cafés, and from the people sitting at the plaza's benches. As in other types of begging a verbal request is not always

necessary as the prospective donors will react to the sole presence of the beggar. In situations like at the restaurants or cafe's, young people's groups are less likely to give alms. In mixed age and sex groups it can be expected that the older person or the one who is acting as a host will be giving for the whole group. The interaction in these places will be minimal, and the general attitude of the donor is one of displeasure or hurry to return to what he was doing before being disturbed.

The issues of allocation of pity and alms seem basic in explaining the existence and maintenance of a relatively large and steady population of beggars in San Cristobal. The lack of, or the inadequacy of existing alternatives for those who are "ill, poor, and without a family" (Fabrega 1971:281), coupled with the socially sanctioned right of given individuals to beg, complete the conditions which make begging an acceptable way of earning a living.

In San Cristobal, beggars are taken for granted, as is almsgiving; so much so that when at a given time a specific beggar does not appear, something has been disrupted in the daily routine. The tostôn is kept ready to be given away and if the beggar does not show up, it is realized for the first time that "it" had been part of the daily routine. Otherwise, nobody even noticed their existence.

A repeated interaction at the stores will follow more or less the structure of the following example. 'Nobody' Chamula approaches the store and manages to crawl (as he cannot walk at all) through the doorway. He stays quietly between the entrance and the counter at a convenient distance, so he can look at the store-owner's face. He stays there for a few minutes, staring alternately to the store owner and to the clients. After a while the owner gives him a tostón. He remains, waiting for the alms of the customers. If they don't come, he leaves. He doesn't say a word but looks thankfully. Then he moves to his next target, a vendor across the sidewalk. He changes direction as the vendor doesn't seem to pay attention to his presence and hits the next possible donor, the confections seller. He searches in his bag while looking at the confections. He seems not to find anything in his bag. Then the seller, who has finished helping a customer, looks at him and gives him some confections. They talk briefly and amicably. He puts the confections in his bag and crawls across the street to go into the stores on the other side of the plaza. He disappears among the people coming and going.

I asked the store owner, who previously maintained that he never gave alms, "Why did you give to this beggar?" "I feel for the poor devil," was the immediate answer. Pity, dominance-subordination is again present.

Who Does Not Give?

In a situation where people give to beggars as part of a daily and somehow mechanical routine, it becomes reasonable to ask, what do the givers think of the non-givers?

The majority of the respondents assume that the people who do not give when requested alms are ruthless and tight-fisted. People who do not give do not feel pity because "they don't think of the poor" or "do not realize their needs." Few of the answers point out that some beggars beg only for their "vices" (namely alcoholism), or that "they throw away, waste, the money given to them." Only one respondent answered that those who do not give "are not good Christians" and a few people thought that the question was irrelevant, as "everybody gives." The style of these comments is consistent with historical information we have. Beggars are being accepted by this society as they were in the 17th century and earlier, when people backed the poor against the strict enforcement of repressive laws against begging in the street. Not even Protestantism stopped almsgiving; it only "made it harder for the poor, beggar or not." For Protestantism "giving for social welfare involves the idea of stewardship and is in a way a substitute for almsgiving" (Gilmore 1940:25). In the society which we have been studying, the efforts of the Catholic Church's authorities to cope with the traditional religious style of the Sancristobalenses

have no effect with respect to almsgiving: it is natural to expect "everybody to give" or, if not, be perceived as a "bad Christian."

What Can People Do to Curb Begging?

When asked about their personal ideas on how to reduce begging in town, only 98 of the 152 respondents answered. Of these, seven stated that it cannot be reduced, "It is impossible, there are too many beggars," and 15 people expected the solution from the Federal Government.

From a realistic point of view, Federal efforts would have not many chances to be successful in a society that perceives the poor as having the right to beg. It seems the following statement of Gillin, made fifty years ago, fits the conditions of San Cristobal in 1973: "The feeding of beggars and vagrants and indiscriminate giving to street beggars only encourages the habit and confirms these men in their hope that they can make a living without work . . . a community will have just as much begging and vagrancy as it deserves by its treatment of the beggar and vagrant" (Gillin 1921:114).

Of the remaining answers, 46 people suggested the building up of hospitals and houses for the elderly either by governmental or citizens' initiative. This response reflects the dominance of elderly

and handicapped beggars in the city. Nine persons suggested the creation of new job opportunities or abstention from giving, in order to force the beggars to work.

Only two respondents considered that the only manner to stop begging is to take measures against alcoholism, which again is concordant with our findings of a limited, spacially restricted number of alcoholic beggars being helped on the basis that alcoholism is not the "fault" of the alcoholic. As a consequence the alcoholic beggar is subject of pity, deserving to be given economic support.

When asked about the allocation of responsibilities regarding begging, 115 respondents answered that the State has the main obligation to solve the problem as being within the Church's domain.

The remaining respondents abstained from answering. The massive lack of meaningful responses to these two questions moves the researcher to question again the degree of consciousness that the prospective donors have of begging. The common citizen gives without considering the legitimacy of begging as a way of life. If there is any way to change or improve the living condition of beggars it is not taken at all to be his responsibility. "The State (through the creation of new or the improvement of existing institutions) . . . should take care of it." There is no need for him to think or worry about the problem. Thus, giving, as it has been done for generations, appears to be the individual "solution" when faced with begging.

CONCLUSION

This has been a study of professional beggars in the Mexican city of San Cristobal, Las Cases. Our project was undertaken with the main goal of expanding and shedding additional light on issues brought forth by previous exploratory research. Let us then recapitulate some of our findings.

1. There appears to be a stable population of beggars working regularly in San Cristobal. Furthermore, this population expands during the periods of major influx of non-beggar population, such as the Fair and Summer.

2. Most of the beggars come from out of town, though some of them have been in town prior to their becoming beggars. Similarly to other migrants, beggars come to town attracted by the economic advantages of the city. In contrast to other migrants to town however, the beggars are likely to have closer relations with (through posada and/or daily patronage) the stable, core population of the city.

3. The institution of posada, traditionally relating the Indian to his Ladino patrón during the former's visits to town, has been adopted by beggars, including the Ladino ones. Thus the beggars relate to their donors very much the way an Indian coming to town relates to the Ladino, e.g., within a patron-client, dominance-subordination style. In other words, the relationship pattern that tints the whole gamut of relationships between the hinterland and the city is maintained through the donor-beggar relationship.

4. The maintenance of the above style of relationships is consistent with the maintenance of traditional social stratification and ascribed roles of Ladinos vis a vis Indians, and of the higher class Ladino with regard to the lower-class Ladino.

5. To be a beggar is degrading for a Ladino among other Ladinos, as it is for an Indian among other Indians. In the city, where the interaction is between Indian or Ladino beggar, on the one hand, and Ladino donor, on the other, ethnic affiliation is irrelevant to the determination of social status; Indian and Ladino beggars share an equally low position in the society.

6. The movement of beggars within the city space follows the daily routine and schedule of the city. That is, during the day

beggars tend to concentrate in the commercial areas, while at night they stay within the residential sectors. All in all, beggars share the city space equally; alcoholic beggars, who keep their activities close to the bars, are an exception.

7. The limited existence of modern economic institutions in the city has helped to maintain the traditional pattern of the beggar-donor relationship. This pattern does not always work wherever modern forms have appeared. So, for example, begging in the newly found department stores and supermarkets is very limited.

8. According to previous history and observation of beggars, it was expected that a large number of beggars would concentrate around the church, as a space and as an institution. Yet our fieldwork proved that is not the case in San Cristobal, probably due to the efforts of the new generation of priests trying to eliminate the exercise of indiscriminate charity. Instead, beggars tend to concentrate in three major areas which are centers of economic attraction for all: the Market, the Central Plaza and the Bus Stop.

9. The residence patterns of the city are class and occupation determined, and follow strictly the urban land usage inherent

in the pre-industrial city. It was expected that spatial attachment to given sectors of the city would produce changes in the style of interaction between beggar and donor. Specifically, we expected that in business areas, the style of the transaction would take a more contractual form. We found that, even in the most business-oriented sectors of town, the dominant style of interaction remains far from formal or contractual.

10. The historical classification of beggars as able-bodied and handicapped is particularly valid for San Cristobal. In addition, there is the belief that the handicapped have a right to beg, more so than the able-bodied. San Cristobal society handles the problem of its deprived members on an individual basis: charity is in the hands of individuals, not institutions. And whenever such institutions do exist, they are not favored by either beggars or non-beggars.

In general it may be suggested that the integration of the beggar within the San Cristobal society is maintained through the one-to-one relationship created through the beggar-donor interaction. Under certain circumstances a person acquires the right to beg, whereupon society does not question the legitimacy of this right.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

BASIC QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BEGGARS

APPENDIX I

GUIA DE ENTREVISTA (CUESTIONARIO BASICO) LIMOSNEROS

Full-Time..... .....Part-time

Toma?.....Si .....No? Defecto?....Si .....No?

Edad aproximada..... Especifique.....

Nombre.....

VIVIENDA. Casa propia?.... Familia?.... Amigos?....

Pide posada?....Si ....No Dónde?.....

CUANTO TIEMPO HACE QUE VINO A SAN CRISTOBAL?.....

(Si va y viene de su pueblo) Que días viene?.....

BARRIOS EN QUE PIDE. Lu.....Ma..... Mi.....Ju.....Vi.....Sa.....

Do..... Todos los días.....

HAY BARRIOS MAS BUENOS QUE OTROS? Si?.... Cuáles?.....

No?..... Por qué?..... Todos son iguales.....

BUEN TRATO. Dan comida?..... Dinero?..... Ropa?.....

MAL TRATO. No dan?..... Por qué?.....

Hay más gente buena que mala?....Si? ...No ....Todos son iguales

(Mujeres 1; Hombres 2; Viejos 3; Jóvenes 4; Indios 5; Ladinos 6; Gringos 7).

QUE PREFIERE QUE LE DEN?...Comida....Ropa....Dinero...Otra.....

SABE SU FAMILIA QUE PIDE? ...Si Que dice?.....

...No Por que?.....

CUANTO TIEMPO HACE QUE PIDE?.....

SI LE OFRECIERAN UN TRABAJO QUE UD. PUDIERA HACER, TRABAJARIA?
Si.... No..... Por que no?.....

HORAS MEJORES PARA PEDIR. ..Mañana.....Tarde.....Mediodía.....
Todas son iguales.....

TIENE LUGARES FIJOS PARA PEDIR?.....

TIENE LUGARES FIJOS EN QUE LE DEN COMIDA?.....

TIENE LUGARES FIJOS EN QUE LE DEN ROPA?.....

Pregunte, del cuestionario a la población:

No. 17. Por qué cree Ud. que la gente da?..... no da?.....

No. 18. Quiénes son más dignos de lástima?.....

APPENDIX II

CASE STUDIES RECORD

APPENDIX II

GUIA PARA ESTUDIO DE CASOS

Nombre..... Edad aprox.....

Est. Civil..... Defecto.....

GENEALOGIA. anotar trabajo, lugar de vivienda y ocurrencia o no de alcoholismo, para cada familiar nombrado.
Hay otros limosneros en la familia?

TIEMPO PIDIENDO. Recuerdos de los comienzos en el oficio.
Le enseñó alguien? Le aconsejó alguien para que se hiciera limosnero?

QUE HACE CUANDO NO ESTA PIDIENDO? Uso del tiempo libre.
Amigos? A quiénes ve todos los días, semanas, fines de semana?

SI ES CASADO En que trabaja el (la) conyuge? Cuantos hijos?
Viven todos juntos?

SI ESTA SEPARADO Por que se separó? Donde vive la ex familia?

EN QUE TRABAJAN SUS AMIGOS?

ES CATOLICO? Tiene otra religion?
Va a la iglesia regularmente, a veces, nunca?

PIDE EN LAS IGLESIAS. Si no pide, por que no?
Si pide, en cuales?.....

CUANDO SE ENFERMA, A QUE HOSPITAL, DISPENSARIO, DOCTOR VA?
Si no va a ningun hospital, por qué no?

HA PENSADO DEJAR DE SER LIMOSNERO?
Se puede o no se puede? Si se puede, como lo haría?
Si no se puede, por qué no?

CONOCE ALGUNOS LIMOSNERITOS A LOS QUE LES VAYA MUY BIEN, QUE GANEN MUCHO?
Conoce algunos limosneritos que hayan dejado de pedir?
Que hacen ellos ahora?

VIAJA FUERA DE SAN CRISTOBAL?
Cuantas veces a la semana, mes, año?
Adonde va regularmente?
Que medio de transporte usa?
Paga su pasaje?

SI TOMA DESDE CUANDO TOMA?
Tomaba antes de ser limosnero?
Empezõ a tomar despuẽs?
Adonde prefiere ir a tomar? Por que?

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE TO NON-BEGGARS

APPENDIX III

PARTE NO. 1 ENCUESTA NO.....

LAS RESPUESTAS DE ESTA SECCION DEBEN SER LLENADAS POR EL ENTREVISTADOR INMEDIATAMENTE DESPUES QUE HA TERMINADO LA ENTREVISTA. POR NINGUN MOTIVO DEBEN HACERSE ESTAS PREGUNTAS AL ENTREVISTADO.

DIRECCION..... BARRIO.....

1. ENTREVISTADO
   1. dueño (a) de la casa
   2. sirvienta
   3. otro...especificar.....

2. SEXO DEL ENTREVISTADO ..... 1. H ..... 2. M

3. GRUPO EN QUE CLASIFICARIA UD. AL ENTREVISTADO.
   1. indígena 2. ladino

4. CLASE SOCIAL EN QUE UD. CLASIFICARIA AL ENTREVISTADO.
   1. alta 2. media 3. baja
   Por qué? En qué basó Ud. su opinión?.....
   .....
   .....

5. QUE REACCION TUVO EL ENTREVISTADO ANTE LAS PREGUNTAS?
   1. no se molestó 2. se molestó algo 3. se molestó mucho
   4. se interesó 5. nada especial

6. LE PARECIO A UD. QUE EL ENTREVISTADO ES UA PERSONA.
   1. muy instruída 2. instruída 3. ignorante

7. EDAD APROXIMADA DEL ENTREVISTADO
   1. hasta 20 años
   2. 21 a 30 "
   3. 31 a 40 "
   4. 41 a 50 "
   5. mayor de 50 años.

PARTE NO. 2 Preguntar al entrevistado.

1. Algunos de los pobres de esta ciudad son limosneros. Vienen muchos por aquí?

   1. Pocos 2. No muchos 3. Muchos 4. No sabe

2. Hay algunos que vengan todos los dias?

   1. Si 2. No 3. Sólo algunos días 4. No sabe

3. Hay algún día en especial en que vengan más?

   1. Si (escribir el día).....
   2. Todos los días son iguales
   3. No sabe

4. En qué época del año vienen más?.....

5. Aque hora del dia vienen mas?

   1. mañana 2. mediodía 3. tarde 4. noche 5. no sabe

6. Quiénes vienen más, indígenas o ladinos?

   1. indígenas 2. ladinos 3. igual 4. no sabe

7. Quiénes vienen mas, hombres o mujeres?

   1. hombres 2. mujeres 3. igual 4. no sabe

8. Qué es lo que piden más?

   1. comida 2. dinero 3. cualquier cosa 4. no sabe

9. Qué prefiere Ud. darles?

   1. comida 2. ropa 3. dinero 4. otra cosa (qué?).....

10. Acostumbra Ud. a darles a todos los que vienen?

    1. a todos 2. sólo a algunos 3. a ninguno 4. no sabe

11. A quienes prefiere Ud. darles?.....

    .....

12. Conoce Ud. a alguno de los que vienen por aquí?

1. sí 2. por su nombre.....
3. no conoce el nombre pero los identifica.....
4. no

13. Cree Ud. que entre los limosneros hay....

1. gente buena y gente mala?.....
2. más gente buena que mala?.....
3. más gente mala que buena?.....

14. Cree Ud. que entre los limosneros hay....

1. muchos alcohólicos?.....
2. algunos alcohólicos?.....
3. casi ningún alcohólico?.....

15. Cree Ud. que hay mendigos que no están realmente necesitados?

1. no 2. sí 3. algunos 4. muchos 5. no sabe

16. Conoce Ud. alguno así?.....
.....

17. Por qué cree Ud. que la gente da?--

el mendigo le da lástima*	1	2	3	4
le da pena	1	2	3	4
le da asco	1	2	3	4
le produce disgusto	1	2	3	4
es deber de buen cristiano	1	2	3	4
es deber de buen ciudadano	1	2	3	4
le enseñaron a ser caritativo	1	2	3	4
para que el limosnero se vaya	1	2	3	4
para obtener agradecimiento	1	2	3	4

*1 = sí 3 = tal vez
2 = no 4 = no sabe

18. Como diría Ud. que son las siguientes personas?

--un anciano que pide.....
--una anciana que pide.....
--un joven que pide.....
--un niño que pide.....
--un ciego que pide.....
--un cojo que pide.....
--un enfermo que pide.....

1 = muy digno de lástima
2 = digno de lástima
3 = poco digno de lástima
4 = no es digno de lástima

19. Cuánto tiempo lleva Ud. en San Cristóbal?

1. toda la vida.....
2. más de veinte años.....
3. de diez a veinte años.....
4. de cinco a nueve años.....
5. menos de cinco años.....
6. no se acuerda.....

(SI HA VENIDO DE OTRA PARTE PREGUNTE 20-21 y 22. SI NO, salte a23)

20. De dónde vino Ud.? .....

Era de allá su padre? 1. si 2. no 3. no sabe

21. Hay limosneros allá?

1. si 2. no 3. no sabe

22. Hay más o menos mendigos que en San Cristóbal?

1. más 2. menos 3. igual 4. no sabe

23. Qué cree Ud. que podría hacerse para evitar la mendicidad?

.....

.....

24. Quien cree Ud. que tiene más obligación de solucionar este problema?

--el estado..... 1. si 2. no 3. no sabe
--la iglesia..... 1. si 2. no 3. no sabe
--Todos los ciudadanos..... 1. si 2. no 3. no sabe

NOTES

NOTES

Introduction

1. I am using the term marginal in a spatial sense as being used in the Latin American sociological literature with reference to urban "marginals," individuals displaced from the productive occupations and at the same time of the physical margins or borders of the city.

2. Liber Vagatorum, The Book of Vagabonds and Beggars, was probably written shortly after 1509. The first edition seems to be the one printed at Augsburg in about 1512-14 by Erhart Öglin. Luther's edition is the second and the best known. It was published at Wittemberg in 1528. The first important English edition, including Luther's preface was published by Hotten in 1860. Hereafter the book will be referred as Thomas 1932, as for the edition we have been using.

3. I would prefer defining beggars as a "category of . . . (individuals). . . who share a common way of life, a 'culture' retaining the meaning of both 'category' and 'culture,'" as used by Spradley (1970:264, 265).

Chapter I

4. Within the limitations of translating colloquial Spanish into English, I shall try to keep the style of my informants. This will be easy with educated informants, but will become difficult as we begin dealing with beggars and others not as fluent and coherent.

5. The Liber Vagatorum gives a detailed account of the tricks usually played by beggars to attract the attention of their possible donors. Many of these tricks are later on observed by Paulian (1897) in France, Kumarappa (1945) in India, Gaya (1962) in Spain and Central Europe, and Gilmore (1940) in the United States.

6. Las Partidas (Alfonso X, El Sabio). In this body of legislature were the first restrictive laws regarding beggars in Spain.

7. Gilmore (1940:151) divides occupations in two kinds: socially approved and socially disapproved; more specifically, socially disapproved occupations are "outlawed and outcast by organized society" e.g. "Prostitution, violation of property rights (such as robbery and stealing), illegal commerce (such as bootlegging and smuggling), and begging."

Chapter II

8. "Because 'since always' for the Tzotzil Indians have existed the memories of the time when the valley of Jovel was an enormous lake that later was directed tunnel of El Sumidero (The Gullyhole). This lake carried its contents underground until reaching the point named Rio Frio, between the present settlements of Alcala and San Lucas" (reported by informant H.A.).

9. There are slight discrepancies between different authors regarding these figures. I have tried to maintain an equilibrium between the written sources and my own observations.

10. The Spanish Government began to send out exact instructions for the layout of the colonial towns only after 1523, under the rule of Charles V, when these instructions and the principles on which they were based were codified in the "Laws of the Indies." For further information on the grid pattern and its importance not only for the further development of the city plan, but also for the social stratification reflected in it, see Stanislawski (1947), Zucker (1959), and Foster (1960:34-49).

11. This is one of the several traditions followed by the Spaniards to name the cities they founded. Some were named in honor of the native town of the founder, some others were reminders of the patron Saint of the province of Spain where he came from. In some cases he maintained the original or a Spanish version of the native denomination, adding to it the Christian requirements of a non-pagan name. When Villa Real became San Cristobal will be discussed later in this chapter.

12. "In 1528 Villa Real de Chiapas was founded. This followed the plan of measured streets and solares and apportionment of the land according to merit, as ordered in the king's instructions" (Antonio de Remesal, quoted in Stanislawski 1947:100). "A central plaza was destined for communal gatherings, probably as a market place also, and simultaneously represented the courtyard of the central temple. The social standing of the inhabitants was manifested by the respective nearness of their houses to the plaza" (Zucker 1959:136). After laying out the plan of the city the founder should divide the plots for houses these to be according to the status of the persons. (Colección de Documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y colonización de las posesiones españolas en America y Oceanía, sacados en su mayor parte del Archivo de Indias, Madrid 1864-1884, Vol. 38, 1881, pp. 284-285.

13. These two latter barrios are considered by some authors as being Colonias. San Ramon in any case is an older urban development originally occupying private lands alongside the road to Chamula. San Felipe Ecatepec is an Indian settlement close San Cristobal. Some historians and anthropologists refer to it as a barrio. I would prefer to consider San Felipe as a hamlet.

14. "cochi" is an abbreviation used in San Cristobal instead of cochino or cerdo (pig).

15. Tamal is a food made out of corn flour and wrapped in corn leaf. Sometimes it is filled with pork meat and prunes, others with blackmange.

16. The atajadoras are ladino women. Before dawn they go to the trails coming into town and wait for the Indians who come to Market. They buy the Indians' merchandise at a bargain price. They are feared by the Indians, especially the younger ones.

17. Comal is a flat earthenware pan for cooking tortillas. It is separated from the fire by three big stones.

18. I am specifically concerned with the barrio as basically a dwelling unit. It must not be confused with the use of the term in reference to the Chamula Indians, where, according to Pozas (1959:29-30), the barrio is a human group without any relationship to territory.

19. There are 24 churches and public chapels in San Cristobal, and of these only one, San Agustin, can be called abandoned (Montagu 1957-58:2).

20. "La época contemporánea no ha hecho sino empobrecer San Cristobal, destruyendo la ciudad que en conjunto guarda la estulticie de un comercio pintarrajeador y destructor de fachadas. Actualmente puede verse un gran numero de casas sin caracter antiguo ni moderno, y una serie de anodinas construcciones que se multiplican día a día, como mancha expansiva por toda la población" (quoted in Markham 1963:20).

21. By the second half of the 1600's a sculptor from Barcelona named Tolsa was in charge of the building of the statue of Charles IV at Ciudad de Mexico's major plaza. For this purpose a stone zocle with a balaustrade was built in the center of the plaza. The statue was put in the middle of this zocle. It became the habit for the people of Mexico City to say "let's go to 'el zócalo.'" This phrasing was misinterpreted by tourist guides and similar publications that understood that local meaning as being the Mexican way of referring to La plaza. Really, in almost all Mexican towns and cities, la plaza is known as El Parque, which is also the term used in San Cristobal.

22. Since August 1972 a new era has begun for this kiosk. It has been remodelled and transformed into a long needed bookstore.

23. The translation of this term is servant girl. It is the name and self denomination of maids. The feudal and derogatory connotation of this term may be related to the fact that almost all servants are Indian girls.

24. Twenty centavos is the price of a ride in the bus. As a result these buses are nicknamed "veinteros."

25. "Class distinctions are very strongly recognized and even barrios have class standings . . . in asking the number of social classes I have received (as an answer) . . . from two to thirty-four, the latter including a tremendous breaddown by family economic standing, occupations and the distance from the center where the occupation was practiced. The most usual answer was three" (Montagu 1957-58:3).

26. "The gentlemen Creoles or natives of Chiapa are as presumptuous and arrogant as if the noblest blood in the Court of Madrid ran through their veins. It is a common thing among them to make a dinner only with a dish of frijoles in black broth, boiled with pepper and garlic, saying that it is the most nourishing meal in

all the Indies; after this so stately a dinner they will be sure to come out to the street-door of their houses to see and be seen, and there for a half an hour they stand shaking off the crumbs of bread from their clothes, bands (but especially from their ruffs, when they use them), and from their mustachios. And with thier tooth-pickers they will stand picking their teeth, as if some small partridge bone stuck in them. Nay if a friend pass by at that time, they will be sure to vent out some crumb or other in the mustachio (as if on purpose the crumbs of their table had been upon their beards, that the loss of them might be a gaining of credit for a great housekeeping) and then will be sure to vent out some non-truth, as to say: 'Ah Señor que linda perdiz he comido hoy,' 'Oh Sir, what a dainty partridge have I to eat today,' whereas they pick out nothing from their teeth but a black husk of a dry frijol or Turkey bean" (Thomas de Gage 1648:142).

27. Pitt Rivers talks about the metropolitan culture as contrasted with the local ladino community beliefs and behavioral body . . . "Ambas culturas se entrelazan, desde luego, y es posible distinguir un cierto rango de progresión que va desde el ladino pobre y sin educación, con antecedentes indígenas recientes, cuyo dominio de la cultura metropolitana es muy débil, hasta el Ladino que fué a la escuela fuera de la comunidad y viaja a menudo a la capital del estado o a la ciudad de Mexico por razones de negocios, salud o placer. El ladino de clase media, cuyo status lo obliga a preocuparse por la cultura metropolitana, se halla en el punto capital del conflicto que tiene lugar entre sus valores y creencias y las de su comunidad local" (J. Pitt Rivers 1970:32).

28. I am thinking of the generally extended disease of this type of bureaucracy in which problems are "dissolved" somewhere in the bureaucratic net, reminiscent of a Kafkian labyrinth.

29. Every Latin American country will have a different regionalism to express this involuntary tip, bribe, or perquisite.

30. Even for the pharmacies there are social categories. The first rate ones where there is a responsible professional, backed by a degree inscription number. The second rate ones where, painted in large characters in the facade, says: "Mr. Jose Jimenez performs the profession without the required degree."

31. Paraje is a basic social unit associated to the territory. It grows, moves out, changes or disappears depending on the slash and burn cultivation requirements (Pozas 1959).

32. Necapal is an Indian load-carrying method; it uses a rope or leather-made device, which consists of a headband on one end and an attachment for the load at the other end.

33. Marchante, caminante, comerciante.

34. I knew about Antonio through Sancristobalenses who knew him from long time. I also had the opportunity to talk to him several times at the jail.

35. I am thinking of a similar idea as the "Image of Limited Good" of the peasants (Foster 1965).

36. Enganche--contract procedure which is notorious for involving the laborers into perpetual indebtedness.

    The Enganchador--Cheap labor recruiter offering temporary field jobs to Indians and Ladinos in a financial squeeze.

Chapter III

37. One quart of a liter (8 ounces).

38. Maestro (school teacher) was the name they use to give to the assistant who was recording the conversations inside the cantinas.

39. "The failure"--In colloquial Spanish or Chiapas, girls refer to "el fracaso" (the failure) of their female acquaintances who have engaged in premarital sex. This term is especially used if the failure had consequences such as abortion or childbirth. In general, losing virginity means that the young woman has shapely reduced her chances of finding an honorable husband.

40. limosnerito/a--Some beggars, especially the elderly, call themselves with the diminutive of limosnero (beggar).

41. Actually what he was drinking was medicine for external use only. It was intended for skin rubbing alleviating muscular pain.

42. Tostón--a 20 centavos coin.

Chapter V

43. "The bishop of Chiapas created the asylum using the inheritance his brother left to him. But most people prefer to stay away because they make more money and are free. In the asylum they do not make money but they receive food, shelter, everything. But, they want to be free and have money in their pockets. At the beginning we (the Church) used to give food here. Sometimes many people came who were not poor. Later on we thought that to give food was not functional." (Father Pedro in conversations with me.)

44. "We (the Church) have forbidden carrying images while begging for their money-boxes, but there are still two or three women who do it. The women's religious associations sponsor them and give them a half of what they collect" (Father A in conversations with me.) He thinks that this is a form of begging, that the church cannot be proud of. "It is a shame that these women walk around begging for us, especially the paralytic ones, while we are here, in a good house, with a car and everything."

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