

SAN ANTONIO, YUCATAN: FROM HENEQUEN
HACIENDA TO PLANTATION EJIDO

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ABSTRACT

SAN ANTONIO, YUCATAN: FROM HENEQUEN HACIENDA TO PLANTATION EJIDO

By

Rodney Carlos Kirk

This dissertation examines the effects of land reform on San Antonio, an ex-hacienda, ejido community located in the monocrop henequen zone of Yucatán, México. The 1938 agrarian reform program of President Lázaro Cárdenas transformed the jural status of San Antonio from a community of plantation wage laborers on an henequen hacienda to a collective ejido, an autonomous, communally landholding, population unit. In the attempt to understand the significance of behavior in contemporary San Antonio, this ejido community is analyzed in the context of its recent historical origins and the succession of exogenous social, political and economic institutions that have controlled, and continue to control, its economy and organization. Although land reform changed the jural and ideological status of this community of Yucatec Mayans, the productive and structural relationship of the community to the manufacturing industry and the world market for henequen fiber has remained essentially unchanged since the latter part of the nineteenth century. San Antonio has existed and continues to exist as the lowest productive appendage of the monocrop export economy of Yucatán.

The first two chapters of the dissertation provide an identification of San Antonio in the context of the environmental and institutional setting of this ejido community. Chapter II also provides a basic analysis of the demographic changes that have occurred in San Antonio from 1900 to the 1970/1971 ethnographic present of this study. The reconstruction of demographic evidence proves invaluable to the later analysis of pre- and post-land reform changes in interpersonal behavior and the social, political, and economic organization of life in this plantation community. The total population of San Antonio has nearly doubled during the more than three decades since land reform yet, due to the nature of reform in this region, no further expansion of ejido lands is possible to compensate for the demographic increases. Localized overpopulation characterizes San Antonio in particular and the henequen zone in general and, in the view of many investigators, has resulted in a generalized condition of underemployment for the ejido population of the henequen zone.

Chapter III specifically examines the effects of land tenure reform on the economics and organization of production in San Antonio. A comparison is made between evidenced productivity of the collectivized ejido sector, the private sector, exemplified by the present owner of the remnant holdings of Hacienda San Antonio (the pequeña propiedad), and the individual cultivation of small parcels by some members of the ejido community. A superficial analysis of aggregate statistics points to a greater productive efficiency of the private sector. A detailed analysis of productive variation in the ejido sector belies critical assessment of ejidos as inherently inefficient.

In this analysis, lowered ejido productivity is attributed to the contradictions existing between a liberal reform ideology and the reality of restrictive and stagnating institutional control exerted by the federal administrative and credit agency of the ejido agrarian bank.

Chapter IV focuses on the institution of compadrazgo (ritual coparenthood) as highly responsive and adaptive to general changes in the institutional context of the community and to the consequent post-land reform proletarianization of the population of San Antonio. Choice patterns in the selection of coparents reconstructed for the pre-reform, hacienda period demonstrates an emphasis, as noted by other investigators, on the selection of ascending primary relatives as coparents. It is hypothesized that this emphasis is not simply "traditional" but was highly adaptive in the setting of community endogamy and the high frequency of early adult mortality, remarriage, and associated realignment of affinal ties evidenced for the pre-reform period.

Chapters V and VI examine the economic and political organization of contemporary San Antonio. Chapter V focuses on the analysis of domestic group structure and cyclicity and associated income and expenditure patterns in this community of wage laborers. Chapter VI examines political processes associated in interaction, accommodation and alliance within the community and between the ejido community and external institutions of the private sector and the state and federal government. Special emphasis is given to the patterned relations existing between the ejidatarios and the federal regulatory agency of the ejido credit bank.

In the concluding chapter, the significance of the study is discussed as it relates to critical analyses of the Mexican ejido reform program generally, and the reform program and collectivization of ejidos in the henequen zone of Yucatán in particular. The discussion includes suggestions for governmental policy changes to reduce the restrictive nature of ejidal control and to increase the apparent productive efficiency of that sector of the henequen zone. In spite of restrictive physical limitations on the availability of land, the key resource, and the restrictive nature of institutional control, the ejidatarios of San Antonio have demonstrated tremendous flexibility in their ability to change and adapt to conditions which obviously affect their lives and their ability to survive as individuals, as members of domestic groups and as members of the larger ejido community. Within the institutional and historical context, it is this flexibility in adaptation, the inner dynamic of San Antonio, that is the subject of this study of an ejido community in the henequen plantation zone of Yucatán, México.

SAN ANTONIO, YUCATAN: FROM HENEQUEN HACIENDA
TO PLANTATION EJIDO

By

Rodney Carlos Kirk

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DEDICATION

**To Barbara
My Parents
And L.L.B.**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Aseguradora--Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera, S.A.

Banagrario--Banco Agrario de Yucatán, S.A.

Banjidal--Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal

CEPES--Centros de Estudios Políticos, Económicos y Sociales
(P.R.I.)

C.N.C.--Confederación Nacional de Campesinos

CONASUPO--Campaña Nacional de Subsistencias Populares

CORDEMEX--Cordeleros de México, S.A.

DAAC--Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización

D.I.S.A.--Documentos Inéditos de San Antonio

Henequeneros--Henequeneros de Yucatán

IEPES--Instituto de Estudios Políticos, Económicos y Sociales
(P.R.I.)

P.R.I.--Partido Revolucionario Institucional

S.A.G.--Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

San Antonio in Perspective

Plantation

Ex-Hacienda

Collective Ejido

Local Ejidal Credit Society

Land Reform in the Henequen Zone:
Research and Critiques

The Study of an Ex-Hacienda, Plantation
Community

Fieldwork and Methodology

San Antonio in Perspective

This study of San Antonio,¹ an ejido² land-reform community in the henequen zone of Yucatán, represents one contribution to a long neglected area in the anthropology of Mexico. As recently noted by Raymond Wilkie (1971: xiii), outside of Oscar Lewis's discussion of the ejido in the municipal center of Tepoztlán (1951), intensive analyses of single ejido communities are conspicuously lacking in the anthropological literature. In the description and analysis that follows, San Antonio provides a focal point and is used as one vehicle in the examination of the processes and effects of land reform in the northern ecozone of Yucatán. In order to understand the significance of behavior in contemporary San Antonio, it is necessary to place this ejido in the context of its historical origins and the succession of exogenous social, political, and economic institutions that have controlled and continue to control its economy and organization.

In 1937, President Lázaro Cárdenas initiated a land reform program that transformed the jural status of San Antonio from a community of plantation wage laborers (acasillados) on an henequen hacienda to a collective ejido, an autonomous, communally-landholding, population unit. The past is not merely history, however, but profoundly affects life in San Antonio. Despite more than three decades as an established ejido community, the people of San Antonio still frequently refer to themselves as "los acasillados" and to their community as simply "la hacienda."

Contemporary San Antonio can be variously described as a plantation community, an ex-hacienda, a collective ejido, or a local

credit society. All of these labels are applicable and all have reference to aspects of land tenure, mode of production, and control over the means of production. As a plantation community, San Antonio, rather than subsistence-oriented, is part of a larger area emphasizing the monocrop cultivation of henequen. The community is the lowest link in a productive chain which supplies raw henequen fiber and items manufactured from that fiber to regional, national, and international markets.

In the aftermath of the Mexican revolution of 1910, the peasants of San Antonio were released from the bondage of indebted servitude characteristic of the hacienda (private landholding) system in Yucatán. The agrarian reform of 1937 established community autonomy, provided the community with expropriated hacienda lands, and required the inhabitants, the legal members of the ejido community, to engage in a collectivized form of exploiting those lands. As a federally endowed ejido, the organizational structure is supervised and regulated by the Mexican Department of Agrarian Affairs (DAAC). As a henequen plantation ejido, San Antonio is officially defined as a "local ejidal credit society" whose productive efforts and financial operation are strictly controlled by the Agrarian Bank of Yucatán (Bangrario), a regional branch of the National Ejido Credit Bank (Banjidal). Although the ejido community of San Antonio has been created by the agrarian reform program, the people continue to depend on the owner-heir of the residual smallholdings (the pequeña propiedad) of Hacienda San Antonio.

Together, the descriptive labels provide the context for the analysis of social, political, and economic organization in San Antonio.

The labels are descriptive of not only the contemporary ejido community, but of its past and the succession of institutions which have controlled and affected San Antonio since the expansion of the henequen industry in the late nineteenth century.

Plantation

Land utilization patterns in the northern zone of Yucatán were drastically altered in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Productive emphases shifted from the raising of cattle and corn to the large-scale cultivation of henequen (*Agave fourcroydes*) and the extraction of the fiber contained in the slender, spiny leaves of this cactus-like plant. The northern zone shifted from a tendency towards economic self-sufficiency to an export economy associated with fiber production and monocrop emphasis on the cultivation of henequen.

As a plantation community, the mode of production in San Antonio is constrained by characteristics of the henequen plant. Henequen is indigenous to Yucatán and thus far seems the only commercially valuable plant adaptive to both the sparse soils and the arid winters of the northern environment. The cultivation of a henequen field is itself an economic activity that requires investment and planning throughout a growth period spanning more than twenty-five years. The initial six to eight years of early growth (cultivo) are years of investment without return. The fields must be periodically weeded to minimize competition from other plants for scarce soil nutrients and water. During the sixth through eighth year, leaves are harvested but the fiber content is low and the rate of economic return minimal. The period of full

production lasts from the eighth through the twenty-fifth year of cultivation (explotación) after which the plant typically produces a central flowering stalk, and dies. By cutting the stalk as it emerges, thus preventing the aging agaves from flowering, another two years of production (decadencia) may be added to the cycle.

The henequen plant reaches a height of approximately two to three meters with leaves emanating radially from a central trunk. The leaves are long (up to 2.5 meters in length), slender, and fleshy, terminating in an extremely sharp, spiny point. During each of the three annual harvesting cycles, an average of seven leaves per plant are selected for cutting and transport to the central processing factory (desfibradora). The cultivation and harvesting of henequen leaves remains the only non-mechanized stage in the process leading to the manufacture of cordage, twine, and other products from henequen fiber. There is some differentiation in tasks associated with annual cutting and weeding cycles, yet there is very little occupational specialization among the workers themselves. Independent of the particular task, a concession is made by all field workers to the environment: work typically takes place either early or late in the day. Heat, humidity, and the absence of air movement in the densely planted henequen fields makes work both uncomfortable and unhealthy if performed at midday or during the early hours of the afternoon.

The effective plantation cultivation of henequen requires the careful integration of short-term and long-term planning. During each yearly cycle, care must be exercised in both the weeding and cutting operations. If the fields are not weeded, or if the worker is careless,

competing plants will lower the overall yield and quality of the fiber produced and make entry into the fields difficult for the cutters. If too many leaves are cut during the harvest cycle, the plant may be unable to withstand the long winter drought. Finally, if central stalks are not cut before they flower, the resulting release of pollen will trigger an entire field into a premature state of decline.

Long-term planning is associated with both the life-cycle of the henequen plant and the economics of plantation agriculture. To minimize fluctuation of returns from henequen, fields must be maintained in various stages of development. In the absence of large capital reserves or ready sources of long-term credit, it would be disastrous to plant all available fields at the same time. Income would be maximized during the productive years, only to be followed by several more years of unproductive investment in the clearing, re-planting and weeding operations.

Ex-Hacienda

Prior to 1937, the ejido lands and the community itself were part of the larger holdings of the Hacienda San Antonio. Together, these holdings formed an integrated production unit comprised of lands, labor, and a primary processing factory, or decorticator, which separates the fiber from the pulp and skin of the henequen leaf. As a type, Hacienda San Antonio fit the pattern of the engenho plantation, "the subculture of the workers on family-owned estates" (Wagley and Harris, 1974: 37). The owner's house on the hacienda, with its attached servant's quarters and chapel, formed the hub around which the social,

economic, political, and religious life of San Antonio revolved. The central core (casco) of the hacienda included the main house (casa principal), warehouses, corral, primary processing factory (desfibradora) and, immediately outside of the stone walls of the owner's gardens and orchard, the community of workers.

The relationship of the owner (hacendado or patrón) to the worker (peón) involved the qualities of both personalism and paternalism, a combination of benevolence and dominance. Throughout much of this period, Mayan workers received, in return for work performed on the hacienda, a house, a small plot of land to cultivate in their spare time, and "paper" wages in the form of a credit account at the hacienda store (tienda de raya or "company store"). Though debt peonage was officially abolished in 1914, the tienda de raya continued to inhibit out-migration by effectively preventing the necessary capital accumulation.

The patrón, or his administrators, not only controlled all aspects of the production of henequen fiber, but also regulated community life, rewarding loyal and diligent members and severely punishing those who acted contrary to the owner's image of "proper" productive and social behavior.

As an ex-hacienda, the people of San Antonio are still very much influenced by and dependent upon the descendent-heir of the original founder of the hacienda. Land reform reduced the size of the private holdings by approximately 80%, but the heirs were allowed to retain a few fields and the core area (casco) containing the major buildings and factory, all contiguous to the newly created, independent

ejido community of San Antonio. Because of these remnant holdings (the pequeña propiedad or "smallholding"), the ex-hacendado (now referred to as the pequeño propietario) continues to provide full and part-time employment for over half of the community.

The pequeño propietario provides financial assistance to the community which goes beyond simple payment of wages for work performed. In return for his individual loans and general community assistance, the owner has enhanced his own prestige and maintains a relationship with the ejidatarios that is reminiscent of the previous pattern of patrón/peón paternalism. Due to his continuing support of the community, the owner is known in Mérida as one who is progressive; he is known as one who does not bitterly fault the ejidatarios of San Antonio for the act of expropriation of the family hacienda.

Collective Ejido

By governmental decree, San Antonio is organized as an autonomous, collective ejido (ejido colectivo). Community members (ejidatarios) receive common usufruct rights to cooperatively exploit expropriated hacienda lands. The physical community of San Antonio was included among the expropriated lands and individual ejidatario heads of household receive rights to a lot (solar) and house. Officers are elected from among the membership of the ejido and are responsible for the organization of production and the internal governance of the ejido.

On an ideological level, the 1937 land reform program was designed to release the peons (acasillados) from their conditions of extreme poverty and social, political, and economic domination by the

landholding elite of Yucatán. One of the major goals of land reform concerned the planned transition of peasants and rural proletarians from the status of peón in a context of hacienda paternalism to that of independent agriculturalist who, at least potentially, would become a productive member of, and oriented towards, the national society. Toward these ends, the federal government promised financial, health, and educational assistance in addition to shared access to the newly created ejido community lands.

The contrast between the ideological goals of Cárdenas' program and the reality of "reform" in the henequen zone closely parallels Charles Erasmus' distinction between "agrarian reform" and "land-tenure reform" (1969: 30 - 31). Full implementation of the original "agrarian reform" program would not only have restructured the distribution of land ("land-tenure reform"), but also would have extended control over the means of production to the ejidatarios. Cárdenas planned to create "integrated agricultural and industrial units" (Cárdenas, 1937: 341), giving the ejidatarios land, federally supplied financial and technical assistance, and, more importantly, usufruct rights to, or outright ownership of, the fiber-producing, decorticating factories of the expropriated haciendas.

The rapidity of agrarian reform in the henequen zone resulted in an uneven distribution of lands of varying degrees of actual or potential productivity. The hacienda owners were allowed to select portions of land which would be legally respected as their remnant private landholdings (*pequeñas propiedades*) and most owners retained the central *casco* and fields which were in the early phases of the

productive cycle. The majority of the ejidos received either lands going out of production, lands recently planted, requiring several years of investment in weeding and maintenance operations without economic return, or lands which were totally uncultivated. A minority of the ejidos were classified as "rich ejidos" (Rodríguez, 1966: 276), as ejidos which had received sufficient lands in production to support the members and their families.

By 1938 Humberto Canto Echeverría, governor of Yucatan, usurped federal control and transformed the entire henequen zone into one single ejido (called "El Gran Ejido") which was to be administered by a State organization, Henequeneros de Yucatán (Henequeneros). In explaining his decision, Canto Echeverría made reference to a thesis expounded by the archaeologist Sylvanus Morley concerning the apparent practice of collective cultivation by the ancient Maya.

In his autobiographical narrative, Canto Echeverría stated: "When Doctor Morley stated his thesis and spoke to me of the form in which the Mayas collectively cultivated the land, there arose in me the notion that such procedures could be and should be applicable to the Yucatán of our time in order to resolve her agrarian problems." (Rodríguez, 1966: 274, my translation.)

Toward this end, Canto Echeverría returned most of the decorticator factories that had been expropriated (only 36 out of a total of 300 decorticators had actually been expropriated), organized Henequeneros to administer the regional allocation of work (ignoring the boundaries of individual ejidos) and to handle the processing, sale of the product, and the payment of wages and dividends to the ejidatarios. For the use of the decorticators, now in the hands of the original owners, Henequeneros paid the ex-hacendados 52% of the ejido fiber produced.

The ejidatarios, for their efforts in the cultivation, weeding, and harvesting of the leaves, received 48% of the fiber, less the costs of administration and the various commissions charged for the management of accounting and payment of the salaries of employees of Henequeneros (González Navarro, 1970: 267; Rodríguez, 1966: 279 - 280). Administration of Henequeneros resided in a council directed by the governor and made up principally of private producers and ejidatarios. The ex-hacendados received the benefits derived from the remaining small property holdings, plus as a return for the cost of decortication, over 50% of the fiber produced on lands previously belonging to them. They were, in effect, released from having to pay the workers' salaries and from the investment burden associated with planting and maintaining new fields.

During the period of control exerted by Henequeneros, the ejidos were viewed primarily as labor pools rather than defined population units associated with particular holdings of land. One author has concluded that the governor, through Henequeneros, transformed the henequen zone not into a "Gran Ejido" but, rather, into a "Gran Hacienda":

With the approval of the plan of April, 1938, the gran hacienda, with 50 thousand workers and 200 thousand hectares under cultivation, began to take shape. . . . These (initial) successes extended a smoke screen which hid the continuing and dominant bitter reality: the salaries and allotments of work, decreed by Henequeneros, had in no way improved the condition of the peasants. (Benítez, 1962: 136, my translation.)

In 1955, the Federal government ordered the dissolution of Henequeneros and re-established control over the ejido program through the National Ejido Credit Bank (Banjidal) and, after 1962, through the regional subsidiary Agrarian Bank of Yucatán (Bangrario). Ejido boundaries were

once again respected and ejidatarios were assigned work tasks at the level of their own ejidos rather than on a regional basis. The federal banks assumed productive control and management of the financial operation of the ejidos.

As an ejido, the community is conscious of the revolutionary agrarian reform ideology and the stated goal to integrate ejidatarios into the national economic and socio-political life of México. The people of San Antonio are also conscious of the fact that the means of production and marketing have remained under the control of a succession of private, state, and federal institutions. Lands have been redistributed, the legal status of the community of San Antonio has changed, but productive control, control of the means of production, remains outside of the jurisdiction of the ejidatarios of San Antonio.

Local Ejidal Credit Society

As a local credit society (sociedad local de crédito ejidal), the ejido is closely supervised by the Agrarian Bank of Yucatán (Bangrario). By 1970-1971 (the ethnographic present of this study), the ejido of San Antonio had accumulated a total debt of approximately \$500,000 pesos.³ As long as the ejido is unable to retire the debt, it remains under the strict control of the Bangrario and economic or productive autonomy remain an impossibility. In terms of the contractual arrangement between the ejido and the Bangrario, the ejido remains a "client" of the bank for the duration of its indebtedness.

For the duration of the contractual period, the Bangrario assumes control over the cultivation, harvesting, processing, and

marketing of henequen. The ejido receives a weekly allotment sheet which dictates the number of leaves to be harvested, the number of mecates⁴ to be weeded, cleared, or replanted, the amount of work assigned for the repair of field walls and access roads, etc. In the name of the ejido, the Bangrario also contracts for the decortication of leaves and arranges for the transport, storage, and final sale of the fiber in Mérida.

The Bangrario maintains both short-term (avío) and long-term (refaccionario) loan accounts for the ejido. Short-term loans are extended weekly for payment of assigned work related to the yearly production cycle and the maintenance of the henequen fields. Work that is related to the longer life-cycle of the plant (clearing, planting new fields, etc.) is charged against the long-term loan account of the ejido. At the end of the fiscal year, the Bangrario calculates the total earnings from the sale of fiber and deducts the administrative and other charges (processing, marketing, etc.) from the total. The remainder of the earnings, by priority, are used to cancel the short-term interest and principal and the interest and principal payment due on the long-term account. After these deductions, any excess is to be returned to the ejido for distribution to the ejidatarios as "profit." Because of the extent of indebtedness, the ejidatarios of San Antonio receive no profits and, accordingly, refer to the weekly loans as simply "wages."

Provisions of the contract with the Bangrario prohibit independent or autonomous use of henequen fields by the ejidatarios. Since the ejidatarios receive money only for assigned work, expansion or

alteration of productive activities is not possible. The control exerted by the bank over the processing and marketing of the fiber makes unlawful any attempt to circumvent governmental restrictions through independent agreements or efforts on the part of the ejidatarios.

Perceptions concerning the institutional control of ejidos by the Bangrario vary with the perspective of the observer. Based on the fluctuation of world market prices for henequen and competition from synthetic fibers, the government believes that the survival of the henequen industry depends upon complete control over all phases of production and marketing. On the local level, in order to minimize suspicions of graft and favoritism, the Bangrario emphasizes impersonalistic relations through the periodic rotation of field representatives. At the community level, the ejidatarios of San Antonio see themselves as captive wage-laborers in the employ of a faceless, bureaucratic patrón rather than an actual hacendado.

One of the primary objectives of this study of San Antonio is to analyze the combined effects of land reform and institutional control on an ex-hacienda community. Of particular interest are the ways in which San Antonio has adapted to and been altered by the contradictions of reform ideology⁵ and the dual reality of restrictive federal control and the powerful presence of the heir to the remnant holdings and the decorticating factory of Hacienda San Antonio.

Land Reform in the Henequen Zone: Research and Critiques

Given the significance of the economic importance, over the last century, of henequen for the state and the nation, it is curious

that research in Yucatán has all but ignored the plantation haciendas of the northern ecozone of that state. In the earlier studies of Steggerda (1941), Redfield and Villa Rojas (1934) and Redfield (1941), the search for Mayan "Indians" and "folk culture" led those authors conspicuously away from the henequen haciendas of northern Yucatán.⁶ Early impressions of the haciendas vary from the journalist Turner's expressions of shock and dismay concerning the mistreatment of plantation slaves at the hands of the landowners (1911: 7 - 28), to the resultant pacific tranquility of the hacienda which the Archaeologist Morley apparently found so conducive for writing (1956: viii).

More recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in Yucatán in general, and the henequen zone in particular, by both Mexican and U.S. anthropologists.⁷ Shirley Deshon, for example, analyzed patterns of social interaction and fictive kinship (compadrazgo) in an ex-hacienda community (Deshon, 1963). While she described aspects of the ejido structure of Mukui-il (Deshon, 1959), her main focus was oriented towards the status and roles of women in a Mayan plantation (ex-hacienda) community. Roland Chardon, a cultural geographer, examined patterns of land tenure and production (1961) among private landowners (ex-hacendados) and the community and town ejidos. Chardon concluded that because land reform had resulted in productive inefficiency and disorganization in the henequen zone, the ejido should be abandoned and the henequen hacienda reinstated as the basic unit of production (1963: 192 - 193).

One anthropologist, Nathaniel Raymond (1971), has presented an extensive analysis of the historical development of the henequen

region and land reform in Yucatán. In his study, special reference is given to the groups that have variously controlled or attempted to control the monocrop production of fiber: private landowners, entrepreneurs, the state and federal governments, and the U.S. based, International Harvester Company. Unlike Chardon, Raymond does not view the ejido program as a failure, but maintains that in Yucatán, the program did not lead to "reform" at all. Land reform altered the structure of the units of production, through the creation of ejidos and the expropriation of large landholdings, but without altering either the mode of production or, at least from the worker's point of view, the structure of access to, and control over, the means of production (Raymond, 1968). While Chardon attributed lowered productive efficiency in the ejidal sector to the general inability of the workers to accept the necessary responsibilities with regard to organization and work effort, Raymond views lowered productivity and extreme factionalization of a town ejido as resulting from a prematurely arrested land reform program and the subsequent manipulation of ejidatarios by external, special interest groups. Utilizing, as discussed earlier, the terminological distinctions of Charles Erasmus (1969: 30 - 31), Yucatán seems to have experienced a program of land-tenure reform, redistribution of land, rather than agrarian reform and the associated total restructuring of the social, political, and economic organization of the agrarian sector.

Rather than view the general ejido land reform program as "Mexico's Way Out" (Simpson, 1937), critics of agrarian reform in Mexico, like Chardon in Yucatán, base their conclusions on the analysis of

aggregate statistics concerning demographic and productive characteristics of ejidos and private holdings (*pequeñas propiedades*). Whetten, for example, viewed the Mexican ejidos as primarily non-commercial, subsistence-oriented, agricultural communities which had the potential to contribute to the growth of the national economy, but which were hampered by the small scale of production, a general lack of capital, and an emphasis on individual rather than collective cultivation (Whetten, 1948: 214, 243 - 249). Whetten, along with other critics, felt that the ejido program functioned primarily as a device of political expediency, designed to pacify the peasant's desire for land. Based on his analysis of the 1940 census data, Whetten suggested that the economic future of Mexico rested upon the continued support of the more commercially-oriented, and productively successful, private landholding units.

Since the release of the 1960 census material, major rebuttals have been leveled against the criticisms of the Mexican land reform program.⁸ Lucio Mendieta y Nuñez (1968: 514) and Francois Chevalier (1967: 166) criticize the over-reliance of many investigators on the published statistics concerning land reform, development, and economic productivity. Both authors call attention to the fact that until recently, methods of data collection and quantification have been far from standardized. In addition, Chevalier argues that the statistics obscure many factors which inhibit intensive production for the national market, factors that are beyond the control of the ejidatarios themselves. Among these, Chevalier notes that ejido land is rarely the best land in a given region. Irrigated lands, specifically, have most

often remained in the hands of private owners. With respect to the statistical "fact" of inferior per capita market production in the ejidal sector, Chevalier notes that there is often a large "hidden" population which, by virtue of its extended kin relationships to the legally entitled ejidatario, is dependent for subsistence on a typically small portion of land and, therefore, a smaller portion of the harvest enters the marketplace.

Chevalier argues that ejido agricultural production is significant, but that the effect on the national market economy actually becomes dissipated when one considers the problems of over-population and resultant poverty. Over-population and an environment of governmental "neo-paternalism" and dominance results in the stagnation of ejidos and the decline of innovative and productive efforts on the part of subordinated ejidatarios (1967: 194).

Criticisms of the land reform program in Yucatán, in that they stress over-population and underproduction, are similar to those leveled against the Mexican reform programs in general. Examination of aggregate statistics concerning henequen production in the state of Yucatán seems to support the conclusion that private holdings are more productive than ejidos. A planning report issued prior to the 1970 presidential elections by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (P.R.I., n.d.)⁹ noted that of the total number of henequen ejidos, 10% operated with a margin of profit, 40% were barely able to cover expenses, and 50% operated at a loss, requiring continuing subsidies from the Bangrario. Production figures in the P.R.I. report indicate that

for 1969, production per hectare was significantly lower in the ejidal sector (542 kg./hectare) than in the private sector (1,200 kg./hectare).¹⁰

The P.R.I. report also compares ejido demographic structure at the time of the 1937 land reform (32,000 families with total holdings of 180,000 hectares), with the structure in 1969 (71,400 families on 205,000 hectares). During this period, the average family share dropped from 5.6 hectares to 2.9 hectares and, according to the P.R.I. estimate, has resulted in approximately 30,000 families living in a condition of "disguised unemployment" in the henequen zone.

The Banco de Comercio (of Mexico), in a 1969 report on the economy of Yucatán, closely paralleled the P.R.I. assessment:

It is generally accepted in Yucatán that the pequeña propiedad has been more productive than the ejido. This is confirmed by both the statistics and the physical appearance of the (henequen) fields. (Banco de Comercio, 1969: 30, my translation.)

In subsequent paragraphs the Banco de Comercio described both quantitative and qualitative differences which show the ejido to be inferior to the private holdings in both production and the costs of production. In a brief attempt to account for these differences, the authors stated that:

To a certain extent, the ejidatarios' lack of incentives is due to peasant overpopulation and the paternalistic attitude of the (Bangrario) authorities. (Banco de Comercio, 1969: 30, my translation.)

Further comparison of aggregate statistics from diverse sources seems to confound rather than clarify. The 1960 National Agrarian Census summary (Census, 1965: 413) on henequen production in Yucatán (Table 1) presents a different assessment of ejido production as compared with that on private holdings. Table 2 (below) further summarizes statistical differences in the percentage of land in production that is controlled

TABLE 1.--Annual Henequen Production.¹¹

Production/Hectare ^a (1960)	Ejidos	Private Holdings (Over 5 Hectares)
Leaves Harvested	45,000	44,590
Value of Fiber (Pesos)	\$1,874.64	\$1,694.52

^aSource: Census, 1965: 413.

TABLE 2.--Ejido Landholdings and Production.¹²

Per Cent of State Total	1960 ^a	1963-1967 ^b	1969 ^c
Ejido Holdings in Production	73.4%	70%	74.5%
Ejido Henequen Production	75.3%	63%	57.5%

^aNational Agrarian Census (Census, 1965: 413).

^bBanco de Comercio, 1969: 30.

^cP.R.I., n.d.

by ejidos and the percentage of total henequen production represented as deriving from those ejido holdings.

An examination of the figures (cf. Tables 1 and 2) demonstrates an apparent decline in ejido production and an associated increase in the share of production on private holdings. Assuming the figures are accurate, one might conclude that factors other than simple ejido inefficiency are significant. During the period 1955 to 1970, a number of institutional changes occurred relative to control over ejido production and the marketing of fiber. With the 1955 dissolution of

Henequeneros, the National Ejidal Credit Bank (Banjidal) controlled the henequen ejidos until it was replaced, in 1962, by the subsidiary Agrarian Bank of Yucatán (Bangrario). The latter institution, as already noted, has exerted an absolute monopoly over production on a large number of indebted ejidos. By 1964, the federal government extended its monopoly to include the manufacture of henequen products through the acquisition of controlling interest in the unified manufacturing complex of CORDEMEX (Cordeleros de México) in Mérida. This industrial complex receives fiber from both ejido and private producers and manufactures cordage and other products for internal and export markets. The government has invested a great deal of capital to centralize, modernize, and diversify product processing, manufacturing, and marketing. In order to reduce production costs, CORDEMEX has consistently rated ejido fiber as low in quality and paid accordingly low prices to its chief supplier, the Bangrario. The effects of this practice are felt in both a lowered income to ejidos for a given quantity of fiber and a statistical bias which officially characterizes ejido fiber as of conspicuously low quality. A further statistical bias, prejudicial against apparent ejido productivity, results from the lowered prices paid by CORDEMEX, and the Bangrario practice of absorbing, as payment on outstanding debts, all monies in excess of wage-payment that are derived from the sale of fiber. Reportedly, ejidatarios, singly and as groups, have sold fiber surreptitiously to the private land owners. This sosquil de luna, "midnight fiber" (Rodríguez, 1966: 290), or fuga de pencas, "escaping leaves" (Raymond, 1971: 158), since it is listed as part of the private landowner's

harvest, tends to inflate productivity figures related to the private sector, and deflate the apparent productivity of the ejidal sector in Yucatán.

The Study of an Ex-Hacienda,
Plantation Community

The ejido of San Antonio exists in an extremely restrictive physical and cultural environment. The physical environment is restrictive in the limited amount of land available to the community for commercial production. Land reform affected the region surrounding San Antonio in a way that makes further expansion of community holdings an impossibility. The community is surrounded by lands belonging to towns and private owners and which are within the allowable limit imposed by the Agrarian Code of Mexico. Land, the basic resource, must be considered as non-expandable, as fixed and in limited supply. The cultural environment is restrictive most obviously in terms of the economics of production and distribution. The Bangrario and CORDEMEX, together, constitute a governmental monopoly which controls the means to both production and marketing, determining both the amount and type of work to be authorized on the local level and the amount of return to be allowed for productive efforts.

From the perspective of the individual ejidatario family, the economic environment is not merely restrictive, but is actually shrinking in terms of relative income and assigned shares of the total work allocated. At the time of land reform, in 1937, there were a total of 44 adult males legally entitled to be registered as members of the newly created ejido of San Antonio. Under the provisions of the Mexican

Agrarian Code, dotation of expropriated lands was calculated on the basis of four hectares per certified ejidatario plus, in the case of San Antonio, an additional unit to support the community school and thirteen units of additional land to adjust for future population expansion; a total of 58, four hectare units to be exploited collectively by the ejidatarios. By 1970, the number of certified and eligible ejidatarios in San Antonio had increased to 84 and the Agrarian Code, since 1943, has specified a minimum of ten hectares as necessary to adequately support an ejidatario and his family. Along with a general increase in population, the absolute number of ejidatarios has increased in San Antonio, while the original dotation has been officially redefined as inadequate to support even the number of ejidatarios living in San Antonio at the time land reform was instituted.

The ejido of San Antonio exists as part of what Eric Wolf generally refers to as an "administrative domain" in which the state "claims ultimate sovereignty over the land, and . . . affects agricultural production as well as the disposal of its produce" (Wolf, 1966: 57). In order to enhance their own economic and social position within the monocrop henequen zone, the ejidatarios continue to function as a labor pool within the "mercantile domain" (Wolf, 1966: 53) of the private smallholder or *pequeño propietario*. The combination of external control and influence and internal pressures of population growth and associated poverty, has created for the people of San Antonio not a "view," nor an "image," but a realistic assessment of "their total environment--as one in which all of the desired things in life . . . exist in finite quantity and are always in short supply" (Foster, 1967: 304). Rather than

transforming the community into invidious, competitive familial segments, this assessment has contributed to the existence of varying levels of collective action for the benefit of the community in general, and both fluidity and flexibility in patterns of intra-community alliances and actions that have actual or potential adaptive value. Within the institutional and historical context of San Antonio, it is this flexibility in adaptation, the inner dynamic of San Antonio, that is the subject of this study of an ejido de acasillados in the henequen plantation zone of Yucatán.

Fieldwork and Methodology

The initial period of fieldwork (June to August, 1970) was devoted to our participation in the Mérida-based team project directed by Professor Fernando Cámara B., of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (I.N.A.H.) and Professors Scott Cook and Joseph Spielberg of the Department of Anthropology, Michigan State University. Involvement in this project, itself an educational experience, provided the opportunity to exchange information and ideas with the host-country professionals and students participating in the project, to engage in background research, and to conduct a site survey. It was at the end of this period that the ex-hacienda community was selected, by myself and my spouse, for more intensive study and analysis. We resided in the community of San Antonio from the middle of August, 1970, until June of 1971.

To provide a base-line study for later comparative research concerning proletarian adaptation and the effects of agrarian reform

in Latin America, it was decided that an ex-hacienda, plantation ejido community would be selected for detailed analysis. San Antonio fit the major criteria and provided the opportunity to study patterns of interaction between a proletarian population (the ejido community), a controlling governmental agency (the Bangrario), and an extremely influential member of the private sector (the pequeño propietario, present owner of the residual holdings and descendant of the original founder of Hacienda San Antonio).

The availability of a residence in the community affected, to some extent, the selection of San Antonio. It was found that in instances where local housing was available, it usually was associated with community outmigration to nearby towns and, therefore, a general depopulation of the ex-hacienda community. In many of the cases surveyed, workers could migrate to the towns, enjoy conveniences such as electricity, increased availability of health care, and ease of transportation access to Mérida, and still retain their rights as members of the proximal hacienda ejido. Since San Antonio was still a viable community, no local housing was available. Fortunately, the owner of the residual holdings, who himself resided in Mérida, very graciously offered the use of his relatively modest casa principal (owner's house) which, until our arrival, had been utilized as a warehouse for excess henequen fiber.

The generosity, interest, and support demonstrated by the pequeño propietario initially heightened the reserve and suspicion with which we were treated by the members of the ejido community. The people initially assumed that we were either employees of the

Mexican government, employees of the pequeño propietario himself, or his relatives. As we continued to reside in San Antonio and interact with members and their families, rapport increased and most of the initial suspicion and reservation decreased significantly.

As a part of the I.N.A.H./M.S.U. Summer Project, we were requested to administer, early in the fieldwork period, a census questionnaire to the various heads of household in the community. Respondents seemed cooperative but it later became clear that the informants, not yet sure of our role in the community, had withheld or underestimated a considerable amount of information. Several months after the questionnaires had been coded and filed with I.N.A.H., informants began to volunteer information which they "had forgotten" at the time of the original census. To correct some of these inaccuracies and to provide supplementary information, each household was revisited near the end of the fieldwork period. The objectives of the second visit were (1) to cross-check and verify genealogical relationships, (2) to gather specific information concerning the selection of coparents (compadres) and godparents (padrinos), (3) and to review and correct, where necessary, information collected during the initial community census.

Data obtained from participant observation, informant interviews, and the survey questionnaires, were supplemented through the examination and recording of various documents and archival materials pertinent to San Antonio in particular and the henequen zone in general. A number of local production records were made available by both the officials of the ejido and the manager of the pequeña propiedad of

San Antonio. Ejido archives included Bangrario work allotment statements and bills of lading only for the period from 1966 through 1968. Work records retained by ejido officials were available for additional periods and this allowed, in the absence of official Bangrario statements, for at least a partial reconstruction of productive trends and characteristic features of henequen fields and plantings on the ejido. The owner of the pequeña propiedad, the private holdings, made available documents (D.I.S.A.) relevant to the pre-reform tactics of resistance employed by the Hacienda owner and the post-reform transfers of the ownership which culminated in the present descendant's control of the pequeña propiedad.

Officials in many governmental agencies cooperated in making available documents pertinent to understanding the history of San Antonio and the kinds of changes that have occurred prior to, and subsequent to, land reform. The Director of the Maax Civil Registry office allowed municipal birth, death, and marriage records to be examined and copied. He assisted voluntarily in indentifying particularly faded or otherwise illegible entries. These records are important in that they provide significant information relative to the kinds of demographic changes that have occurred coincident with changes in labor reform and land reform legislation in Yucatán. The municipal records also provided invaluable information which allowed for the reconstruction of patterns of consanguineal and affinal relations, in the case of some families, back to the middle of the last century.

Officials of the Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización, the federal agency responsible for regulating the

organizational structure of ejidos, completely opened their archival materials relative to the ejidos of San Antonio, Maax, and Xamach. These files contained boundary maps, copies of the presidential resolutions implementing land reform, reports and statements by field agents of the institution, and letters and other documents relative to elections and reported local disputes. The federal office of the Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería (S.A.G.), which retains administrative control over the DAAC office, provided copies of general production totals and prices obtained for fiber by rural producers, on a regional basis. Letters of introduction requested by Professor Fernando Cámara B., and provided by Don Carlos Loret de Mola, Governor of the State of Yucatán, assisted greatly in providing a legitimate basis for access to information maintained by various state and federal agencies.

Of the various institutions, only the Bangrario proved intractable. A detailed record of the accumulation of the massive ejido debt was never released either to myself or to the ejidatarios of San Antonio. The office of the Bangrario was visited repeatedly throughout the twelve month period of fieldwork, but usually with the same negative results. It was near the end of the fieldwork period, after visiting the Bangrario with officials from the ejido of San Antonio, that an interview was granted with the Director and Sub-Director of that institution and minimal financial summaries were released to this investigator.

Since we had the only vehicle in the community, we were able to provide a service to the community and our automobile was frequently

used to take community members to visit doctors in nearby towns or to the ejido hospital in Mérida. From the first emergency trip to the last, a sequence of interaction became established and, without fail, repeated. Upon returning to the community, the infirmed or a close family member would ask "how much" they owed for the trip and the favor. Hearing the reply, "nothing," the individuals would appear to be uncomfortable as they left the vehicle and returned to their houses. The discomfort was clearly related to the fact that, given the general unavailability of cash in the community, the only alternative to cash payment for services would be obligatory reciprocity. Following a trip to visit a doctor in a nearby town, a family would offer items (usually comestibles: condiments, soft drinks, or a small packet of tortillas) as symbolic repayment (in the context of reciprocity) for services rendered. In a few cases, such as one which involved a trip to the ejido hospital in Mérida (beginning at 2:00 a.m.) and which involved several hours waiting for the appearance of a doctor, the diagnosis, and news regarding the severity of the illness, community members would determine that even a symbolic repayment was beyond their means to reciprocate. In these cases, the principals would acknowledge the service and their inability to reciprocate, even symbolically, with the phrase "Dios se lo pague!" "God will repay you!"

A photographic darkroom was set up in our house and photographic prints were frequently given as gifts to informants and key families cooperating in the study. The photographs, as with the use of the vehicle, were not viewed as compensation for time they gave up to the

anthropologist but, rather, were viewed as "gifts" initiating a personalized relationship of reciprocity. Invariably, the gifts of prints would result in counter prestations of, again, comestibles.

In an attempt to balance debts of reciprocity incurred during the ten months in San Antonio, my wife and myself decided to devote one evening to a slide show of pictures we had taken of the community and the people, and to provide refreshments to everyone attending. The ejido officials and friends assisted in the organization of the "show" and helped me to whitewash one outside wall of the community school to be used as a screen. The pequeño propietario loaned a projector and the local school teacher and his students organized a series of dances as intermission entertainment. Invitations were extended to all members of the community, the pequeño propietario and his family, the parish priest, and the municipal president of Maax. The slide show seemed to be a success and, following its termination, I produced a few bottles of rum to further compensate the friends who had assisted in organizing the affair.

My desire to make the show a final "gift" to the community failed; we were not to be so easily released from the obligatory network of reciprocity. A few nights later, after we had retired to our hammocks, a serenade began outside of our bedroom window. Looking out, we discovered that community families had brought refreshments, hired two guitarists from Maax, and proceeded to present us with a tremendously enjoyable despedida (farewell party) which lasted well into the morning of the next day.

It was our privilege to have lived in San Antonio, to have been able to share experiences with the families and friends of this ejido community, and to have been included in a social network of obligatory ties which effectively communicates a desire to continue the amicable and personalized relations established through reciprocity.

It is not clear precisely when the transition was made from our initial status of suspected strangers to the more enjoyable status of foreign friends. The transition itself, undoubtedly, was a gradual process but, nevertheless, one particular event indicated to me that the change had definitely occurred. Early in the second half of the fieldwork period, Filo, then president of the ejido of San Antonio, invited me to accompany him and some friends to a fiesta in the municipal center of Maax. While seated at a table in the Maax plaza, and enjoying a few beers, Filo began to converse with some town dwellers seated at the next table. After a few minutes, one of the men gestured towards me and asked Filo who I was. Filo looked at me and smiled, turned back to face the man from Maax, and replied, "Oh, he's our anthropologist."

CHAPTER I--FOOTNOTES

¹"San Antonio" is a pseudonym for the actual community studied in Yucatán. Pseudonyms are used throughout this dissertation to disguise the precise location of San Antonio and to protect the privacy of key informants.

²Spanish terms are underlined and defined only when initially used in the dissertation. Similarly, titles and abbreviations for key federal and state institutions are underlined only with respect to their initial appearance. For the convenience of the reader, the terms and abbreviations are also defined in the "LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS" and in the "GLOSSARY."

³The debt is expressed in pesos ("Moneda Nacional") and apparently accumulated during the period of administrative control exerted by the Banjidal (1955-1962). Both the ejidatarios and this investigator attempted to discover how and precisely when this debt was incurred, but to no avail. By the time I left San Antonio, in the summer of 1971, the ejido had still not received fiscal statements from the Bangrario for either 1969 or 1970.

⁴"Mecate" refers to a unit of land measuring 20 meters by 20 meters, 25 mecates to the hectare.

⁵Speeches by politicians and officials, that deal with the henequen zone, do not fail to refer to some aspect of reform ideology and the ejido. The following example is taken from a speech delivered by the Mexican Secretary of Agriculture, at the ejidatarios' "Casa del Pueblo" (C.N.C.), upon the occasion of the inauguration of the Banco Agrario de Yucatan:

Esta es, compañeros campesinos, a grande rasgos, LA NUEVA REFORMA AGRARIA DE YUCATAN que está siendo puesta en marcha por el Presidente López Mateos.

La integración de una economía más humana, más técnica, más nacional; la integración vertical del ejido hacia etapas de la industria, hace que el pan se reparta en mejor forma, que haya mejor justicia social en Yucatán. Muchas Gracias. (Puga y Castillo, 1962: 13)

⁶For a position that is especially critical of Redfield's ahistoricism, see Strickon (1965).

⁷As noted elsewhere, the study of San Antonio began as part of a combined team project sponsored by the Mexican I.N.A.H. and the M.S.U. Department of Anthropology.

⁸In terms of the national ejido program of Mexico, a major rebuttal is provided to critics by F. Dovring, an agricultural economist. Dovring compared the 1960 census on agricultural production with the previous census periods of 1940 and 1950. Controlling for inequities such as patterns of land distribution, Dovring (1969: 21-22) arrived at the conclusion that:

If permanent crops are kept separate from crops on arable land, then the ejidos registered a rate of gain in permanent crops in the first decade (1940-1950) that differed less from that of the farms over 5 hectares than was true of total crops; and in the second decade, (1950-1960) the rate was actually higher than on the larger farms. Since the land and the farm labor are free goods, from the viewpoint of the national economy, it appears that small-scale, labor-intensive production is less costly than large-scale production . . . (and) it is quite clear that the land reform has in no way impaired the economic development of Mexico.

⁹The P.R.I. report was located in the library of the Banco Agrario de Yucatán. No date of publication was listed, but I estimate that the report appeared sometime in early 1970.

¹⁰The latter category includes both parcelarios (individual holders of small plots of land) and pequeños propietarios (owners of the residual hacienda estates).

¹¹The figures included in Table 1, are my calculations based on information concerning the total number of ejidal and private hectares in production, the total number of leaves harvested by each sector, and the total value of each sector's share of the harvest. This information is contained in the Fourth National Agrarian and Ejido Census of 1960 (Census, 1965: 413).

¹²The percentages included in Table 2, are calculated on the basis of shares of land in production, the number of leaves harvested, and the shares of kilograms of fiber produced by the ejidal and private sectors. The figures are not strictly comparable but, as noted earlier in this chapter, this is not an unusual problem when one attempts to compare statistical data from diverse sources and for different time periods. Working backwards, using the figure of 45 thousand-leaves (millares de pencas) from the Agrarian Census, and using the P.R.I. figure of 1,200 kilograms per hectare produced in the private sector, one arrives at a calculated figure of approximately 27 kilograms per millar of leaves, an average yield that would be considered only slightly lower than achieved by the pequeña propiedad of San Antonio (about 28 kilograms per millar).

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING

Introduction

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Introduction

This chapter examines selected dimensions of the general setting, the cultural and ecological context of contemporary San Antonio. A temporal perspective complements the descriptive material, providing an analytic framework and a more general understanding of factors which have contributed to the formation of San Antonio as observed during the fieldwork period.

The first two sections of this chapter include a general overview of key physical and biotic features of the northern ecozone of Yucatán. Geological and climatological characteristics have affected the distribution and concentration of population in the state and have contributed to the present prominence of henequen production and the relative absence of productive diversification in this zone of the State of Yucatán.

The next section summarizes major stages in the development of henequen fiber production and the associated shift from a mixed subsistence economy of cattle and corn to labor intensive plantations and singular dependence on an export-oriented economy. This transformation of henequen into the "oro verde" or "green gold" of Yucatán is associated historically with the major effects of semi-industrialization, an increasing international demand for fiber products, and the aftermath of a devastating Mayan peasant rebellion (the Caste War of Yucatán). A brief glimpse at Yucatecan history points to a distinctiveness, a separateness of Yucatán, apparent from the early post-conquest, a colonial period, within the national sector of Mexico.

The final sections of this chapter describe the setting of the community of San Antonio. The first presents a set of images concerning the physical community. The types and distribution of structures in San Antonio point to the past hacienda system of exploitation and to the continued presence and influence of the owner-heir of the semi-industrialized, remnant holdings (the *pequeña propiedad*) of Hacienda San Antonio. The second of these sections examines some of the implications of the demographic structure and background of the ejido population. In part, the local perception of social and economic difficulties (low income, poor health, etc.) matches the more formal analyses which attribute these problems to a decline in the demand for natural fibers in the world market and the existence of a "localized overpopulation" in the henequen zone (Cámara B., 1958; de la Peña, 1964: 597). The demographic analysis of San Antonio and the larger municipality of Maax to which the community belongs, constitutes an exploration of the roots of this "overpopulation" and an attempt to reconstruct the more general demographic consequences of changes which have occurred during the pre- and post agrarian reform periods of this century.

In a most literal sense, this chapter describes "the setting." The organization of this chapter serves to set the ejido community of San Antonio in the context of external and internal factors significant to the analysis and interpretation of contemporary behavior. "The setting" of San Antonio places it within a cultural-ecological matrix of physical, economic, social, political, and historical dimensions.

The Northern Ecozone of Yucatán

The Yucatecan peninsula can perhaps be most economically described as simply a "low-lying plain . . . made up of horizontal limestone formations of relatively recent age" (James, 1959: 599). This characterization is succinct, yet has important consequences for the populace and economy of especially the northern zone of the State of Yucatán¹ (cf. Figure 1).

Despite an average annual rainfall of about 1,000 millimeters, (Table 3), this northern region is quite arid throughout much of the year. Vegetation varies from the tropical rainforest formation of the southern and eastern parts of the peninsula to a dry, low scrub brush or thicket zone in the northern part of the state (Wagner 1964: 258). Rainfall is heaviest during the months of June through September, with the winter months typically lacking in precipitation. Rainstorms in this semi-tropical zone are predictably torrential and brief. Limestone outcroppings abound and the relatively recent age of this plain results in a sparse and thin layer of poor soils. The water table is usually three to seven meters below the surface and while underground currents seem abundant, the porosity of the limestone shelf, together with the absence of geological relief, results in a conspicuous lack of streams or standing water.

Occasionally, natural sinks or depressions in the limestone expose the ground water in natural wells or cenotes. Temple and village sites of the ancient Mayan civilization, Spanish colonial settlements, and many contemporary towns in Yucatán are logically clustered around the natural cenote wells. Even though water lies

Figure 1.--The Peninsula of Yucatán.

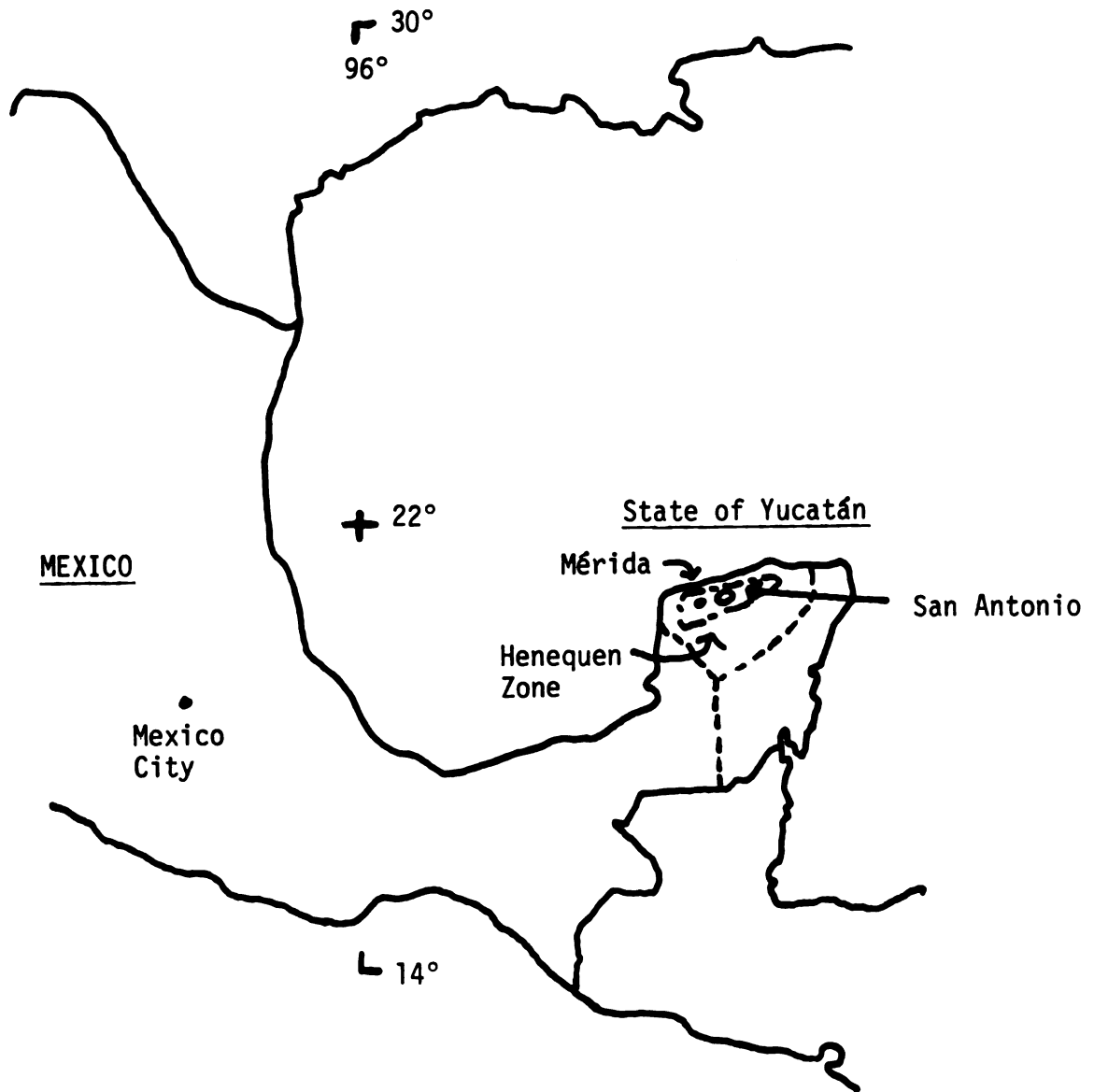


TABLE 3.--Climatological Data for Mérida, Yucatán.^a

Month (1969)	Median (°C) Temperature	Precipitation (mm.)	Relative Humidity
January	23.7	10.5	73
February	24.1	9.7	68
March	24.5	30.2	68
April	28.2	20.8	67
May	28.7	83.7	73
June	29.0	95.5	73
July	28.0	110.4	75
August	28.0	110.4	75
September	26.5	305.6	83
October	27.4	37.3	80
November	23.9	17.0	72
December	23.1	--	61
Annual	26.2 (Ave.)	1,102.9 (Total)	72 (Ave.)

^aDirección General de Planeación, 1970: 20.

generally only a few meters below the surface, the limestone forms a crude concrete which makes the hand digging of wells an extremely laborious and time-consuming activity. The introduction of gunpowder and steel tools by the Spaniards, however, made water more accessible during the colonial period and, accordingly, led to an expansion in the number and location of settlements.

The poor and scarce nature of the soils, together with the general porosity of the limestone, preclude the usual forms of irrigation and plow agriculture in northern Yucatán. Small house gardens, for example, are seeded with the use of a digging stick and the sprouted or mature plants must be watered individually using a bucket or, if an

electric or gasoline-powered pump is available, with a hose. The sinking of a well involves more than merely exposing the water table and unless one strikes a good "vein" of water, the well is likely to have only a limited capacity. Wells that are to be used in pump irrigation often must go deeper into the water table and the resulting cavity used primarily as a slowly-filling reservoir.

Subsistence Potential

Slash-and-burn cultivation of corn (milpa agriculture) is still practiced by some in this semi-arid northern area, but the results are too unreliable and unproductive for commercial purposes. The few remaining milperos continue in the hope that their efforts will supplement meager incomes derived from the cultivation of the fiber-producing henequen plant. Rainfall seems adequate for milpa cultivation but, in fact, rains are often unpredictable and discontinuous during especially the initial part of the planting season. A milpero must cut the brush covering, let it dry, and burn it before the start of the summer rains. If the clearing of the field is started too late in the season, the brush will not dry sufficiently to burn. If the first rains of the season are premature, the milpero may see his newly sprouted corn wither during the period of drought that often follows.

The devastating effects of the unpredictable alternation between drought, heavy rains, and cyclones are reflected in the major famines documented for the colonial period by Ricardo Molina Hübbe in his work, Las Hambres de Yucatán (1941). Based on information provided by Chardon (1961) and others, Kurjack concludes (1971: 74-77) that with regard to subsistence milpa agriculture, this northern zone has by far

the lowest carrying capacity of the Mayan area (including the whole of the Yucatecan peninsula and the Guatemalan Petén).

Mexico, Yucatán, and the "Oro Verde"

Crossing Mexico, traveling to Yucatán, one's senses are flooded with a plethora of diverse images. From the arid north, through the verdant mountains of Puebla, to the lush vegetation of the Gulf Coast and the Bay of Campeche, one is continuously awed by the color and physiognomy of Mexico. Diversity and richness of musical styles impress one with the plaintive sounds of the rancheros and corridos of the north, the brilliance of the mariachi bands of central and eastern Mexico, and the pulsating rhythms of the marimbas of Veracruz and Tabasco. While one recognizes regional diversity, there is nevertheless a feeling of some communality, of some unity which makes this all "Mexican."

Passing through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and continuing along the lowlands of the Gulf Coast, one passes the ancient Mayan ruins of Palenque, nestled in the shadows of the northern escarpment of the impressive highlands of the State of Chiapas. Continuing through Campeche, relief becomes less and less pronounced until finally, pausing at the summit of the final Puuc or range of hills, one gets his first view of the flat, ashen expanse of the State of Yucatán.

From the beginnings of the colonial period, Yucatán differed from the rest of Mexico. Francisco de Montejo and his army of Spanish Conquistadores were frustrated by a protracted war of conquest in Yucatán and disillusioned by the total absence of mineral and other

riches found in central Mexico. In Yucatán, Montejo found instead a series of independent Mayan states and confederations flexible enough to form the fluid alliances that effectively resisted the incursions of foreign invaders.

In central Mexico, Cortés had a dual advantage which was denied Montejo. Cortés was viewed by many of the subjugated groups as a powerful and prophesized liberator from the oppression of Aztec imperial rule. Most importantly, Cortés was able to conquer and dominate the Aztec bureaucratic system without really destroying the network of control. Montejo had no central focus for his efforts of conquest, no single group or individual leader that he could defeat to secure the peninsula. In addition Montejo was opposed by Gonzalo Guerrero, a Spaniard shipwrecked off Yucatán sixteen years prior to the arrival of Montejo who had adapted himself to indigenous life in Yucatán. Guerrero assisted Mayans in their militant opposition to the forces of Montejo, convincing the Mayans that conquistador and horse were separate creatures and, more importantly, defeatable (Chamberlain 1948: 4, 15).

Lacking the mineral riches encountered by Cortés, Montejo and his conquistadores turned to the exploitation of the land and the human resources. The Spanish Crown awarded the conquerors grants of territory in trust (encomienda) which entitled the holder (encomendero) to exact tribute in the form of labor and material products from all indigenous communities (encomendados) within the territory of the encomienda.

As in other areas under the control of the Spanish Crown, there were pressures from the beginning to change the grants from the temporary tribute-rights of the *encomienda* system to a concept of rights to territory and populations as family holdings--holdings viewed as part of an inheritable patrimony. Private estates, or *haciendas*, existed de facto from the early stages of the period of colonial control over the peninsula, but it was not until 1785 that the *encomienda* system was finally de jure terminated in Yucatán (Strickon 1965: 42-43).

The southern part of the peninsula, with its deeper and more fertile soils and greater rainfall, was the area of greatest agricultural potential in Yucatán. The pattern for later exploitation was initially set by Francisco de Montejo who founded the first sugar plantation and mill on his *encomienda* lands at Champotón, south of the city of Campeche (Chamberlain, 1948: 332).

Environmental hindrances to large-scale commercial agriculture in the northern part of the State led to the development of primarily a labor-extensive industry associated with cattle raising, and a minor export trade reliant principally on indigo (palo de tinte), beef and hides. Mayans not needed for these enterprises were largely left to cultivate supportive subsistence crops for themselves and the Spanish colonists. The colony, therefore, came to stress self-sufficiency rather than a market-oriented, export economy (Betencourt Perez, 1970: 122-124).

This regional symbiotic emphasis on subsistence crops and cattle in the north, and cane sugar in the south, lasted from the

early colonial period until the mid- 1800's when commercial interests turned from the hacienda cattle ranch to the development and expansion of the fiber-producing, henequen plantation. Utilization pattern estimates for cultivated land in 1845 (Table 4) illustrate a continuing emphasis on subsistence over commercial crops even into the early period, following 1821, of national independence.

TABLE 4.--Land Use in 1845.

Crop	Area under Cultivation	
	Mecates	Hectares
Corn ^a	6,000,159	240,006
Sugar Cane ^a	102,081	4,083
Rice ^a	46,666	1,867
Henequen ^b	16,000	640

^aBetencourt Perez, 1953: 35.

^bCline, 1948: 41.

Henequen remained a minor crop of considerable economic potential until the second half of the 19th century. Henequen, a variety of Agave (*A. fourcroydes*) indigenous to Yucatán, had long been exploited by the Mayan populations of the peninsula for the fiber contained in its long, slender leaves. Since the colonial period, markets existed for cordage, rope, sacks, hammocks, and other products manufactured from henequen fiber. While this cactus-like plant was able to survive the long periods of drought and the poor soils of northern Yucatán, the

labor-intensive, hand separation of the fiber (tonkos y pakché) from the leaf skin and pulp proved too costly and time-consuming for the development of a major fiber industry. Fiber production was encouraged among the population, but as an economic adjunct to family subsistence, not as the sole or major source of livelihood.

By the late 18th century, henequen had gained preference over hemp and other fibers for use in maritime rope and cordage. The growing world demand for henequen fiber gave impetus to the full-scale development of what was to become the basis of the monocrop export economy for the State of Yucatán (Benítez, 1962: 56). The latter 19th century ascendancy of the economic, social, and political importance of henequen, and the consequent eclipse of beef and sugar cane as primary export products, can be attributed to three major developments during this period: the Caste War, the invention of a mechanized raspar or decorticator for the extraction of fiber, and the demand for binder twine created by the invention of the McCormick reaper in the U.S.A.

The devastating Mayan peasant uprising of 1847-1855, the "Caste War" of Yucatán (cf. Reed, 1964), altered demographic and economic patterns in the State. The sugar cane industry which had been expanding in the more fertile southern part of the peninsula was effectively destroyed by the violence and the resultant temporary isolation of that area from the rest of the State. Mayan peasant captives, as well as Mayans attempting to escape the ravages of the war, became concentrated in the more secure northern zone. There they were either incorporated into the growing haciendas, or sold as

slaves to Cuba. The revenue from these slave-trading activities was used to help finance the war against the Mayan rebels remaining and to replenish the bankrupt governmental treasury (Menéndez, 1923).

The violence of the 1840's included not only the Caste War of Yucatán, but was also complicated by internicine conflict between Mérida and Campeche for political control over the peninsula, and by warfare between the United States and Mexico which resulted, in 1847, in the capture and temporary occupation of Mexico City itself. Cut off from Campeche and Mexico, the Mayan rebels controlled most of the peninsula by 1848, and threatened Mérida with total destruction.

The desperation of the "white race" of Yucatán, the political chaos in Mexico City, and the continuing sense of distinctiveness of Yucatán, convinced the governor of the State, Santiago Méndez, to send appeals for assistance to the U.S. Secretary of State, James Buchanan. Threatened with total defeat at the hands of the rebels, the governor declared neutrality in the conflict between the U.S. and Mexico and requested the U.S. provide both protection to Yucatán from Mexican revenge and direct aid to save "the white race from the fierce aborigines" (de la Torre V., et al., 1964, II: 225). Governor Méndez, in his final communication to Buchanan, surpassed his original request for 2,000 soldiers and 500,000 pesos in assistance:

The white race--the civilized class of this state--is presently being attacked in a cruel and barbaric manner by the aboriginal race which rose simultaneously in insurrection, with instinctual ferocity, and which makes against us a savage war of extermination. . . . I have resolved, then, to seek the extreme remedy dictated by our great need--that of soliciting the direct intervention by powerful nations, offering the dominion and sovereignty of this land (Yucatán) to the nation that takes charge of saving it. (de la Torre V., et al., 1964, Vol. II: 228-229, my translation.)

Méndez not only requested protection and salvation from the Mayans (and the "Mexicans"), but was willing to offer Yucatán itself as a prize to the nation providing such assistance. Reed notes (1964: 85) that similar appeals were also sent to Great Britain and Spain. Before the U.S.A. Congress could vote on the request, Méndez was replaced as governor by Miguel Barbachano. Declaring Méndez a traitor, Barbachano attempted to effect a reconciliation with the government of Mexico. Mérida finally received military assistance from Spain, via Cuba, for the war against the Mayans, but the U.S. Monroe Doctrine prevented Spain from accepting the offer of sovereignty over Yucatán. In spite of this aid, the "white race" of Yucatán was saved primarily by the timely arrival of the planting season. Most of the rebel army that had threatened Mérida disappeared as the peasants returned to prepare their milpa fields for the coming season for the cultivation of maize (Reed 1964: 85-87, 98, 103).

The economic catastrophe of the Caste War gave priority and added impetus to the pre-war attempts on the part of the state government to expand the cultivation of henequen and the production of fiber. The war, by destroying the sugar cane industry, removed a significant competitor for capital and labor and actually resulted in a greater concentration of the population in the northern zone of the newly expanding henequen industry.²

The second development significant to the growth of the henequen industry occurred in the 1860's and brought the benefits of the industrial revolution to the extraction of fiber from the spiny henequen leaf. The first patent for a machine to replace the laborious and time-consuming

hand separation of fiber, was issued in 1833 to Henry Perrine, U.S. Consul to Yucatán and Campeche (Oroza D., 1956: 25). That Perrine's raspar or decorticating machine failed is indicated by the 1840 governmental offer of \$2,000 pesos to the inventor of a successful machine (Oroza D., 1956: 30). The same prize was again offered in 1852, but with the added stipulation that such a machine actually represent a savings in time and labor over the hand separation of fiber from the leaf. Finally, in 1856, a commission was organized by the state government to investigate the competing inventions of Manuel Cecilio Villamor and José Esteban Solís. The 1856 commission was instructed to apply the following criteria in their investigation:

1. That the machine produce 20 pounds of fiber daily for each man employed on that machine.
 2. That the machine should not produce fiber inferior in quality to that separated by hand.
 3. That the initial cost of the machine not be excessive.
 4. That construction be simple, and repairs possible locally.
 5. That the machine be transportable from site to site.
 6. That the rasping action not waste fiber.
 7. That the operating costs of the machine be low.
- (Oroza D., 1956: 45, my translation.)

After years of litigation between the two self-proclaimed inventors, Solís was finally awarded the prize in 1868. Continuing its efforts to improve and increase fiber production, the government offered \$2,000 peso prizes again in 1869 and 1875, stressing, respectively, greater output of a higher quality, and worker safety with reduced production costs. In one last attempt to promote effective and efficient industrialization of this stage of henequen production, the state government offered, in 1884, a prize of \$20,000 pesos to the inventor of a rasping or decorticating machine that could meet the following revised criteria:

1. That it be automatic and for that reason, skilled labor would not be required for its operation.
2. That all dangers to the workers be completely avoided.
3. That it require less motive force than present machines.
4. That it increase fiber production and reduce wastage as compared with other machines in use over a given period of time.

(Oroza D., 1956: 76, my translation.)

While no record was located showing payment of this prize, it is clear that mechanized decorticating plants were in operation by the 1860's and that, with governmental incentives, refinements were encouraged to further increase production quantitatively, qualitatively, and, at the same time, reduce the costs of production.

Industrialization affected primarily the separation of fiber from the henequen leaf. Cultivation of the plant by slash-and-burn techniques, care and weeding of the fields, and the harvesting of the leaves have remained as essentially unchanged, manual, labor-intensive operations. Beginning in the late 1880's, narrow-gauge tracks and mule-driven carts (the "Decauville" system) facilitated transportation of leaves to central decorticating factories on the haciendas, thereby obviating the need for a portable processing plant, but the field work has remained unaltered.

In part because of population loss due to the violence of the Caste War and to the slaving operations that followed, the expansion of henequen cultivation in Yucatán outstripped available manpower. As early as 1883, the state government offered to pay a subsidy of \$10 pesos per head to contractors bringing "males between 8 and 50 years of age" to work in the henequen fields and factories (Oroza D., 1956: 72-74).

The relatively rapid shift from labor-extensive to labor-intensive forms of economic exploitation in the henequen zone resulted in the consolidation of hacienda plantations and the attached communities of indentured Mayan acasillados which made up the core or permanent labor force. Seasonal demands for additional labor were met through the use of available luneros, landless workers in regional towns who were not attached permanently to an hacienda but formed a labor reserve essential to this form of plantation agriculture.

With the Cárdenas reform of 1937-1938, the family-owned, henequen haciendas officially ceased to exist. Post-revolutionary land reform split these holdings into two distinct categories. Usufruct rights to newly created ejido lands were ceded to workers residing in both the regional towns and on the haciendas. The ex-hacienda owners were allowed to retain a limited portion of their fields and key buildings, including the hacienda casco and the decorticating factories. These private holdings are referred to as pequeñas propiedades and the owners as pequeños propietarios.

The third major development significant to the expanding cultivation of "green gold" in Yucatán concerns the 1878 invention of the McCormick binding reaper in the United States. This wheat harvester opened a new and massive market for bailer twine made from henequen fiber. The McCormick reaper not only created a demand for henequen fiber, but also resulted in a series of oscillating and protracted struggles between state, national and multi-national interests (International Harvester Corporation³) over the control and monopoly of the production, pricing, and export of henequen fiber from Yucatán.

The effects of these factors on the transformation of the northern sector of Yucatán have resulted in an export-oriented, monocrop dependence with all of the implied economic inflexibility and vulnerability to control by external interests. The conversion of land for the production of henequen fiber (Table 5) increased rapidly during the last one hundred years, reaching its peak in 1916 with the stimulus of the tremendous demand for fiber by the allies during World War I. Subsequent fluctuations in henequen production are associated with (1) hacienda abandonment due to anticipation and implementation of agrarian reform (1930's), (2) the decline in the market demand for fiber following WWI (1920's), (3) the increasing competition from other natural fiber producing areas (chiefly Indonesia, Tanzania, Kenya, and Brazil), and (4) the most recent introduction of synthetic fibers to the world market.

San Antonio: the Community Setting

San Antonio, a small community of approximately 300 people, is located in the so-called heart of the monocrop henequen zone of Yucatán. The ejido community lies at a distance of 3 and 4 kilometers, respectively, from the nearby towns of Xamach and Maax.⁴ San Antonio lies within the jurisdictional boundaries of the municipality of Maax, yet, because of its proximity and the improved condition of the gravel road, Xamach is socially and economically the more important of the two towns.

Travelling the last, dusty leg of the journey from Mérida to San Antonio, one passes the now-familiar, stone-walled henequen fields.

TABLE 5.--Henequen Production in Yucatán: 1845-1969.

Year	Area of Land Under Cultivation	Production
	(Hectares) ^a	(Kilograms X 1,000) ^a
1845	640 ^b	
1860	2,600 ^c	
1869	16,000 ^d	14,280 ^d
1890	99,100 ^b	47,000 ^e
1916	320,000 ^e	171,190 ^e
1926	171,000 ^e	128,470 ^e
1930	167,000 ^d	117,700 ^d
1936	132,000 ^e	111,240 ^e
1940	109,100 ^d	94,950 ^d
1950	114,000 ^d	101,107 ^f
1960	165,500 ^g	137,650 ^g
1965	183,000 ^g	128,170 ^g
1969	155,800 ^g	111,160 ^g

^aWhere necessary, the author has converted mecates and arrobas, pacas, or libras, into hectares and kilograms, respectively.

^bCline, 1948: 41.

^cCámara Z., 1946: 688-689.

^dGonzález N., 1970: 182, 185, 351.

^eManero, 1966: 33, 40.

^fSoberon, 1959: 51.

^gS.A.G., 1970b.

In the distance, a cluster of trees and a tall brick chimney locate both the community and the decorticating factory of the pequeña propiedad, part of the remnant holdings of the heir to Hacienda San Antonio. Throughout the henequen zone, the chimneys locate hacienda decorticating factories, communities, and are themselves non-functional artifacts of the earliest, steam-powered phase in the history of the industrialization of the henequen zone in Yucatán. Although the factory in San Antonio is now powered by an electric motor, the mechanical separation of fiber from the skin and pulp of the henequen leaf and the manual technology associated with the cultivation and harvesting of henequen remain largely unchanged since the latter part of the nineteenth century.

First impressions of San Antonio vary with the time of arrival. In the morning, just at first light, one views a community of men and older boys. They may be seen walking to the fields; walking to work in the processing factory; or perhaps standing in small clusters, shaking off the early morning chill and quietly discussing the day's proposed activities.

By mid-morning, the community is one of women, older girls, small children, and a continuous competition between the noisy irregularity of the gasoline-powered, local corn mill, and the constant din of the more distant desfibradora factory. While waiting in line for their turn at the corn mill, women will argue about who will be first, and thus receive the lime grit which unfortunately remains from the previous day's production of corn meal. Nobody wants to be the first in line, but all want to have the second place. Occasionally, the

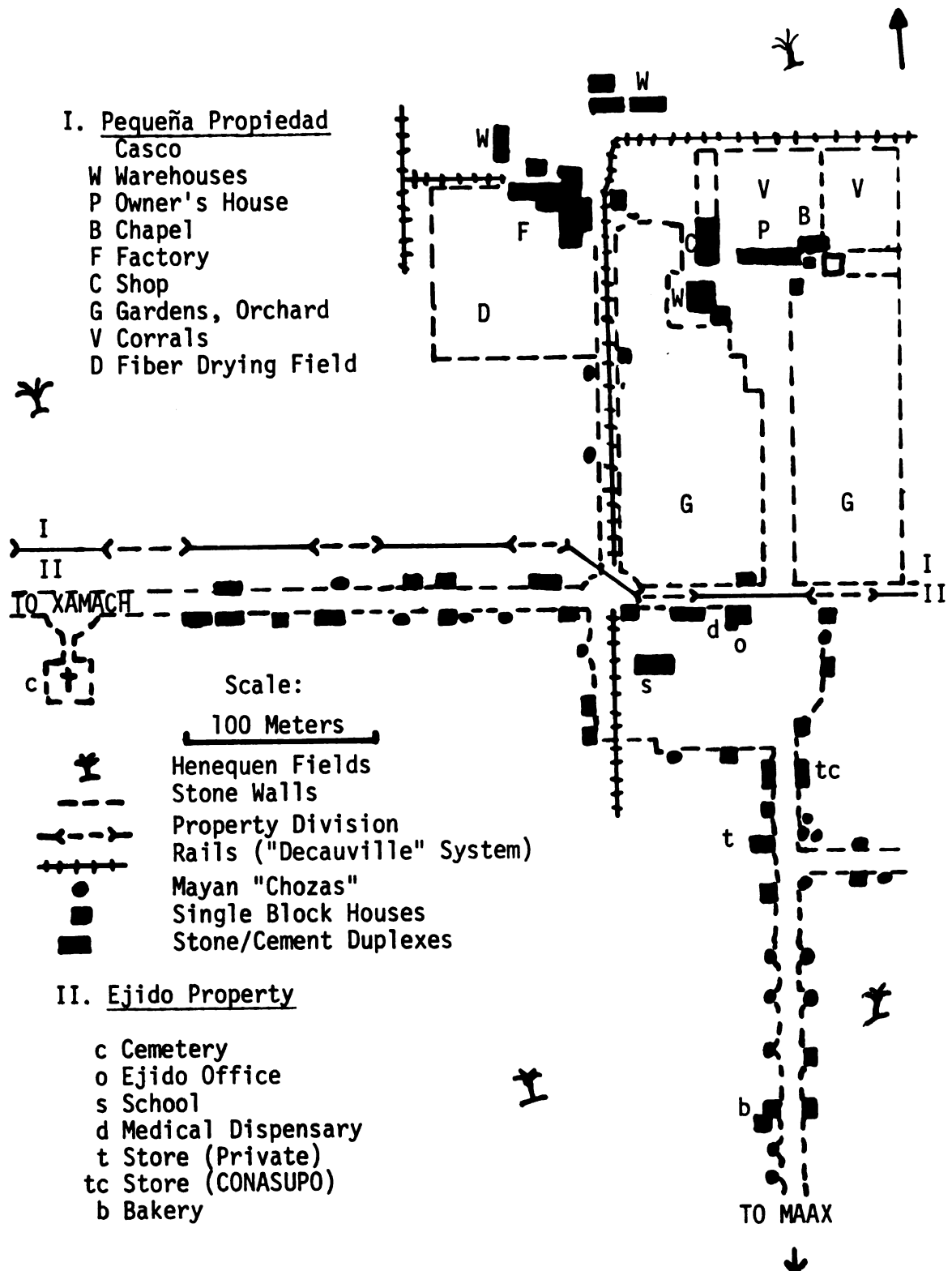
problem is resolved when one of the women is planning to grind corn to feed the animals kept behind the house. Once grinding is underway, conversation settles down to a continuous flow of gossip, interspersed with laughter and shouts. Once completed, the women carry the corn meal home or to the houses of friends and relatives to continue conversations and visiting while making the tortillas for their noon and evening meals.

During the heat of the early afternoon, the streets seem deserted. Following the large noon meal, men and women tend their sparse house gardens, look after the animals, bathe, and visit neighbors or simply relax in the comfort of a gently swaying hammock. As the afternoon begins to cool, the streets become once again a center of activity. Children play, people may attend to their needs at one of the two community stores, or stop in the town square to watch some of the older boys play baseball. Occasionally an itinerant merchant may be seen and heard as he bicycles past advertising his wares.

At dusk, the houses become closed and shuttered. Dogs bark persistently at the evening intruders and, if it is not too late, one or more of the three television sets can be heard. People who have paid their twenty centavos for an evening's entertainment are bathed in the soft glow of the television screen as they come to the windows and doorways to peer at the passing travelers.

The two roads linking San Antonio with the rest of Yucatán meet at the weed-filled, central square of this "L"-shaped, line community (Figure 2). The juncture of these two roads is a focal point in the life of San Antonio. At this juncture, the building

Figure 2.--The Community of San Antonio.



which houses the office of the ejido faces the imposing arched portal of the casco, the key portion of the remnant holdings of the Hacienda San Antonio. From the door of the old Casa Principal (owner's house) an ancient, cobbled, tree-lined road leads due south approximately 165 meters to the portals. The cobblestones disappear as the road continues south, past the ejido building, through half of the community, and on to the municipal center of Maax.

Along with the community office, the ejido building also contains the attached shed of the corn mill and, until the leaking roof forced its abandonment, the community store. Until the 1937 land reform, the store had belonged to the hacienda (tienda de raya), serving the owner as a means to control consumptive habits of the workers and to reduce out-migration by forcing workers into a state of continued indebtedness. State legislation passed during the period 1915-1920 abolished debt peonage and, since land reform, the store space has been leased by the ejido officials to a succession of independent concessionaires, usually to individuals from near-by towns who, after accumulating capital and credit, return to the towns to continue their enterprises on a somewhat larger scale. Presently there are two stores in the community (each operated in a house) and both are operated, for the first time, by community members. One is a full-time, commercial endeavor, and the other is a part-time, government-sponsored, CONASUPO outlet (Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares) which specializes in a limited variety of basic staples (corn, rice, flour, salt, soap, etc.). Each of the owner's of these stores determines credit (fiado) policy based on individual assessments of client-families in the community.

The casa principal is the largest residential structure in San Antonio. It was built during the last century as a seasonal residence for the Mérida-based, landholding family. The design is that of a relatively simple, four-roomed, 25 x 7 meter rectangle and the style and scale of construction are adaptive to the climate and the needs of the hacendado and his family. The plastered, stone walls are nearly a meter thick and provide effective insulation from the intensity of the Yucatecan sun. In the afternoon, as the temperature inside the house increases, the warming air begins to rise the ten meters to the beamed ceiling where it escapes through a series of small portals under the roof line, thus creating a natural ventilation system for the residents. The stone walls retain heat well into the evening but, depending on the season, this may either be overcome or put to use by the occupants. During the summer, relief may be sought by opening the shutters to the barred, glassless windows; during the cool evenings of the dry Yucatecan winter, the shutters may be left closed and the heat radiating from the stone will keep the house comfortable well into the night.

Surrounding the hub of the casa principal are the main well (noria), corral, carpentry shop, muleteer's house, warehouses, and the small, windowless, muleteer's equipment building which once served as the hacienda jail. The noria supplies water, via electric pump and storage tank, to this core area of the casco. Controlling to some extent for the noise and strong odor of henequen pulp, the decortivating factory and warehouses are located approximately 100 meters to the west of the casa principal.

The casa principal continues to serve the owner as a convenience to himself and occasional visitors, but no longer is used as an actual habitation. At the time field work was begun in San Antonio, the casa was being used as a spare warehouse to store bales of henequen fiber until they could be marketed. Despite the physical distance between the community and the casa principal, the ejidatarios of San Antonio can ignore neither the house nor the past which it symbolizes; they must approach the house to attend mass or conduct devotions in the attached chapel. The ejido of San Antonio is, by law, physically, socially, economically, and politically separate from the private holdings and personal power of the ex-hacienda owner. The ritual life of San Antonio remains linked to the feudal past, and the people continue to depend on the good will of the owner to allow them to maintain and use the chapel facilities of the hacienda casco. Rather than the exception, this ritual link is only one of the more obvious elements of a dependence-interdependence network of ties that actually exist between the pequeño propietario and the ejidatarios of San Antonio.

The average ejido house is a small (4 x 6 to 5 x 8 meters), one-room structure fronting directly on the road. Stone walls connect adjacent houses, with perpendicular walls forming the sides of an enclosed, 25 x 30 meter, solar or house lot. Behind the house, additional structures usually include a simply constructed lean-to used for cooking, a shelter for animals and, if the family is large, extra rooms or buildings may be attached to the house. Furnishings in the houses are sparse and include a few chairs, stools, a table for the family altar, and perhaps a wooden cabinet to protect clothing

and other family possessions. All of the houses are constructed and reinforced to support the weight of hammocks by means of either roof beams or by hooks imbedded in stone or concrete block walls.

Hammocks are highly adaptive to both the climate of this northern zone and to the limitations of space imposed by the small size of these houses. Even on hot, humid, summer nights, an individual may find relief from the heat by swinging in the hammock. In the absence of a breeze, the movement of air is simulated by the movement of the hammock through the air. The hammocks are usually large enough to sleep several members of the household. During the day, the hammocks are folded, tied and hung against one of the walls inside the house to free the room for other activities. Hammocks may also be used by a family during the day to contain babies and smaller children who may otherwise require careful watching. A crying baby is quickly lulled to sleep by the swaying of the hammock, is protected from both flies and a fall by the encircling, closely-woven mesh, and the hammock remains dry as urine passes through the mesh onto the easily-cleaned floor. The single-roomed houses, and the hammock as well, are relatively inexpensive and multifunctional.

There are two basic types of houses in the community, with modified versions of each type. Approximately thirty percent of a total of sixty-two houses are "chozas," Yucatec Mayan dwellings constructed of wattle-and-daub with dirt floors, thatched roofs, and "apsidal" in shape (Kurjack, 1971: 43). An additional fifteen percent of the houses are variant forms of this structure with zinc or oiled fiber board roofing substituted for thatching, stone and mortar

in place of the wattle-and-daub, or cement instead of the packed dirt floors.

A 1935 inventory of the community (D.I.S.A., n.d.) lists a total of "50 chozas" for the workers of Hacienda San Antonio; today, over half of the houses in the community may be identified as "modern" or "progressive" in appearance. These houses are rectangular, constructed of either stone and mortar or cement blocks, with low, plastered roofs. Constructed periodically during the post- agrarian reform period, these houses are preferred by most of the members of the community because of their identification with the design style found in the towns and in the urban center of Mérida. The two styles of houses differ with respect to adaptiveness to the climate of the area. The thatched choza, like the casa principal, allows warming air to pass through the roof, thus cooling the residents. The thatching is an effective barrier to rain, and winds improve this quality by forcing the thatch into a compressed, resistant mat. The block houses readily absorb heat from the sun and, lacking the ventilating design of the other styles, are quite warm and uncomfortable during the humid summer months. The block houses do provide more protection and warmth during the cool winter evenings and certainly provide less of a haven for the wide variety of insects and spiders that typically inhabit the thatching of the chozas.

Cost differentials between the two types of structures account for the persistence of the choza in San Antonio.⁵ Costs for construction (in 1971) indicate that the block house represents an initial expense of about \$4,500 pesos, versus a range of \$1,200 to \$1,500 pesos for the

choza. The periodic need to re-thatch the choza roofs, at a cost of about \$500 pesos for the materials, reduces the long-term cost difference between the two structures. The higher initial cost of the cement block house makes prohibitive the possibility that an individual family can, utilizing its own economic resources, undertake to provide itself with this more "progressive" type of dwelling. The block houses that exist in the community were constructed either with funds provided by Henequeneros de Yucatán (1938-1955) -23% of the existing houses--or by the branch of the federal ejido bank (1955-) -32% of the habitations. During the most recent period, house funds were made available to the community, the costs entered as part of the long-term ejido debt, and the constructed houses assigned by raffle to eligible ejido heads of family. More recently, the federal Banco Agrario has ceased extending loans for the purchase of materials needed for repair or construction of houses and prefers instead to merely approve small wage allotments for persons engaged in the construction. Families can either use the "wages" to purchase materials, or utilize locally available materials for the construction or repair of existing chozas. The ejidatarios have been able to overcome this economic limitation to some extent by utilizing continuing relations of paternalism and dependence with the pequeño propietario. The owner has assisted the community members in obtaining materials at discount prices in Mérida, has loaned the use of the hacienda truck for transportation, and has himself purchased some of the materials used in both the construction of a new block house, the construction of a medical dispensary, and the repair of six chozas (during 1970/1971). The ejidatarios were able to improve

the housing conditions of several members of the community, and the owner was able to point out his generosity and philanthropy to properly impressed official visitors to San Antonio.⁶

Images of the Present and Selective
Recall of the Past

Poverty and illness are two themes that pervade conversations with the ejidatarios of San Antonio. For them, life is a struggle which results from a feeling of powerlessness to alter their own economic situation. There is a particular realization, often implicit, that there are simply too many people trying to live off of the limited work available from the ejido or in the employ of the pequeño propietario. The following excerpt from field notes is a more explicit example of the difficulties associated with population expansion:

After the discussion of the ejido and the casas (costs of house construction) with Rodrigo and Silvestre, I walked outside the ejido building and sat with a group of men who were watching boys play baseball in the plaza field. One of them commented: "Mira a todos los ejidatarios que están allá!" (Look at all those ejidatarios!) It was said very quietly, very seriously. David, Silvestre and Vena Pech (brothers) were standing there and David began to count. Many of the boys were approaching the legal age for membership in the ejido (16 years of age). Vena asked me if I wouldn't like to help them out by taking some of the little ejidatarios--not "children" but "little ejidatarios"--back to the United States with me.

On another occasion an older member of the community, Don Peto (b. 1906), was commenting to me about the sickly, abandoned dog that had adopted my wife and myself.⁷ Don Peto mentioned that the dog really had to fight for everything she got and, like many poor people, had to make do with whatever meager handouts she could beg from others. He thought for a moment and then said: "You know, that

poor thing is really very lucky!" When I asked why, he replied to the effect that although she had been around for a number of years, she never had any puppies, and was therefore spared the additional burden of watching progeny suffer and die as a result of her own unfortunate situation.

The frustration of trying to stretch meager incomes seems to produce for some a romanticization of the past. As hacienda acasillados, they would say, all were cared for. The hacendado made sure they had enough food; work was hard, but they never had to worry about getting money together to pay for a visit to the doctor or to pay for medicine. If material was needed to make new clothing, the hacendado would see that it was supplied. If a wedding or a fiesta were planned, the hacendado would loan money or provide some of the food or refreshments without charge. Money loaned to the acasillados was interest-free and the hacendado would make sure that even though they had to pay the loan back, they would always have enough credit at the company store (tienda de raya) so that their own survival was never threatened. Houses were constructed and repaired at the expense of the hacendado and these acts were performed on the basis of need for "his people." The acasillados had no need to fear municipal authorities, since the hacendado would try to arrange or smooth over any surmountable difficulties that may have occurred. These kinds of images of the past most frequently appeared when a family had to bear unexpected expenses or during periods of seasonal ebbs in the availability of work.

The ejidatario's romantic image of the past seems created especially to oppose the perceived relationship that exists between

the community and the Bangrario. The hacendado was a visible individual who dealt personally with the people of San Antonio. The pattern of interaction was one of paternalism, but often with the added intensity of personalized bonds of campadrazgo (ritual co-parenthood). The Bangrario is perceived as a faceless, unsympathetic institution which limits work, which has an image of distrust and secrecy, and which often refuses appeals on the part of the members of the community for economic assistance in the areas of income, housing, or health. Adding to this image of impersonalism, the Bangrario changes field agents frequently, shifting them from one local zone to another.

The frustration of the present has produced, seemingly, a highly selective recall of experiences remembered from the hacienda period. This selective examination of the past is, however, quite fragile and may be easily shattered by some abuse or conflict (perceived or actual) arising between the ejidatarios and the pequeño propietario. Difficulties between the two sectors of San Antonio are often reflected in worker comments such as: "Don't they (the patrones) realize that the period of slavery has ended in Yucatán?"⁸

For the oldest informants in the community, recollections of the past are more frequently interspersed with tales of the strict control exerted by the hacendado over the daily lives of the acasillados, of the whippings and other forms of punishment meted out for the slightest transgressions of the hacendado's imposed code of conduct, of the examples of the lack of freedom to arrange even one's own selection of a marriage partner, of the coercion and fear used to make one member of

the community report the guilt of others, and of the prohibitions against physical, social, or economic mobility. Don Cirilo (b. 1891) especially remembered the use of credit, loans and resultant foreclosure as a tactic to increase hacienda lands during the early part of this century. Don Cirilo witnessed first a period of growth in the size of the community and then the effects of devastating epidemics that rapidly reduced the size of the community. More than a mere witness, Don Cirilo himself had outlived three wives and all but one of his children.

For those born towards the end of the hacienda period, recollections of that period were more frequently infused with positive elements. Don Pacífico (b. 1917), for example, recalled the time he accompanied his sick father to stay in special quarters in the Mérida house of the hacendado, where his father was cared for until healed. Don Pacífico also remembered the patrón sponsoring fiestas for Christmas and the day of the patron saint of the community.

The opposing remembrances of the hacienda period coincide with two identifiable phases in worker-owned relations during the first few decades of this century. Moisés González Navarro (1970: 236-248) details significant changes in Yucatecan labor legislation during the post-revolutionary period which would have resulted in an alteration of the patrón-peón relationship and in effect would have converted the plantation laborer from a condition of debt-peonage to that of proletarian status. One of the earlier laws (1914) "freed" hacienda workers, yet mobility could be realized by neither father nor son until the abolishment of the mechanisms of indebted servitude and the

resultant termination of economic as well as socio-political enslavement.⁹ The proletarian conversion began with legislation passed in 1917, under the revolutionary military governor, General Salvador Alvarado, which officially abolished debt-servitude in Yucatán.

Alvarado's labor reform legislation limited the amount of indebtedness to the equivalent of one month's salary and a worker's heirs, for the first time, were under no obligation to assume the debt of the father. The 1917 laws also abolished the fagina labor practice (wage-free, labor tribute for the right to work), abolished child-labor (prohibiting the utilization of individuals under fourteen years of age), and made the patrones legally responsible for the care of workers in the case of accident or illness. Labor legislation passed in 1918 required that hacienda owners contribute to an unemployment fund for workers and demanded double salary for workers forced to work on Sundays. In addition to worker's funds and medical assistance legislation, a law passed in 1925 (Orosa D., 1961: 85) fixed minimum wage rates for both salaried (empleados) and part-time or piece-rate workers (jornaleros).

Mechanisms which provided pressures for enforcement of Alvarado's labor reform laws seem to have centered around Felipe Carrillo Puerto who, in 1919, organized workers' syndicates (as part of a "Liga Central de Resistencia") and who, as governor, drafted legislation calling for the expropriation of "abandoned" haciendas. Much of the socialist-revolutionary reform momentum diminished with the 1924 assassination of Carrillo Puerto. Carrillo Puerto signed his land reform bill on November 23, 1923. He was threatened, pursued, and imprisoned by

military officers partisan to General Adolfo de la Huerta (a major contender for control of post-revolutionary Mexico) on December 21, 1923. On the second of January, 1924, Felipe Carrillo Puerto was executed (Orosa D., 1961: 61; González N., 1970: 250).

Carrillo Puerto's death could not reverse the momentum of change totally. Land reform had already begun to affect the area surrounding Hacienda San Antonio with the dotation of uncultivated lands to the inhabitants of the municipal center of Maax (initial request, 1919; granted, 1924) and the nearby town of Xamach (initial request, 1917; granted, 1929) (DAAC Archives). The pressures for land reform and, especially, the new potential for mobility on the part of the hacienda workers undoubtedly affected patrón-worker relations. Certainly more than claimed indebtedness alone would be required to retain a worker population. The hacendados could no longer rely on the assistance of the police and the other mechanisms of the state to force workers to remain or return to their owner's hacienda holdings. In spite of labor reform and other legislation, fully fifteen years would pass from the execution of Carrillo Puerto to the massive expropriation of hacienda lands under the land reform program of President Lázaro Cárdenas in 1938.

Reform and Change: The Demographic Evidence

In this final section, demographic materials from the Mexican National Census publications and the birth and death records of the municipality of Maax are examined in the context of the reforms occurring since the turn of the century. With the focus being San

Antonio, the following analysis and demographic reconstruction further supports the division of the recent hacienda period into two distinct phases. Following the labor reform legislation of Alvarado, and its apparent implementation in the henequen zone, mortality rates dropped significantly in San Antonio and the total community population also declined. The decline in mortality rates indicates that nutrition and health care had improved in the community and the decline in the total population provides evidence that workers and their families were, in fact, enjoying the potential for geographic mobility provided by the legislated end of debt peonage in Yucatán. The inordinately high mortality rates calculated for the pre-labor reform and pre-revolutionary periods indicate that the population of San Antonio was in a state of extreme demographic stress. Particularly high infant mortality and generally low life-expectancy point to poor nutrition and the absence of health care as factors responsible for the extreme susceptibility to epidemic disease evidenced for the population during this earlier hacienda phase.

Census materials are incomplete for San Antonio up until the beginning of the Mexican National Census in 1895. Governmental and Maax parish records indicate that San Antonio increased in population during the latter part of the nineteenth century as the transition was made from a small cattle ranch to an expanding henequen hacienda, a transition from a labor-extensive pattern of exploitation to one that was labor-intensive (cf. Table 6). The population declined following the revolution and labor reform and began once again to increase following Cárdenas' land reform of 1938. The population of

TABLE 6.--Population in San Antonio and Environs.

Year ^b	San Antonio	Maax Municipio (County)	Maax Cabecera (Town)	% of Population in Cabecera
1828 ^a	35			
1900	187	1,294	502	30.9%
1910	225 ^c	1,065		
1920	167	899	336	37.8%
1930	158	1,054	414	39.3%
1940	178	959	438	45.7%
1950	203	1,306	577	47.7%
1960	238	1,665	913	54.8%
1970	307 ^d	1,922 ^e	1,054 ^e	55.2%

^aDocument from the Maax parish records, 1828.¹⁰

^bUnless otherwise indicated, all figures are based on the Mexican National Census records as published by decade.

^cThe National Census was interrupted by the Mexican Revolution and the indicated figure for San Antonio was based on the Municipio population and the calculated extension of municipio birth and death rates to the analyses of the records of San Antonio at the time.

^dBased on field census of San Antonio, 9/70 to 10/70.

^eState of Yucatán (1970) estimates.

San Antonio has effectively doubled during the four decades from 1930 to 1970. A comparison of calculated rates of population change (cf. Table 7) indicates that although the State increased little during the period 1900 to 1940, there was nevertheless a great deal of change and movement within the State. Following 1920, migrations from the rural haciendas to the municipal center of Maax occurred and, for the state, migration is evidenced generally to the urban center of Mérida. The fact that the growth rate for the State does not change significantly until after 1940 indicates a general outmigration¹¹ from the State occurred from 1920 to 1940 which abated coincidentally with agrarian

TABLE 7.--Demographic Change in San Antonio and Yucatán.

Rate of Change ^a	San Antonio	Maax Municipio	Maax Cabecera	Mérida City	Yucatán State
1900-1910		-17.2		+28.6	+ 9.2
1910-1920	- 5.7 ^b	-17.0	-25.0 ^b	+ 4.0	+ 5.3
1920-1930	- 5.5	+15.9	+20.9	+18.2	+ 7.5
1930-1940	+11.9	- 9.4	+ 5.6	+ 1.9	+ 8.0
1940-1950	+13.1	+25.3	+27.6	+38.9	+21.2
1950-1960	+15.9	+32.2	+45.9	+17.9	+17.2
1960-1970	+25.4	+14.4	+14.4 ^c	+31.0	+23.1
<u>Inhabitants</u>					
1900	187	1,294	502	57.2 ^d	309.7 ^d
1970	307	1,922	1,054 ^e	253.9 ^d	774.0 ^d
Percent Change	+64.2%	+48.5%	+110.0%	+343.9%	+149.9%

^aCalculated average annual rate of change/1000 population.

^bCalculated for the twenty year period, 1900 to 1920.

^cBased on the estimated population for the cabecera.

^dPopulation expressed in thousands of inhabitants.

^eEstimated population of the cabecera of Maax.

reform. Following 1940, rural to urban migrations continue and, as well, population increases continue for each of the levels analyzed: the community of San Antonio, the municipality and town of Maax, Mérida, and the State.

In order to add to a more general understanding of the patterns of demographic change, Maax municipal birth and death records were examined in detail to ascertain the changes occurring at the level of the municipio and more specifically, at the level of the community of San Antonio. The birth and death registrations, together with the

decade population estimates, were used to calculate birth and death rates for San Antonio and Maax (cf. Table 8). The calculations are based on three-year averages for each decade census year and the natural rate of change per thousand population is calculated on the differences between the birth and death rates. Although the birth and death rates seem inordinately high when compared with the calculations of others for the period of 1924 to 1928 (Hilferty and Maher, 1933: 408), it must be noted that previous investigators had concentrated their efforts outside of the henequen zone of the State of Yucatán. With regard to mortality rates, for example, Hilferty and Maher note that "in each district there is considerable variation in the rates for the individual years, as would be expected where epidemic diseases contribute such a high proportion of the total mortality" (1933: 408). Maax municipal records do indicate periodic and severe epidemics of measles (1882), whooping cough (1893-1894), dysentery (1899-1902), and an outbreak of influenza of "pandemic" proportions (Shattuck, 1933: 347) during the period from 1918 to 1920. Given the coincidence of epidemics with the census periods of 1900 and 1920, and the associated high death rate for these years, the rates calculated on the basis of census and municipal records are probably more accurate than "reasonable." The calculations for San Antonio may be least accurate or representative, since the small size of the base population is a source of potential random error. Comparison with the decade figures for the municipality, however, indicate a consistency on a general level in that both the municipality and the community birth and death rates have declined, especially since 1920.

TABLE 8.--Natural Population Change.^a

Year	Births/1000		Deaths/1000		Change/1000	
	Maax	San Ant.	Maax	San Ant.	Maax	San Ant.
1900	69.8	82.0	78.1	85.6	- 8.3	- 3.6
1910	62.3		47.9		+14.4	
1920	51.2	39.9	60.1	71.9	- 8.9	-32.0
1930	39.8	38.0	30.0	25.3	+ 9.8	+12.7
1940	38.6	31.8	48.6	33.7	-10.0	- 1.9
1950	57.8	57.5	27.6	37.8	+30.2	+19.7
1960	40.0	26.6	10.2	12.6	+29.8	+14.0

^aMaax figures calculated for the municipality in general; specific census count for San Antonio during 1910 not available due to the Mexican revolution.

Comparisons of the three tables (Tables 6, 7, and 8) indicate that the plantation henequen zone was undergoing massive demographic as well as economic changes during the early part of this century, changes not experienced to such a degree in the districts outside of this zone. During the first decade of this century, subdued Yaqui Indian rebels, as well as Chinese and indigenous Mayans, were forced into enslavement and debt peonage on the henequen haciendas (cf. Turner, 1911: 7). High mortality rates plus the expansion of the henequen industry provided the pressures for continuing importation of workers into this northern ecozone of the Yucatecan peninsula.

While specific data as to distribution by sex and age of the population are not available, one can hypothesize that the slave population was a young population which was utilized not only to create a labor force, but to procreate workers as well. In the context of the growing henequen plantation sphere, it is not difficult to

understand the inordinately high birth rates calculated for the first two decades; a young worker population would have an unusually high percentage of individuals at procreative ages, and a smaller percentage of individuals in the pre-pubescent category or past the age of general fertility. The equally high mortality rates would insure that the procreative population remain active, in light of the extremely high infant mortality evidenced for the period, with shorter periods of time existing between pregnancies.¹²

The pre- 1920 period, as examined through the birth and death registrations in the Maax Civil Registry office, point to a tremendous susceptibility to disease especially for individuals during the first few years of infancy. During this period, the community of San Antonio can be characterized as one demonstrating both high infant mortality (cf. Table 9) and a high rate of early adult mortality. The calculated average age at death was 16.3 years of age from the period of 1911 to 1920, and improved to 25.5 years of age for the decade following (1921 to 1930). For the period from 1900 to 1937, just prior to Cárdenas' land reform program, the calculated average age at death was 17 years of age and, averaging the age at death of those surviving beyond four years of age (controlling partially for infant mortality), the average was 43 years of age.

High mortality rates are frequently associated with economic, social, and nutritional poverty (U.N., 1953: 49). Epidemic diseases affect mainly populations that are able to withstand neither the debilitating effects of disease, nor to resist the severity of those effects. Similarly, high fertility rates are also described as

TABLE 9.--Mortality in San Antonio for Selected Periods.

Period	Registered ^a		Infant ^b Mortality	Age at Death			Cause ^c of Death
	Births	Deaths		0-4	5-14	15+	
1900-1901	32	37	844	73%	14%	14%	Measles, Dysentery Whooping Cough Influenza
1913-1915	39	50	975	76%	4%	20%	
1918-1920	24	48	834	42%	6%	52%	
1911-1920	128	145	688	64%	4%	32%	
1921-1930	69	43	398	44%	5%	51%	

^aNumbers of identified births and deaths recorded in the Maax archives.

^bInfant mortality calculated based on recorded number of deaths of individuals between 0 and 4 years of age and the recorded number of live births recorded during the same period. The rate is expressed as deaths/1000 births.

^cThe list includes only predominant (believed) causes of death as entered in the Maax records.

characteristic of populations that are in a low position of socio-economic status (U.N., 1953: 91). High birth and death rates indicate, then, that a population is not only economically depressed, but tremendously stressed as well. High birth rates indicate an attempt to compensate for the tremendous losses to epidemics and the high infant mortality associated with malnutrition and susceptibility to disease (cf. Brown and Wray, 1974).

The decline in the mortality rate following 1920 is related to changes in the area of general health care, disease control, and the implementation of the various articles of Alvarado's labor reform legislation of the previous decade. By 1920, the introduction of

vaccine and general health programs had begun what T. Lynn Smith (1970: 30) has called a "demographic revolution"¹³ in Latin America in general, and Yucatán in particular (Shattuck, 1933: 344). Following Brown and Wray (1974: 47-49),¹⁴ however, it is clear that only changes in the nutritional value of the diet and improvements in housing, working conditions, and the actual extension of health care, could account for such a dramatic decline in the infant mortality rates of the post- 1920 period.

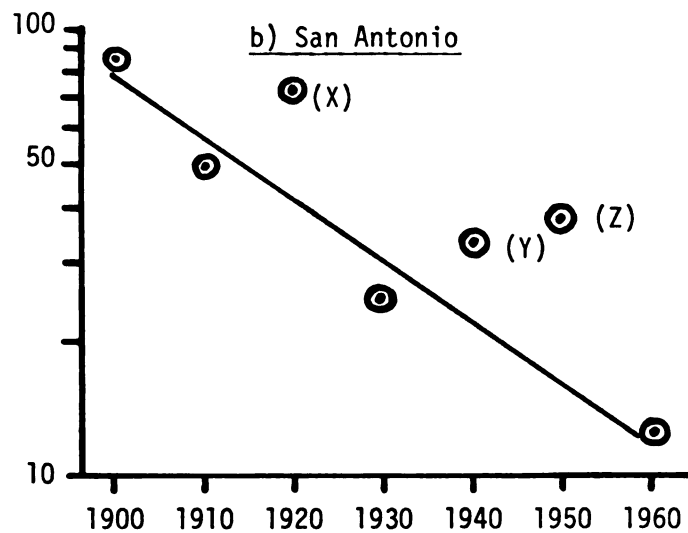
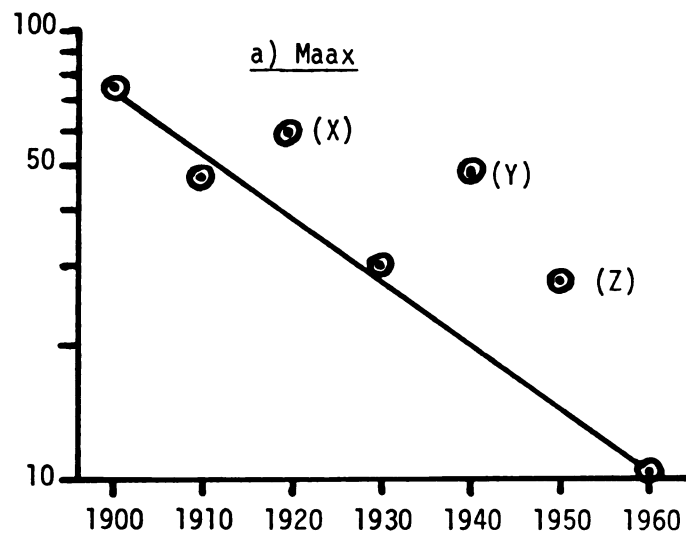
Concerning mortality rates in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, the United Nations (1953: 55) reports that

The sharp declines of death rates which have been noted in some of these countries are almost entirely the product of social and economic reforms during the twentieth century, and especially during the last two or three decades.

For San Antonio and the Maax area of the henequen zone, social and economic reforms in this century have had the effect of lowering death rates. The trauma associated with periods of rapid reform and general social, political, and economic instability, however, have resulted in greater initial mortality rates (cf. Figure 3) and only later, a continuation of the rate of decline evidenced prior to these reform periods. As indicated in Figure 3, a relatively continuous rate of decline in mortality rates/1000 population is evidenced for the decade years of 1900, 1910,¹⁵ 1930, and 1960. Deviations from this rate of decline are associated with periods of rapid change. Increases in mortality for 1920 are associated with epidemics, as discussed above, but also are indicative of the resistance to, and delay in, full implementation of Alvarado's labor reform legislation. Improvements

Figure 3.--Mortality in San Antonio and Maax.
(Semi-Logarithmic Graph)

Rates/1000



- (X) Period of post-revolutionary labor reform.
 (Y) Implementation of land reform in Yucatán.
 (Z) Latter period of State control: Henequeneros de Yuc.

realized in health care and nutrition by 1930 were reversed again with the introduction of Cárdenas' plan for land reform in the henequen zone of Yucatán in 1938, and the assertion of control over that program by the restrictive agency of the State government, and the governor himself, through Henequeneros de Yucatán. The high mortality identified for 1950, coincides with the general decline in the effectiveness of Henequeneros to maintain adequate control of the henequen market, and to administer the henequen zone in ways actually favorable to the workers. In 1955, the federal government resumed control over the henequen ejidos and, by 1960, the mortality rates once again declined for both San Antonio and the municipality of Maax.

Summary and Conclusions

The rise of henequen production and the associated shift to a monocrop-based, export economy can be attributed to a complicity of natural and human factors. The semi-arid northern ecozone imposes limitations on the intensive cultivation of plants less resistant to drought than the cactus-like, indigenous agave of Yucatán. In the nineteenth century the Caste War altered patterns of productive exploitation of the land and the size and distribution of the population of the peninsula. Industrialization during the latter 1800's increased both the market demand for fiber (McCormick's reaper) and the productive means to meet that demand (the mechanized decorticator). The industrial stimuli for growth resulted in an expansion of henequen plantations and by the turn of the century exploitative patterns shifted away from labor extensive cattle herding and the subsistence-oriented

cultivation of maize by Mayan peasants. During this first phase of the henequen plantation, the rural population became attached laborers (hacienda acasillados) who were retained through mechanisms such as that of debt-peonage, and involved in the labor intensive cultivation of Agave fourcroydes. It was during this early period that Hacienda San Antonio and the attached community of Mayan acasillados experienced its greatest growth and expansion.

Workers were brought into the Maax zone as a response to the combined need for laborers and apparent inability of the local population to achieve a natural rate of growth. After 1900, the inordinately high birth and death rates of the young proletariat began to decline. Presumably, stabilized or improved working conditions lie at the basis of the decline in mortality during the first decade of this century.

The decade of 1911 to 1920 brought with it a series of devastating epidemics which not only affected a maintenance of high infant mortality but resulted in the additional deaths of a large percentage of the adult population. The decrease in the hacienda's population for this and the subsequent decade (1921-1930) cannot be attributed solely to increased mortality. Outmigration seems to have begun with the period of post- revolutionary labor-reform legislation and continued until the implementation of land reform in 1938. During the interim period of relative political stability, mortality rates continued to decline until the end of the second phase (post- labor reform) of the hacienda and the redistribution of private holdings in the henequen zone.

Although initiated by the Federal government under President Cárdenas, the State government altered the program. Through Henequeneros

de Yucatán, the new ejidatarios were converted into one large collective proletariat and the henequen ejidos into what the State referred to as the "Gran Ejido" and what some authors have preferred to call the period of the "Gran Hacienda." Apparently a period of demographic stress, mortality rates rose under Henequeneros and decreased following the 1955 reassertion of control over the ejido land reform communities and the fiber manufacturing industry by institutions of the federal government (chiefly, the Banco Agrario de Yucatán and Cordemex, S.A.) During the State period, rising death rates were offset by the increase in birth rates and, apparently, a reduction in the degree of outmigration. The population of San Antonio doubled from 1930 to 1970 and the 1970 municipal population was twice that indicated by the 1940 census. The present condition of "localized overpopulation" seems an effect not merely of increasing health and longevity of the populace but of land reform itself. Whereas the 1917-1918 labor legislation gave the henequen workers real potential for mobility, the ejido reform program has stabilized and immobilized the population for not only the henequen zone but for the State as well. Mérida, for example, increased in size more rapidly than the State as a whole, but so did San Antonio (1960-1970), the cabecera (1940-1960) and the municipality of Maax (1940-1960). Only during the last decade, as the population began severely to press the limits of the economic potential of henequen production, is rural-urban migration once again appearing in the northern zone of Yucatán. This effect may be just beginning to manifest itself for the Hacienda community, but it is clearly a factor for the cabecera and the municipality as a whole.

For the people of San Antonio, there are constant and highly visible remainders of the hacienda period of their history. The heir to Hacienda San Antonio is presently the owner of the pequeña propiedad, the remnant holdings of land and the decorticating factory. The ejido is presently controlled by the Banco Agrario de Yucatán and, yet, the ejidatarios rely to a great extent on the good will of the ex-patrón. Continuing the paternalistic pattern of interaction, the ejidatarios supplement their low incomes from the ejido by working for the pequeño propietario. The private landholder is able to claim the responsibility for the improvement of the road to Xamach, for the electrification of his factory and the community, for the facilitation of the old hacienda chapel for religious purposes, for the construction of a medical dispensary (albeit rarely used) and for assistance in the construction and repair of several houses in the ejido community.

Subsequent chapters focus on the organization and operation of the ejido as a legal, economic and social entity. Special importance is given to the patterns of interaction that link the federal bank, the collectivized land reform community and the hacienda heir. The following chapter will also explore the nature of the ejido henequenero and the ways in which the ejidatario has come to find himself caught in the paradox of a liberal reform ideology forged out of the Mexican Revolution and a new collectivized form of debt-peonage.

CHAPTER II--FOOTNOTES

¹Arnold Strickon (1965: 41) has identified three major environmental zones: (1) the arid "Northern Zone" of thin, poor soils; (2) a "Central-Eastern Zone" of somewhat deeper soils, moderate rainfall, and tall forest cover; and (3) a more productive maize area of deep soils, tropical forest, heavy rainfall that Strickon refers to as the "South-Eastern Zone."

²Moisés Gonzalez Navarro (1970: 173) reports that as a result of the Caste War, the population of the Peninsula of Yucatán decreased from a total of 504,635 inhabitants in 1846 to approximately 300,000 by 1856, a loss of over 40% of the population as a result of the Mayan peasant rebellion.

³Nathaniel Raymond (1971) has focused his research on the historical aspects of the development of the henequen industry and, in particular, has examined in detail the competition for power and economic control between government, local entrepreneurs, and the International Harvester Company.

⁴"Xamach" and "Maax," as well as "San Antonio" and the names of individuals and key informants, are pseudonyms for the actual names of locations and individuals.

⁵One member of the community, recognizing the advantages of thatched roofing, constructed himself a large, rectangular stone-and-mortar house with cement floor and a thatched, high beamed roof. He has combined the advantages of sturdy wall construction with the ventilating and cooling qualities of the "choza" roof.

⁶The owner of the pequeña propiedad has consistently involved himself in projects, many of his own design, to improve the quality of fiber production and to investigate potential utility and possible commercial value of the "bagaso" henequen waste. He periodically brings officials of the state or federal agricultural or governmental agencies to demonstrate his innovativeness and never misses the opportunity to point out the improvements he has made for the ejido community to these visitors.

⁷The dog had adopted us early in our period of residence in San Antonio and proved to be somewhat of an embarrassment at the time we left the community. "Perrita" started out as an extremely thin and horribly infected animal. I treated her for various parasites and we fed her waste food and, owing to the periodic and extreme generosity of the residents of San Antonio, we occasionally fed her,

after dark, some of the extra food given to us (prepared and usually unsolicited reciprocity for our having taken someone to see a doctor or to the hospital for ejidatarios in Mérida). By the time we left the community, "Perrita" was a plump and quite happy animal with a full and glossy coat of hair. People would comment on her obvious change in appearance and spirit but never asked us how the change actually occurred.

⁸This is a very common phrase encountered in the henequen zone. Workers often refer to the hacienda period prior to land reform as simply "el tiempo del esclavitud."

⁹Most authors refer to the earlier reform of governor Eleuterio Avila who first decreed an end to slavery and debt peonage in Yucatán (1914). These reforms were not effective and Edmundo Bolio (1967: 81) has referred to Avila as a "false revolutionary" and further states that "El decreto libertador de los indios, de haciendas, fue enmendado por una segunda disposicion que materialmente anulaba el alcance redentor del primero."

¹⁰Some data is available for migration into the State, but none for outmigration. This could be explored by examining national census materials for other of the Mexican states, looking for numbers of individuals who had reported their place of birth or origin as "Yucatán" for the various decades (where available). Such research is of interest to this author, but lies outside of the general scope and problem of this dissertation.

¹¹Don Joaquin Arrigunaga Peón assisted in locating the Maax parish documents and I gratefully acknowledge his assistance.

¹²In general, increasing infant survival rate increases the length of time between pregnancies due, especially in populations of low caloric intake and poor nutritional quality of the food, to a temporary inability on the part of the female to ovulate for the duration of the period of lactation (Henry, 1956: 53; Kolata, 1974: 934; Frisch and McArthur, 1974: 950).

¹³With regard to the "demographic revolution," T. Lynn Smith states that "In large measure this was due to the comprehensive health programs of the Rockefeller Foundation and the world health agencies, working in close cooperation with governments. These programs were highly successful in controlling communicable diseases such as smallpox, malaria, and the dysenteries--all of the causes of death that are susceptible to arrest by such means as vaccinations, injections, and the safeguarding of milk and water supplies. As a result, the death rates in the Latin American countries began to fall sharply and substantially" (1970: 30).

¹⁴Brown and Wray (1974: 47-49) suggest that changes in diet and general nutritional improvement have a much greater impact on the reduction of morbidity and mortality rates than the alteration of medical and health services. With regard to medical research in

highland Guatemalan communities, they state that "unfortunately, despite assumptions to the contrary, feasible medical methods for controlling infections in these children are not readily available at the village level" (1974: 49). Lowering of infant mortality rates in these villages, then, are attributed to changes in the diet and availability of food rather than particular health programs.

¹⁵Although the National Census was disrupted by the 1910 Mexican revolution, Yucatán was not immediately affected by the revolts.

¹⁶Figure 3 graphically depicts the data presented earlier on Table 8. Missing data for San Antonio for the period of 1910 was calculated and included based on utilizing birth and death records and assuming similarity in the calculated rates for the municipality and extending those rates to the analysis of records for San Antonio itself. The most credible of the various estimating assumptions tested was that of applying the Maax municipal death rate (47.9/1000) to the data on San Antonio. The calculated estimates resulted in a presumed population of 225 individuals and a birth rate for the community of 74.6/1000.

CHAPTER III

THE EJIDO OF SAN ANTONIO: LAND TENURE REFORM AND THE ECONOMICS OF PRODUCTION

Introduction

Revolutionary Legislation: The Ejido and the Ejidatario

Hacienda San Antonio: the First Phase of Reform

The Cardenas Reform: San Antonio and Anti-Reform Tactics

The Collective Ejido of San Antonio: from Federal Reform to State Control

San Antonio and the Federal Ejido Banks

The "Castigation" of Fiber

Ejido Productive Efficiency: Criticisms of Land Reform

Summary and Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter examines qualitative and quantitative aspects of land reform in the area of San Antonio. Expropriations reduced the original hacienda holdings by 86%, creating a much-reduced "small property" or pequeña propiedad. The community of resident laborers (acasillados) became a legally separate entity, an ejido, with 14% of the hacienda lands endowed by the federal government to economically support that population.

Land reform occurred in two phases. The first expropriation reduced the uncultivated, reserve holdings of the hacienda but left the acasillados unaffected. The second reform, ordered by President Lázaro Cárdenas, distributed additional land, much of it already planted in henequen, to the nearby towns of Maax and Xamach and, more importantly, provided the residents of San Antonio with ejido status. Prior to the Cárdenas reform, the owners of the hacienda attempted to divide the property into several small holdings and by that means diminish the effects of expropriation. The legal maneuvers, typical of many land-owning families (cf. Stavenhagen, 1970: 234), failed and the government, obviously intolerant of such attempts to negate the intent to redistribute the land, penalized the family, leaving less land for the pequeña propiedad than the maximum allowed by the agrarian code of the period.

Since land reform, ejido henequen production has never been completely managed by the ejidatarios themselves. This chapter examines aspects of control over the means of production (land, credit, processing equipment) which have been vested in State (Henequeneros de Yucatán), Federal (the ejido banks), and private institutions. The present status

of San Antonio is that of client, heavily in debt, and under the control of the Bangrario (Banco Agrario de Yucatán). The ejidatarios receive, in effect, wages for work assigned by the Bangrario. Henequen production is more than sufficient to cover the local costs of production, but the "profits" are absorbed as payment on a massive debt which reportedly accumulated during the period of the National Ejido Bank (Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal, 1955-1962).

Critics of agrarian reform in Yucatán cite the greater productivity of the private sector (pequeñas propiedades) as proof of an inherent inability of the ejidatario to demonstrate efficiency and care in the absence of strict supervision. When ejidatarios of San Antonio work on lands belonging to the pequeña propiedad they are paid less per unit of work and produce more fiber per hectare of land. The final section of this chapter examines the productive relationship existing between the ejidatarios and the owner of the private holdings. More particularly, factors relevant to understanding lowered productivity in the ejido sector are identified and discussed. In this context, the collective and individual or parcelized models of productive organization are compared.

Revolutionary Legislation: The Ejido and the Ejidatario

The term ejido has its roots in the early period of the conquest and colonization of Mexico. Use of the term ejido combined the varieties of indigenous village and clan-rights to communal use of lands in Mexico with Spanish concepts of individual parcels (propios) and communal town holdings (ejidos).¹ In colonial Mexico, ejido had come to include the

various Hispanic concepts (which were separate in Spain) of common, multi-use lands in the immediate vicinity of a town (ejido land), cultivable lands distributed as rented parcels to community members (propios), grasslands designated as communal pastures (pastos comunes or dehesas), and communally-held woodland areas (montes) supplying resources for fuel and construction (Whetten, 1948: 76-79; McBride, 1923: 106-107). As a result of the Mexican revolution of 1910, the concept of the ejido became transformed into a model for land reform. Article 27 of the post-revolutionary Mexican Constitution provided the legal basis empowering the government to undertake programs of land redistribution and reallocation to provide peasants with independent subsistence bases. Beginning with the declaration that ownership of lands and waters "is vested originally in the Nation" (Simpson, 1937: 749), Article 27 of the Constitution further asserts the absolute right of the government to institute necessary programs of land redistribution.

Proposition XIV. Landowners affected by resolutions already handed down granting or restoring ejidos or waters, in favor of villages, or which may be handed down in the future, shall enjoy no ordinary legal right nor recourse, and may not apply for an amparo (injunction) (Simpson, 1937: 754).

Specific agrarian reform legislation provided the means by which centers of population could petition for the return of usurped lands which had been lost to expanding private holdings. If community claims were vague or titles nonexistent, ejido lands would be granted outright by Federal action and sanctioned by Proposition X of Article 27.² Ejido lands-in-grant are generally referred to as "dotation units" (unidades de dotación) but there are, in fact, four types of grants of communal holdings. Restitution (restitución) refers to lands originally held

in common by a village but which were taken over by means of force or legal debt-foreclosure by private landholding agencies or families. Dotation (dotación) refers to the outright granting of lands and the legal establishment of an ejido in spite of lack of evidence or the precedent of communally held lands as documented in community or governmental archives. Enlargement (ampliación) of existing ejidal holdings may be granted to a petitioning population center which otherwise does not possess land equal to the established governmental minimum family allotment. The establishment of new population centers (redistribución) and the redistribution of lands may be instituted to create a new ejido structure including both lands and a new community of relocated peasants (Código,³ 1970, Libro Segundo: 22-39).

Both article 27 of the Mexican Constitution and the Agrarian Code of Mexico (Simpson, 1937: 759 ff.) stressed individualized exploitation of dotated communal ejido lands. Individual parcels were to be awarded to ejidatarios who were heads of household (or single males over sixteen years of age) by means of drawing lots (Simpson, 1937: 791, Article 132). Article 27 provided for the expropriation and redistribution of large landholding estates and at the same time defended the concept of the privately-owned, intensively exploited, "small property" or pequeña propiedad:

Proposition XV. Mixed Commissions, local Governments and other authorities entrusted with agrarian cases shall, under no circumstances, touch small agricultural properties in operation, and shall incur liability for violating the Constitution, should they make grants affecting such (Simpson, 1937: 755).

Article 27 was later revised to specify, in conformity with provisions of the Agrarian Code of 1933, that a pequeña propiedad would include

not more than 100 hectares of irrigable or "first class humid land," 200 hectares of seasonal land, "one-hundred-fifty hectares of land used for cultivation of cotton, . . . (or) three hundred hectares devoted to . . . henequen" or other plantation crops (coffee, sugar cane, banana, etc.) (Whetten, 1948: 621).

This concept of according protection to smallholdings allowed large landowners to select and retain, as a part of agrarian reform, an area of land which would meet the upper limits of the protected "pequeña propiedad." Landowners typically opted for the most fertile and irrigable of the estate lands plus the hacienda casco and, in the case of semi-industrialized plantation holdings, the local farm or processing machinery (such as the decorticating factory in Yucatán).

Prior to enactment of the Agrarian Code of 1933,⁴ smallholders (pequeños propietarios) were allowed to retain the resident worker communities of the hacienda as well as other lands and buildings. The hacienda resident workers (peones acasillados) were excluded from rights to expropriated lands and legal ejido status (Mendieta y Nuñez, 1968: 240-241). Even with their inclusion in the Agrarian Code, acasillados still could not petition directly for lands, but could only request their inclusion in the agrarian census of a nearby, petitioning population center. The Code provided for their inclusion only if enough land were available to provide minimal "units of dotation" to qualified town or village members and available excess land which could be assigned to an ejido of acasillados.

Article 44 of the 1933 Agrarian Code of Mexico (Simpson, 1937: 768-769) defines ejidatario as a peasant (campesino) who is native born,

whose primary occupation concerns the cultivation of the land, and whose holdings are such that the government deems it necessary to endow additional lands (units of dotation) to adequately support the campesino and his or her family.⁵ In order to receive such grants of ejidal land, the campesino must have resided in the petitioning population center at least six months prior to the initiation of proceedings or the formal request to receive legal status and lands as an ejido agrarian reform community.⁶ A peasant may lose rights as an ejidatario if he fails to cultivate the assigned parcel (if a member of an individualized ejido), fails to meet assigned work obligations (if a member of a collectivized ejido), or attempts to lease or sell ejidal property (Código, 1970: 145; Simpson, 1937: 795-796).

Hacienda San Antonio: The First Phase of Reform

Following the Mexican revolution, the original founder of Hacienda San Antonio found himself in financial and legal difficulties. With the arrival of General Alvarado in Yucatán (1917) there began an anti-Catholic policy which had been felt elsewhere in Mexico during the immediate, post-revolutionary period. The founder, administering a charitable fund linked with the Catholic church, was accused of mismanagement of funds and jailed by Alvarado. He was soon released but, disillusioned, went to Cuba in voluntary exile. He died shortly thereafter and the Hacienda was left to his widow and their children. It was during this period that the first phase of agrarian reform in Yucatán affected the holdings of Hacienda San Antonio.

In 1917, the town of Xamach filed a petition for restitution of ejido lands. With the presidential resolution of 1922, Xamach

received ejido status and a total of 1,923 hectares of which 180 hectares were expropriated from San Antonio. By 1919, Maax had petitioned the government for a dotation to endow ejido status and lands to that village. The resolution of 1924 dotated a total of 2,100 hectares from surrounding haciendas and of that total, 439 hectares were expropriated from the lands of San Antonio (Presidential Resolutions for Maax and Xamach, Archives of the Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización, DAAC).

Neither the acasillado residents⁷ nor the economic operation of the Hacienda were seriously affected by this first phase of land reform. Lands expropriated from the Hacienda were listed as "uncultivated" (inculto), lands that had been acquired to supply wood for the steam-driven decorticator and to supply a reserve area for future plantings of henequen. Under the provisions of earlier agrarian reform legislation stress was placed on maintaining the integrity of private holdings under intensive cultivation. The first phase of agrarian reform left the plantation and the core labor pool essentially untouched.

Hacienda San Antonio was affected by the legal difficulties and the exile of the founder to Cuba. In 1926, following the first phase of agrarian reform, the Hacienda was sold to another party, here referred to as Don Arturo. The new owner began a period of extending henequen fields (only part of the total uncultivated fields were expropriated) and renewing older plantings. Don Arturo held the Hacienda until a little more than a decade later when the second period of land reform reduced the holdings to the present size of approximately 230 hectares.

TABLE 10.--First Phase of Reform and Hacienda San Antonio.

Category	Holdings (Hectares) ^a	Percent ^b
San Antonio, Pre-Reform Holdings	1,642	100.0%
Restitution, Xamach (1922) ^c	180	10.9
Dotation, Maax (1924) ^c	439	26.7
Total Expropriation (1922-1924)	619	37.7
Remaining holdings of Hacienda San Antonio	1,023	62.3

^aFigures reported in D.I.S.A. and DAAC archives have been rounded to the nearest hectare.

^bDiscrepancies in the sum of percentages an effect of rounding.

^cDate indicates the year of publication of the Presidential Resolutions in the Diario Oficial of Yucatán.

The Cardenas Reform: San Antonio and Anti-Reform Tactics

The purchase of San Antonio represented an increase in the total holdings of the family of Don Arturo. His wife had inherited a larger hacienda, San Juan, in the vicinity of Maax and between the two holdings, Don Arturo managed a total area of nearly 2,500 hectares and an acasillado population of over four hundred individuals.⁸ In addition, the decorticators of both haciendas were the largest (in terms of capacity) in the immediate region.

In 1935, Don Arturo initiated a number of legal maneuvers in an attempt to thwart the intent of the approaching second phase of agrarian reform in Yucatán. The methods he used to disguise the ownership of the family properties were typical of counter-reform tactics used in the

henequen zone and, indeed, elsewhere in Mexico. From 1926 until 1934, both haciendas, San Juan and San Antonio, were listed in the land registry office as belonging to the wife of Don Arturo. In January of 1935, title of San Antonio was shifted to the name of Don Arturo. In June of 1935, Don Arturo "sold" 240 hectares of land to his daughter (who was nine years old at the time) and over 500 hectares to his son (who was three years of age), leaving nearly 300 hectares as his share of the holdings of San Antonio (D.I.S.A.). The children, according to the documents of title transfer, were to have been legally represented by their "special tutor," an individual who also happened to be the brother of Don Arturo.

The tactics were clear. Don Arturo hoped that by splitting the holdings among various members of the family, they would be legally recognized as separate entities. According to the original plan, each of the separate holdings would be exempted, up to the maximum of 300 hectares, as an individual *pequeña propiedad*. San Juan, although larger, could not be split into separate holdings since it had long been listed as a single, family-owned, property unit. San Antonio, on the other hand, had expanded during the latter part of the nineteenth century and two of the holdings (the ones which Don Arturo "sold") were listed as "anexas," as lands which had been separate units (independent "ranchos") but which were annexed to the Hacienda. The maneuver would have left the family of Don Arturo with total holdings of over 1,100 hectares instead of the allowable total of 300 hectares--if the tactic had worked.

The 1937 presidential resolution relative to the amplification of the ejido of Maax (DAAC archives) rejected the claimed sale and

division of property. Under the heading "Fincas Afectables para la Presente Ampliación," the various haciendas to be affected are described as to total holdings and status of ownership. With regard to San Antonio, the section states:

. . . it has been made to seem that this person (Don Arturo) divided these (holdings) into two parts, selling each one to the very same children of this marriage with (wife of Don Arturo) who is the same proprietress of San Juan, which sale in the instance of this case enjoys no legal validity. . .

With respect to the haciendas San Juan and San Antonio it has been proven that the acts of sale were simulated ones, that both holdings constitute a single industrial unit, that total usufruct was enjoyed by the same family, and that major economic gains from the exploitation and accumulation of benefits derived from same, is totally in favor of this same family (DAAC Archives, my translation).

Dan Arturo's maneuver had backfired totally, as indicated by the assignment of lands expropriated from the various haciendas:

The lands which are to be respected (as pequeña propiedad) are precisely those specified by article 51 of the Agrarian Code, as amended by decree number nine of this same year, in other words 150 hectares planted in henequen and the rest, in the corresponding proportion, in uncultivated lands, with the exception of finca San Juan which will be wholly expropriated, both henequen fields and uncultivated lands, by virtue of the fact that the owners are the same that own the holdings called San Antonio which is the only one to be respected as the pequeña propiedad (DAAC archives, my translation).⁹

Don Arturo was forced to retain San Antonio as the pequeña propiedad and lost completely the other, larger, family property of hacienda San Juan. The largest holdings lost, the major plantings of San Antonio now in the hands of the new ejidatarios of San Antonio, of Maax, and of Xamach, Don Arturo defaulted on the final due note of fifty thousand pesos and the Hacienda San Antonio reverted back to the heirs of the original founder of the hacienda. Don Arturo, who had invested much of his and his family's funds in the purchase and expansion

of production of San Antonio, was economically ruined. Informants in Merida who knew both Don Arturo and the founder of San Antonio reported that Don Arturo went into seclusion shortly after this loss of property and died an essentially defeated man. In all, only 14.4% of the pre-1917 holdings were given to the ejidatarios of San Antonio. The other ejidos of Maax and Xamach received 72.6% of the lands, and the pequeña propiedad of San Antonio remained with the casco, 14% of the original territory, and the decortivating factory.¹⁰

TABLE 11.--Second Phase of Reform and Hacienda San Antonio.

Category	Holdings (Hectares)	Percent
San Antonio, 1935 Holdings	1,023	100.0%
Ampliación, Municipality of Xamach (1939) ^a	272	26.6
Ampliación, Municipality of Maax (1939)	266	26.0
Dotación, Acasillados of San Antonio (1939)	236	23.0
Total Expropriated (1937-1939) ^b	774	75.6
Held as Individual Parcels ^c	20	2.0
Remnant Holdings: the Pequeña Propiedad	229	22.4%

^aThe dates refer to the year of publication of the presidential resolution in the Diario Oficial de Yucatán.

^bThe presidential resolutions for Maax and Xamach were issued in the latter part of 1937 and officially published over a year later.

^cShortly after 1900, the founder of San Antonio distributed twenty hectares, in small parcels, to acasillado heads of household for their own use. These have remained as the private holdings of some twenty-eight individuals with an average holding of approximately two-thirds of an hectare each. The majority of the parcels are planted in henequen and the present patterns of exploitation and ownership will be discussed more fully below.

Shortly following agrarian reform Don Manuel, the present owner of San Antonio and grandson (DaSo) of the original founder of the hacienda, began to act as representative of the other heirs in the administration of the pequeña propiedad. Beginning with the ten original heirs (referred to as socios or "co-owners") there began in 1942 a series of attempts by opposing factions to gain controlling interest in San Antonio. Two major factions (which included heirs and their spouses) developed, with Don Manuel as the strongest challenger and with each faction attempting to force the other to sell their shares.

The tactics were restricted by state laws concerning co-proprietorship which specify that regardless of an individual's share of the holdings, each socio has the power of a single vote in determining corporate policy. While prohibiting socios from distributing portions of their shares as obvious attempts to gain more votes, the law does allow shares of a deceased member to be sold as part of the financial liquidation of an estate, or a socio may sell all shares which she or he may own. In the latter instance, the other socios have the first option to buy any shares offered to non-socios. The leader of the major opposing faction had "sold" his share to his mother.¹¹ With her death in 1952, her share was equally divided among the leader and seven of his brothers and sisters as part of their inheritance of her estate. Within a short period of time, the father of Don Manuel died, an event which permitted Don Manuel, through the pattern of inheritance, to add seven members to his core of allies.

Since property held by spouses is considered communal property in Yucatán, half of the shares held by Don Manuel's mother (daughter of the founder of San Antonio) were distributed as part of the patrimony to four of her children and their spouses. By 1954, Don Manuel controlled the votes of eleven out of the total of twenty socios owning the pequeña propiedad. In that same year, Don Manuel challenged the opposition, threatening to force an auction of the pequeña propiedad and liquidate the holding society altogether. The opposition capitulated and agreed to sell their ownership to Don Manuel and his associates rather than submit to an auction and public sale of the holdings.¹² By 1962, Don Manuel had bought out the majority of relatives and friends who had supported him in his fight to gain control of the remnant holdings of the hacienda founded by his maternal grandfather. Only his wife, mother, and brother have retained minor shares in the pequeña propiedad, with Don Manuel himself owning 87.5% of the shares. (Based on D.I.S.A. records and extensive interviews with Don Manuel.)

Sections of the Agrarian Code and Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution specify that owners of expropriated lands are to be indemnified through the issue of special bonds for the declared evaluation of the lost holdings. According to Edmundo Flores (1961: 328-333), the laws passed during the post-revolutionary period were purposefully incomplete, contradictory, and lacked the terms necessary to effect indemnization. Flores' major point concerns the fact that the Mexican Government simply could not afford it. Summarizing, Flores states (1967: 120):

Only 170 national claimants, who presented 381 claims for the expropriation of a total area of 222,797 hectares, were

indemnified. This amounts to less than 0.5 percent of the total of 55 million hectares distributed until 1960.

. . . The rest of the lands granted to 2.5 million ejidatarios who were heads of families were expropriated without compensation. The peasants who benefited from the agrarian reform received free land grants.

Documents relative to the return of San Antonio and the later sales between the socios indicate that the hacienda owners received no compensation for the loss of either the lands of San Antonio or, in the case of Don Arturo, for the loss of the entire holdings of San Juan. The return of the hacienda and all sale documents, in fact, list the entire pre-reform holdings as well as those of the pequeña propiedad, indicating which had been dotated to the various ejidos and ending with a clause which states:

. . . with respect to those extensions of lands definitively affected in favor of ejidos by resolutions, this sale does not proclaim actual rights to those lands but rather to all of the rights and actions necessary to claim restitution or payment of appropriate indemnization for the affected lands and henequen fields (D.I.S.A., 1942, 1962, my translation).

In the case of Don Arturo, the lost value of the lands were significant but the expropriation of the industrial plant of San Juan represented a particularly sizeable loss to the transitory hacendado of San Antonio. While data were not available for San Juan, the following table lists the relative cadastral evaluation declared for the various fields, the casco, and the decorticating factory of San Antonio at the time of agrarian reform (D.I.S.A., 1935, 1938). Also included in the cadastral statement of 1935 (concerning the attempted sale of holdings to the children of Don Manuel) were inventory lists of the main Casco and community property of San Antonio.

TABLE 12.--San Antonio: Cadastral Value and Inventory.

Item (Pre-Reform, 1935)		Quantity	Value in Pesos
San Antonio	(a) Lands and Casco	246 hectares	\$ 2,642
	(b) Decorticator, Buildings	26 hectares	267,328
Annex I	Lands	69 hectares	2,940
Annex II	Lands	241 hectares	27,990
Annex III	Lands	440 hectares	62,300
Total Holdings		1,022 hectares	373,200

Casco Inventory (Pre-Reform, 1935)

Structures: 1 machinery building, 35 X 10 meters
1 administration building, 15 X 5 meters
1 recreation building, 30 X 40 meters
1 habitation, 25 X 10 meters
50 workers' houses, 8 X 10 meters each, wattle-and-daub

Cattle	None
Production per thousand leaves	24 Kilograms of Fiber
Annual Production of Fiber	184,000 Kilograms
Decorticator	Prieto Vencedora
Boiler	Bacok
Motors	Robey, 35 hp.
(a) Steam	De la Vergne, 100 hp.
(b) Fuel Oil	
Mules	24 head
Decauville rail and cart system	4 Kilometers

Item (Post-Reform, 1938)	Hectares	Value
San Antonio:		
Casco, land, buildings, machinery, etc. ^a	104	\$ 41,510
Field II (Uncultivated)	48	430
Field III (Cultivated in Henequen)	69	2,940
Total Value (at time of return to heirs)	221	44,880

^aThis list was taken from the copy of sale to the original heirs and addressed to the director of the cadastral office. It appears that the lands and the evaluation of the casco and core are under-rated. Don Manuel's records indicate the core holdings at 112 hectares and Don Arturo had earlier declared \$267,328 pesos as the casco worth.

It is clear from the table (Table 12) that it is difficult to obtain an estimation of the true market value of the pequeña propiedad and the decorticating factory from the tax or cadastral records. The 1935 list is probably most accurate, since it would be reasonable to state the highest price possible if expropriation were to result in potential claims for indemnization. The post-reform value is considerably lower and, while "buildings, machinery, etc." are mentioned, it is not clear whether the price for the core area of San Antonio (\$41,510) actually included the evaluation placed on the decorticator. When, as mentioned above, disputes between the various socios led to an agreement to auction the hacienda, the participants specified (D.I.S.A., 1954) that the minimum acceptable starting bid would be \$600,000 pesos. The auction list included the machinery, rest of the casco, 225 hectares of land, and "the right to future restitution or indemnization" for all other lands lost as a result of agrarian reform. This, it would seem, provides a more probable estimate of the worth of the pequeña propiedad at least during the period of the proposed (but never instituted) auction. One further item of note concerns the earlier cadastral evaluation of 1935 which imposed a fixed value of \$125 pesos per hectare on lands under cultivation (cultivo) and \$9 pesos per hectare on lands already in production. This differentiation in evaluation constitutes an official recognition of the fact that the preparation and cultivation of henequen fields (for the first five to seven years) represent a continual investment without economic return.

Land reform in Yucatán was neither a simple nor a merely mechanical implementation of the program and law as dictated by

President Lázaro Cárdenas. The earlier reforms during the administrations of General Salvador Alvarado (1915-1918) and Felipe Carrillo Puerto (1918, 1922-1923) established village ejidos yet affected little the economic operation of the henequen haciendas. Alvarado's labor reform legislation and attempts to control the political strengths of the hacendados and the catholic church had a greater impact on the operation of San Antonio. The original founder, prosecuted by Alvarado for his involvement in a church-related benefit fund, was forced to abandon both the hacienda and Yucatán itself. The second owner, attempting to avoid the effects of agrarian reform, was himself economically destroyed by the counter-actions of the governmental reform commissions. During the post-reform period, there began a series of maneuvers finally culminating in the victory for control of the present owner of the pequeña propiedad of San Antonio. The worth of the pequeña propiedad, more than the actual lands, is associated principally with the decorticating factory and associated equipment. The hacendados, for the most part, continued to enjoy a monopoly, during the post-reform period, over the processing factories in the rural areas and, therefore, continued to control one of the key means of production in the State's henequen industry. Don Arturo's loss of the lands and the casco of San Juan represents one of the exceptions to the course of actual reform in Yucatán which left as protected and untouched, the pequeña propiedad as defined, within allowable limits, by the ex-hacendados themselves.¹³

From informant interviews among the older members of the community of San Antonio, it appears that the change in ownership and the subsequent factionalization of the socios into opposing groups left

the operation of the pequeña propiedad essentially unaffected. Many informants confused Don Arturo with the hacienda founder, confusing both names and sequences of events surrounding agrarian reform. Once a group discussion would begin, however, the facts would be sorted and consensus would generally mirror the actual course of events and genealogical connection between many of the socios. One informant described the factionalization as simply "su pleito entre ricos," "a squabble among the rich," and of little consequence for their lives as acasillados.

The Collective Ejido of San Antonio: From Federal
Reform to State Control

The creation of the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal (1936), the inclusion of acasillados in the Agrarian Code of 1934, and the emphasis on collective organization of plantation ejidos were three major aspects of Cardenas' reform program which effected the creation and the present form of land exploitation in the ejido of San Antonio. The acasillados, excluded from the earlier reform of 1917-1924, were included in the agrarian census of Maax.¹⁴ Organized as an ejido colectivo de acasillados, San Antonio was to have been placed under the financial wing of the Banjidal. The charter of the Banjidal enabled that institution to function as a source of credit and capital for collectively-organized ejidos. Cardenas' intent was to impose collectivized forms of exploitation (rather than allow parcelization of ejido lands) in areas where patterns of plantation agriculture would produce the greatest economic return through an "integrated" form of organization.

San Antonio received, along with "collective" status, community house lots (solares), the hacienda store, half of which served as the ejido office and the other half rented out as community store, and a total of 58 "dotation units" plus one additional unit as "parcela escolar" to be used in financially supporting the local school. Based on the amount of land under cultivation at the time, there were enough hectares to grant ejidatario status to forty-four individuals with fourteen "units" corresponding to "inculto" lands and held in reserve for future expansion of the ejido (DAAC Archives). Typical of the problems experienced by many newly-created or expanded ejidos, the hacendados retained most of the lands which were capable of providing economic returns and the ejidos received lands which were nearing the end of their productive cycle (decadencia or X-lahpach) or which were newly planted (cultivo) and required several years' investment (weeding and maintenance operations) to bring them into production. Nearly 60% of the lands held by the pequeña propiedad in San Antonio were in the early stages of production (mateo and explotación) while ejido lands producing henequen accounted for only 20% of the total holdings. The ejidatarios originally had usufruct rights to use the desfibradora (decorticator) factory and the owners of the pequeña propiedad were paid for that use. The new owners of the pequeña propiedad no longer had to pay wages to clear the land, cultivate, weed or harvest the henequen. They were saved the long-term investment necessary to bring a field into production but still gained from not only production on their lands, but from ejido production as well.

Within six months following the initiation of Cárdenas' reform, Governor Humberto Canto Echeverría established Henequeneros de Yucatán

to manage the "Great Ejido" of Yucatán and put an end to what he viewed as the period of "federal intervention" in State affairs (Rodríguez, 1966: 270-271). The individual ejidos continued to operate organizationally as specified by the Agrarian Code of Mexico, electing an administrative set of officers, the Comisariado Ejidal, and a watchdog committee, the Junta de Vigilancia. These elected officials, however, had no control over the actual operation of the henequen ejidos nor did they function as more than rubber stamps under the direction of an assigned representative (not from the community) of the State agency. Henequeneros controlled the distribution of work and payment to the ejidatarios.

Under the direction of henequeneros, the ejidatarios were treated as one massive, collective labor pool to work on what Canto Echeverría reportedly referred to as "la finca henequenera más grande del mundo" (Rodríguez, 1966: 277), or the greatest henequen hacienda in the world. For the ejidatarios of San Antonio, this meant that they were to work not simply on lands assigned to their own ejido, but they were joined with the ejidatarios of Maax and Xamach to work as members of labor gangs on lands within the general area. The beginnings of Henequeneros were rooted in the facts of inequitable distribution of cultivable and cultivated henequen lands to the various ejidos. Rather than solve the problem over the long run, the action actually perpetuated the inequities, perhaps even accenting them especially for the ejido of San Antonio. As detailed below, the period of assertion of Federal control, beginning in 1955 with the dissolution of Henequeneros, necessitated a period of lowered earnings and mounting

indebtedness as the ejidatarios of San Antonio began to replant fields which had gone out of production. The ejido had not achieved, during the seventeen years under Henequeneros de Yucatán, a balance in the distribution between new fields and fields already in production; a balance which would maximize production and minimize the amount of land which, at any given time, would require labor investment without economic return.

Actual production data and other records of San Antonio are nonexistent for the period of control by Henequeneros.¹⁵ Don Leonardo, the first elected president of the ejido, recalled that some profits were distributed to ejidatarios during this period but that they actually amounted to a very small amount of money. During Henequeneros, the decortivating plant was turned over to the ejidatarios for the processing of ejido fiber. Ejidatarios would operate the plant (exercizing usufruct rights) but the pequeño propietario retained ownership and management of the factory for the processing of his own fiber or fiber obtained from parcel owners. Henequeneros paid the salaries of both the field workers and the factory workers during the decortication of ejido leaves, and the wages were charged against the account of the ejido. An official investigative report filed by an employee of the Departamento Agrario en Yucatán (later changed to DAAC) in 1951 described the economic relations which existed between the owner of the San Antonio decortivating plant, Henequeneros, and the members of the ejido of Xamach:¹⁶

(For leaves) decorticated in San Antonio, and solely for that operation, Henequeneros turns over 50% of the brute product of decortication (to the decorticator); in this case, given an

average of 25 kilograms produced per thousand (leaves), this percentage amounts to 123,500 kilos which, at \$1.50 per kilo, amounts to \$185,250 pesos. This occurs in spite of the fact that the owners of decortivating plants in the henequen zone from Conkal to Telchak charge \$5.00 pesos per thousand for decortication. With this (charge) the decortication would have cost a total of 49,000 pesos with (in this case) there remaining an inexplicable difference favorable to the decorticator of \$136,250 pesos; this is without taking into account the year end dividend, of which no regard is ever given to the peasant who serves the smallholder, who never receives a dividend of any type, and in which case the dividend referred to, in its totality, is for the decorticator. The decorticator provides the peasant only with a job (jornal) equal to the advance payment (anticipo) given by Henequeneros to the workers who must give up dividends on the other 50% (of the fiber) since it is considered solely for the cultivation and production of henequen and not for the semi-industrialization (processing) for which the other 50% is assigned and turned over to the owner of the decortivating plant. (DAAC Archives, letter of 12/12/1951, my translation).

The above assertion that desfibración charges were usually \$5.00 pesos per thousand leaves seems, at first, to be unrealistically low. In 1955, the Banjidal calculated the costs of decortication as ranging between \$4.77 and \$5.29/thousand, depending on whether the motive force was provided by fuel oil or steam, respectively (Soberon, 1959: 67). These figures were based on a Banjidal study of the henequen zone undertaken as the federal government prepared to assume control over production on ejidos. The figure of five pesos per millar in the DAAC report (above) seems unrealistic except for the fact that the Banjidal estimates include \$3.93 per millar as labor costs and \$0.84 to \$1.36 per millar as covering the costs of fuel, lubricants, spare parts, and the costs of repairs to the equipment. The labor costs, as noted in the DAAC report, were covered by advance payments (anticipos) made to the owner of the decortivating plant for personnel needed in the processing operation. Out of the estimated \$49,000 pesos payment for decortication of fiber (in the DAAC report, above) the

profit to the owner would have amounted to between \$35,770 and \$40,760 pesos.¹⁷

Both ejido and privately-produced fiber were subjected to a set of taxes and other discounts imposed by the State. The ejidos, since they were primarily operating on credit, and since the ejidatarios were charged for the continuation of medical services in the ejidal hospital Veinte de Noviembre, were discounted more heavily for the sale of their fiber. The following table (Table 13) lists the various taxes and other items discounted from the sale of fiber and, based on the total included in the DAAC report, a distribution of income between ejido, decorticator, and the State has been calculated. The base is the total production cited for the ejido of Xamach and the resultant two-way split of the fiber.

The same 1951 DAAC report cited above, specified that weeding operations were paid at the rate of four pesos per mecate, cutting at four pesos per thousand leaves, and that the Xamach ejido possessed a total of 3,920 mecates in production (about 157 hectares) and varying from seven to fourteen years in age. Using these figures and assuming two weeding cycles per year,¹⁹ the following minimum costs of production have been calculated (see Table 14). As Don Leonardo had pointed out in his recollections of San Antonio under Henequeneros, the ejidatarios were assigned tasks, were essentially paid for work performed, and received little in the way of extra dividends from the sale of fiber produced by their labor. The ejido "profits" indicated below actually disappear when one takes into account other necessary expenses such as wages to ejido officials, work needed to maintain fields, walls, firebreaks, access roads, etc.

TABLE 13.--Distribution from Sale of Henequen: 1951-1954.¹⁸

Category	Pesos/Kilogram	Percent
<u>State Discounts (Henequeneros, etc.)</u>		
State Tax	\$ 0.1400	
Transportation to Mérida	0.1794	
Handling and Warehousing Charges	0.0250	
<u>Total Discounted, Private Fiber</u>	<u>0.3444/Kilogram</u>	
Ejido Medical Facilities, Mérida	0.0934	
Interest Charged against Credit	0.0208	
<u>Total Discounted, Ejido Fiber</u>	<u>0.4676/Kilogram</u>	
<u>Distribution of Sale from Total Ejido Fiber</u>		
Total Sale Price	\$ 370,500	1.50/Kilogram 100.0%
Discounted (Total)	100,282	0.406 27.1%
To Decorticator Owner	142,717	0.577 38.5%
Ejido Income (Total)	127,501	0.517 34.4%

TABLE 14.--Costs of Production, 1951.

Category	Estimated Salary
Chapeo (weeding 157 hectares)	\$ 31,360
Corte (cutting 9,800,000 leaves)	39,200
Wages to workers in decorticating plant at \$392.96/100,000 leaves (Soberon, 1966: 67)	38,510
<u>Estimated Costs of Production to Ejido</u>	<u>109,070 (0.442/Kilo)</u>
<u>Estimated Ejido Income from Sale of Fiber</u>	<u>127,501 (0.517/Kilo)</u>
<u>Estimated "Profit" to the Ejido</u>	<u>18,431 (0.075/Kilo)</u>

Indicative of the fact that most ejidos were operating at a loss, the Federal Government, in 1954, began to subsidize ejido earnings at the rate of \$0.17/kilogram of fiber, increasing the governmental calculation of \$0.52/kilogram to \$0.69/kilogram as the total ejido income for its share of the fiber produced (González, 1970: 342).²⁰ Gilberto Flores Muñoz, Secretary of Agriculture in 1955, was one of the officials responsible for the dissolution of Henequeneros de Yucatán and the resumption of control over ejido production by the Federal Banjidal. Interviewed in Yucatán (1/27/1955), Flores stated:

In the first place, our opinion is that the organization called the Gran Ejido should be terminated in order to re-integrate the legal and social personalities of this community (of ejidos) in accordance with presidential dotations and the dispositions of the Agrarian Code. Unfortunately, the existence of the Gran Ejido has been destroying the stimulus and initiative of the peasant, converting him into a simple wage laborer. A peasant, in order to feel himself truly the possessor (of his land), should from the start have the freedom to manage it himself and receive the full fruits of his labor and personal efforts (González, 1970: 342, my translation).

San Antonio and the Federal Ejido Banks

On February 16, 1955, the President of Mexico ordered the dissolution of Henequeneros de Yucatán. The ejidos, referred to as "local credit societies," were placed under the administration of the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal (Banjidal) and, following 1962, under the subsidiary Banco Agrario de Yucatán (Bangaraio). Preparatory to the end of Henequeneros, the federal government not only initiated subsidization (as detailed in the previous section) but also, in 1954, reorganized decortication by contract payment (cf. Table 15) instead of the previous division of the brute quantity of fiber produced. This pattern of contracting decortication between the ejido credit societies

TABLE 15.--Decortication Rates (Pesos/Kilogram).^a

Grade ^b	1954 ^c	1969 ^d
A	\$0.46	\$0.60
B	0.44	0.58
ML	0.43	0.56
C	0.42	0.56
MC	0.40	0.51
Declassified	--	0.45 ^e

^aDeducted from the sale of fiber and paid directly to the owner of the decortivating factory for fiber that is "dry and baled for shipment."

^bGrades describe a range of quality from long, clean, and white ("A") to dirty, short, stained, and matted (poorly processed or "Desclasificado").

^cOscar Soberon, 1959: 105.

^dBanco Agrario de Yucatán, Contrato de Desfibración, 1969 (Xerox copy provided by the Banco Agrario).

^eThe contract specifies that declassified fiber will be paid at the "MC" rate unless the poor quality is proven to be caused by improper processing.

and the private factory owners is presently arranged through the Bangrario offices.

With the abandonment of the Great Ejido, ejidatarios were once again defined as an independent group of agricultural workers having usufruct rights to a particular area of land. The ejido boundaries were respected and in the collective ejidos such as San Antonio, only legitimate members were assigned work on those lands. A major difference, however concerns the processing of leaves. The owner of the pequeña propiedad provides additional employment for the ejidatarios which is paid for from the contracted decortication rates,

pegged to the quality of fiber produced, rather than being paid from ejido accounts. Ejido personnel calculate the number of leaves processed,²¹ and supervise the drying and weighing of all ejido fiber to be packed and shipped to Mérida. As a safeguard for ejido production, the ejido checks production at each stage in the processing and baling and manages the accounting of the fiber produced.

Like those of Henequeneros, details of the economics of production in San Antonio were not available for the period of the Banjidal (1955 to 1962). Presently located in the archives of the Bangrario, these data were made available to neither this investigator nor the officials of the ejido of San Antonio. Lacking facilities, records are not usually retained in the ejido for longer than a few years at a time. Outgoing comisariado presidents take the records to their houses where they become used for other purposes, or where they simply deteriorate in the heat and humidity of the Yucatecan climate. Mexican agrarian legislation of the period, does provide information relative to the restructuring of ejidos following the 1955 return of the Banjidal to Yucatán.

By the end of 1955, the Agricultural Credit Law of President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines was passed and thereafter utilized in the reorganization of production and ejidos in the henequen zone. This law established a national agricultural credit system to service both the ejidal sector (through the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal and subsidiary regional ejido banks) and the private sector (through the Banco Nacional de Crédito Agrícola). The various provisions of Article 38²² empower the Banjidal to provide credit assistance to

"local ejidal credit societies." Ejidal credit societies may operate within the credit system without initial capital as a security fund if that society operates as a "solidary" unit (Articles 38, 40, 43).

"Solidary" unit refers to a cooperative operation in which members either cultivate individual parcels of ejido lands (parcelarios) or, as in the case of the ejido of San Antonio, collectively exploit the landholdings. In larger ejidos, sub-groups of ejidatarios may legally initiate, cooperatively, a credit relationship with the Banjidal as grupos solidarios (Articles 45, 48), but the grupos are considered as organizationally part of the original ejido and may vote to recombine financially and productively once they have terminated all indebtedness to the Banjidal. After 1962, the Bangrario encouraged the formation of grupos solidarios in the larger town ejidos. This represented an attempt to better control the financial operation of the ejidos by splitting local control among a number of individuals and making the elected officials potentially more responsive to a smaller group of workers. San Antonio, due to its small number of members, has remained a collective ejido and a single, local credit society.²³

Once an ejido or group of ejidatarios becomes the client of an ejido bank, they may neither enter into financial agreements with other institutions or individuals (Article 119) nor change the constituted operation of the group (Article 51) for the duration of indebtedness without express approval of the bank. Under the provisions of the Agrarian Credit Law, the ejido banks are authorized to extend various categories of loans of which two, avío and refaccionario loans, have been utilized in the operation of San Antonio. Avío loans are short-term loans extended to primarily cover expenses involved in a single,

annual, cycle of agricultural activities, those operations requiring substantial investment in labor prior to the harvest and sale of the product grown. The term of repayment for avío loans is eighteen months (Article 55) and the interest rate, in 1971, amounted to 12% per year. Avío loans are typically extended to ejidos as anticipos or advanced weekly payments to cover the work performed in cultivation, weeding, and harvesting operations. With each shipment of fiber for sale in Mérida, the charges for state taxes, decortication, health insurance, warehousing, transportation and handling charges, are deducted from the total price obtained. The remaining amount from the sale of fiber is applied to, in turn, the payment of avío interest charges, avío principal, and charges related to refaccionario or long-term loans. Refaccionario loans, at a 4% interest rate, are generally extended to cover capital investment in the purchase of farm machinery or the cultivation of plantation crops, such as henequen, which require a long-term investment before returns can be realized (Article 56). The term for repayment of refaccionario loans is variable, depending on the specific use: five years to cultivate lands for the first time, eight years for the purchase of machinery, and twelve years for the cultivation of cyclical crops such as henequen, which require several years to bring into production. Repayment of refaccionario loans, of the latter type, begins when the fields are brought into production and is spread over a five year period (Article 56).

The Agricultural Credit Law provides the legal basis for the present de facto control exerted by the Bangrario over the management of the ejido of San Antonio. Article 63 states that unpaid debts may

be deferred by the ejido bank, as necessary, according to the ability of the ejido to repay the debt at some time in the future. Article 63 also empowers the ejido bank, upon default of loan payments, to take effective possession of the holdings of the local credit society and manage the operation of the unit until the termination of indebtedness. For the ejido of San Antonio, the control exerted by the Bangrario is absolute. With a declared indebtedness of nearly \$500,000 pesos, there is little likelihood that the ejido will be able to free itself from this credit relationship in the foreseeable future.

In practice, the ejidatarios of San Antonio, via a local agency of the Bangrario, receive weekly work assignment sheets which specify the type and amount of work to be performed (mecates to be weeded, millares of leaves to be cut, etc.) and the rate at which anticipos will be authorized.²⁴ At the end of the week (Saturday), the ejido officials go to Xamach in the morning to receive anticipo payments and the work sheets for the following week; returning to San Antonio, the officials disburse wage payments for work performed in the previous week and salary payments authorized for themselves and the appointed work inspectors (chekadores). The Bangrario lists the anticipos as avío or short-term loans extended to cover the costs of production until sale of fiber produced can be realized. The ejidatarios, since they receive payment for work authorized and since they have not received dividends or profits from the sale of ejido fiber, refer to the anticipos as, simply, "salary."

In 1963, at the suggestion of the owner of the pequeña propiedad, San Antonio appealed to the Bangrario for status as a grupo autónomo,

to enter into a financial agreement with the pequeño propietario rather than the Bangrario. In letters sent to the Bangrario and DAAC (2/20/1963), the president of the ejido requested a detailed summary of the financial status of the ejido vis-a-vis the Bangrario. The letter included the phrase "according to rumors, debts exist which are still pending" (DAAC Archives). The ejidatarios themselves evidenced ignorance as to the exact indebtedness of the society to the Bangrario. In May of 1963, the Bangrario sent a representative to the ejido to study the form of payment of the outstanding ejidal debt and, by April of 1964, the Bangrario agreed to allow the ejido to operate autonomously (financially independent) so long as the ejido continued to make payments on the debt.

Recognizing . . . that the Local Credit Society of San Antonio owes the Banco Agrario de Yucatán, S.A., up to the eleventh agricultural week of this year, the amount of \$485,104.66 which representatives of said society are obligated to continue covering in payment by means of a 15% discount from earnings on each shipment of henequen which they shall make to this institution, until total repayment of the debt (DAAC Archives, Meeting and Agreement of 4/9/1964; my translation).

In the same notification of agreement, the Bangrario declared its intention to retain rights over all henequen fields and the product of those fields as security on the outstanding debt. The Bangrario received the henequen in its warehouses in Mérida, deducted 15% for the loan payment and turned over the difference to the new creditor of San Antonio, to the owner of the decorticator and the pequeña propiedad of ex-hacienda San Antonio.

The original intention, as stated by Don Manuel, was to allow the ejidatarios to take advantage of higher market price for henequen fiber. Don Manuel, by supervising ejido production, would gain both

from decortication payment, which payment increases per kilo with the quality of the fiber, and from interest charged against the anticipos which his office would pay for work performed in the ejido. Don Manuel would also have the use of any ejido capital (profits from the sale of fiber) until the year-end accounting and distribution of dividends. The intentions did not bear fruit, however, for the price of henequen dropped the following year and, by the latter part of 1968, the ejido debt had risen from \$485,104.66 (1963) to a total of \$535,921.34 (Sept., 1968).

TABLE 16.--Rural Price of Henequen.^a

Year	Price/Kilogram	Ejido Status
1962	\$ 1.82	Bangrario Client
1963	2.31	Bangrario
1964	2.39	Bangrario/Autónomo
1965	1.45	Autónomo
1966	1.30	Autónomo
1967	1.30	Autónomo
1968	1.30	Autónomo/Bangrario
1969	1.30	Bangrario Client

^aFrom S.A.G., Mérida office, Xerox copies of yearly "Concentración de Datos de Cultivo: Henequén" records. The "rural price" represents the S.A.G. calculation of the average price received by producers for henequen, rather than the world market price for fiber.

Of the debt owed to the Bangrario in 1968, \$488,983.75 was identified as fiduciario, as a debt which had accumulated during the 1955-1962 operation of the Banjidal and entrusted for collection to the regional Bangrario. The actual account of the ejido, which covered

operations under the direct control of the Bangrario (bancario account) showed an accumulated debt of only \$47,145.73, with most of that debt retired by the end of fiscal 1968. With regard to the massive Banjidal debt, the ejidatarios explained that with the dissolution of Henequeneros, the fields of the ejido were ending their cycle of production. The debt, reportedly, was attributed to a period of replanting followed by several years of unproductive weeding and maintenance operations. The Banjidal and, later, the Bangrario continued to extend loans to cover production and other costs, but the ejido lacked the financial ability to repay the loans. By 1969, at which time the Bangrario ceased charging interest against the fiduciary accounts, the ejido owed a total of \$463,855.37 with nearly half that amount (\$198,127.94) listed as interest on the total outstanding loan debt of \$265,727.43. Based on the few Bangrario records available, the following table summarizes the status of the account with the Bangrario for the first week of 1968 (latter part of the autónomo period), the 36th week of 1968 (when the ejido once again became a "client" of the Bangrario), and the 5th week of 1971 (the most recent made available by the Bangrario).²⁵

From the beginning of 1968 until early 1971, the ejido had apparently produced enough fiber to cover the costs of production, the interest on the bancario loans, the costs of decortication, the state tax and health service charges, and the administrative charges of the Bangrario. In addition, the Bangrario credited a "profit" of \$61,242.69 to the debt-account of the ejido. This credit was reduced, however, to \$37,898.55 by fiduciary interest charges which continued

TABLE 17.--Bangrario Financial Statements for San Antonio.

Debt Category	1/1968	9/1968	12/1968	2/1971
<u>Bancario^a</u>				
Total	18,800.46	47,145.73	12,053.56	18,260.84
<u>Fiduciario^b</u>				
Avío	121,634.06	96,265.97	96,265.97	60,930.99
Refaccionario	204,796.44	204,796.44	204,796.44	204,796.44
Interest	174,783.80	187,713.20	193,459.38	198,127.94
Total	501,214.30	488,775.61	494,521.79	463,855.37
<u>Total Debt</u>	520,014.76	535,921.34	506,575.35	482,116.21

^aRefers to the debt existing between the ejido and the Bangrario.

^bRefers to the outstanding debt which reportedly accumulated (except for interest) during the Banjidal administration (1955-1962) of San Antonio.

to accumulate until terminated in 1969. Were it not for the existence of the fiduciary debt, the ejidatarios of San Antonio would have received dividends above the amount of the anticipos paid by the Bangrario.²⁶ The existence of the debt and the resultant control exerted over the ejido production, lead the ejidatarios to view the Bangrario as a neo-paternalistic, yet impersonalized and faceless, institution; the anticipos are viewed as wages for piece-work (jornales or tareas) as authorized by that institution.

The "Castigation" of Fiber

In 1968, after San Antonio had resumed operating as a client of the Bangrario, the relative economic return on processed fiber

increased significantly. The Bangrario offered greater subsidies to its clients than those given by the government to autonomous ejidos. As well, the Bangrario classified the ejido fiber at grades higher than those experienced during the autonomous period. Cordemex, the federally controlled manufacturing and marketing monopoly, receives all ejido fiber from the Bangrario. After 1969, Cordemex began to downgrade or declassify ejido fiber ("castigate"--castigar--is the term used in Yucatán). The decorticating plant of San Antonio has not been changed significantly over the past few years, the processing procedures remain the same, the owner regularly repairs and maintains the equipment, yet fiber produced has fluctuated considerably in quality, at least as classed in Mérida, castigated by Cordemex.²⁷

With each shipment of fiber sent to Mérida, the ejidatarios of San Antonio complained of the Cordemex practice of "castigating" the ejido fiber. In their own assessment, the Bangrario would reduce total work assignments if income derived from the sale of ejido fiber was reduced too drastically. Ejido officials would discuss the absence of dividends or profit returns from community fiber, but their time was more often spent in the attempt to increase the weekly work allotment or to at least counter Bangrario threats to reduce the work authorized.

The ejidatarios, at the suggestion of the pequeño propietario, experimented with a project to increase both the grade of fiber baled and the number of authorized jobs. Young women were trained to separate long, unstained fiber from the lower quality fiber. The selected fiber was baled separately, clearly marked as to classification and quality,

TABLE 18.--Classification of Fiber in San Antonio.

Grade ^a	1968 Antónomo ^b	1968 Bangrario ^c	1971 Bangrario/Cordemex ^d
A	--	--	0.48%
B	0.74%	47.18%	0.62%
ML Esp.	--	--	7.41%
ML	34.79%	25.62%	24.41%
C	24.72%	1.48%	1.91%
MC	37.34%	25.56%	39.35%
Declassified	2.42%	1.15%	25.77%
<u>Average Price/Kilogram^e</u>			
Average Market Price	\$1.26	\$1.36	\$1.18 ^f
Bangrario Subsidy	.60	1.30	1.08 ^f
Total Price/Kilogram	1.86	2.66	2.26 ^f

^aThe fiber grades range from long, clean and white fiber ("A") to fiber that is short, stained, matted, and poorly processed ("Desclasificado").

^bThe figures in this column are based on Bangrario shipment receipt records during the autonomous period from the first to the thirty-sixth week of 1968.

^cThe figures in this column are based on Bangrario shipment receipt records following re-establishment as a client of that institution, from the thirty-sixth through the fifty-second week of 1968.

^dSince specific receipts for fiber had not been received by San Antonio since 1968, the distribution of fiber by grade for 1971 is that published in "Calidades de Fibra Ejidal," a report released by the Bangrario to the Diario de Yucatán (1/31/1972: 2).

^eThe 1968 prices are those included in the Bangrario fiber receipts, an average of total income and subsidy payments. The price of fiber did not change, but the greater amount accepted as "B" during the Bangrario period increased the average price received in Mérida for the fiber.

^fThe average prices are those reported in the article, "Excedente en 1971 en el Banco (Agrario)" (Diario de Yucatán, 2/26/1972).

and sent as part of a larger shipment to the Bangrario warehouse. Cordemex made no distinction between the select and regular bales of fiber and classed the whole shipment as low in quality. The president of the ejido, who had supervised the operation, was discouraged and the experiment was terminated. The Bangrario refused to extend anticipo loans to continue paying the wages of the girls employed since the attempt to improve the quality of fiber had not, according to Cordemex, actually changed the grade of fiber shipped. The experiment to provide additional employment for members of ejidatario families failed totally.

The experiment illustrates one dimension of the symbiotic relationship which exists between the ejido and the pequeño propietario. Don Manuel both suggested the project and subsidized the payment of wages to the girls involved in the week-long experiment. Had it succeeded, the ejido debt to the Bangrario would have been further reduced and, more importantly for the ejidatarios, family incomes would have increased. The pequeño propietario would have also benefited from the higher classification of processed fiber. As noted above, the pequeño propietario, owner of the decorticating factory, is paid on the basis of the quality of fiber produced. For every ten thousand kilos of fiber classed as "B" rather than "Declassified," the owner could have increased his own profit by approximately one thousand pesos. The owner's motives, while not altruistic, would have resulted in mutually beneficial increases in income for both himself and the ejido, had the fiber been accepted as originally classed at the factory.

The declassification of ejidal fiber affects the financial operation of the Bangrario. The bank is caught in the double bind

of trying to improve the quality and quantity of ejidal production and maintain a work-load level adequate to maintain ejido henequen fields and to create new plantings for future production. Since the former is determined by independent action concerning grading and pricing by Cordemex, the bank claims the latter creates continual deficits in the operation of the bank. The average amount credited to an ejido for the sale of a kilogram of fiber is \$2.26 pesos (\$1.18 as market value and \$1.08 in federal subsidies) yet the Bangrario calculates that the total cost of producing one kilogram of fiber is \$3.59, creating a \$1.33 pesos loss to the bank (Diario de Yucatán, 2/26/1972). The Bangrario maintains that fiber is not "castigated" but that a rigid attempt, for the first time, is being made to enforce standards and control quality. The Bangrario blames the deficits on inefficiency of production in the ejidal sector, the poor quality of work performed, and the large number of aviadores, purveyors, who skim ejido salaries by means of kickbacks, illegal "discounts" made from workers wages, and wages paid to nonexistent workers (nóminas fantasmas) or for work simply not done.

Instances of outright fraud perpetrated by ejido officials seems to be a problem particularly in the larger town ejidos (cf. Raymond's 1971 study of a town ejido in the henequen zone). One case of an official in San Antonio accused of skimming wages (denied by the individual) resulted in his resignation forced by the other ejidatarios. He served only six months of his three-year term as president (this case is discussed more fully in a following chapter). Production on ejido lands is lower, in San Antonio, than on the private

holding, but the ejido has managed to produce sufficient fiber to more than cover the costs of production.

During the annual cycle of 1970, the ejido of San Antonio produced a total of 143,916 kilograms of fiber from 5,506 millar (thousands of leaves), an average of 26.2 kilograms per millar. Some of the fiber was used locally (to produce twine for hammocks, etc.) and since the last cutting cycle of the year lapsed into the beginning of 1971, part of the total fiber was not shipped until after the end of the fiscal year. The total fiber shipped during 1970 amounted to 125,249 kilograms. Total expenses derived from ejido records were \$16,053.64 for payment of the wages of ejido officials (administrative expenses), \$12,285.00 were listed as "social expenses" paid to those too old or too ill to work or paid as assistance to widows in the community, and the total amount paid for all recorded categories of work directly related to the cultivation, maintenance, and harvesting of henequen was \$127,730.80 during 1970. The following table summarizes the recorded and reconstructed costs of production and administration for the ejido of San Antonio during 1970.

Had the full amount of fiber been shipped during the fiscal year, 1970, approximately another 15,000 kilos would have been credited to the account of the ejido of San Antonio (discounting locally-used fiber). Deducting only the average commercial costs, this would have added \$20,850 to the remainder after deductions, producing a total "profit" of \$38,876.67 and doubling the rate to \$0.28/Kilogram of fiber produced. This "profit," were it not for the outstanding debt, would have resulted in a dividend to the ejidatarios of San Antonio

TABLE 19.--Production in San Antonio, 1970.

Category	Fiber Shipped (125,249 Kilos)		Fiber Produced (143,916 Kilos)
	Pesos	Rate/Kilo	Rate/Kilo
<u>Income</u>			
Sale of Fiber ^a	\$147,793.82	\$1.18/Kilo	1.18
Federal Subsidy ^a	135,268.92	1.08/Kilo	1.08
Total	283,062.74	2.26/Kilo	2.26
<u>Deductions</u>			
Decortication ^a	73,896.91	0.59	0.59
State Tax, etc. ^a	35,069.72	0.28	0.28
<u>Ejido</u>			
Administ./Social ^b	28,338.64	0.23/Kilo	0.20/Kilo
Wages to Workers ^b	127,730.80	1.02/Kilo	0.91/Kilo
Total Deducted	265,036.07	2.12/Kilo	1.98/Kilo
Remainder	18,026.07	0.14/Kilo	0.28/Kilo

^aIncome and deductions (in pesos) calculated from Bangrario rate-averages for ejido production in Yucatán (Diario de Yucatán, 2/26/1972). Exact figures not released by the Bangrario.

^bBased on work records on file in the ejido of San Antonio.

amounting to 25% of the total listed income (wages, administrative, and social costs).²⁸ It is clear that, in the case of San Antonio, any loss recorded in the accounts of the Bangrario does not constitute an actual loss of funds but a "paper" loss of notes due or pending and not totally covered by the excess income derived from the sale of fiber.

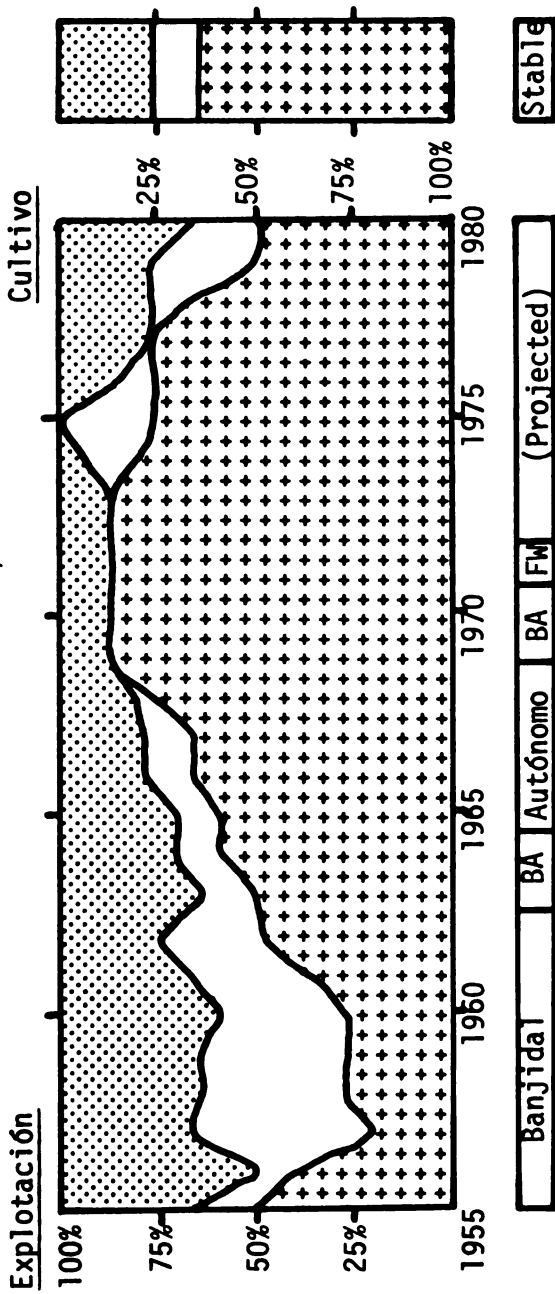
The ejido profit during the 1970 agricultural cycle is misleading since it is a temporary phenomenon. As is the case for many ejidos, the henequen fields are tremendously imbalanced as to their

stages of development. San Antonio, during the period from 1969 to 1973, had a maximum of 87.2% of the total ejidal landholdings in production, with 12.8% under cultivation but not yet in production. By 1980, the massive plantings which were undertaken during the Banjidal period and the latter part of Henequeneros will have gone out of production. It has been projected that in 1980 only 50% of the ejido lands will be in production with the remaining half either producing little fiber or requiring further investment in re-planting, to be followed by several years of continuing weeding operations without productive return. In the long run, the ejido of San Antonio is not likely to reduce the total indebtedness but, rather, increase it if productivity and the exploitation of henequen is to be continued.

The following graph (Figure 4), based on ejido and DAAC records, illustrates the proportionate distribution of productive lands during the period from the beginning of the Banjidal period (1955), through the period of fieldwork (1970/1971), and projected up to 1980. The massive plantings undertaken during the latter part of the hacienda period were going out of production by 1955, and some lands had already ceased producing henequen. The graph shows not only the high percentage of lands requiring investment (in cultivo), but also demonstrates the fact that ejido income reduction was aggravated by a large percentage of lands (45.5% in 1957) which were nearing the end of their productive cycle (decadencia) or which were totally unproductive (Lahpach or X-Lahpach).²⁹

The fact that, by 1969, the ejido had reached its peak in terms of the percentage of fields in production, makes the "castigation" of

Figure 4.--Distribution of Henequen Fields in San Antonio by Productive Status (1955-1980).



Key

Cultivo. Henequen fields (in the first through sixth year of cultivation) requiring investment (planting, weeding, etc.) without economic return.

Decadencia, Lahpach. Fields (after the twenty-third year of cultivation) which require little investment with little or no economic return.

Explotaci6n. Fields in production (seventh through the twenty-third year of cultivation). These fields require investment (cutting, weeding) and are economically productive.

FW Period of fieldwork.

(Projected) Based on the plant cycle and assuming prompt re-planting.

Stable Ideal equilibrium for distribution of fields to minimize fluctuation in production.

BA Bangrario

fiber by Cordemex a serious economic problem for San Antonio. Given the uneven distribution of the ages of fields under cultivation, income from those fields has fluctuated tremendously over the last two decades. The ejido has oscillated between "boom" and "bust," and as a result of this unevenness the ejido has been especially vulnerable to mounting interest charges against the unpaid balance of the debt. As detailed earlier in this chapter, the ejido debt includes an outstanding interest charge which amounts to nearly \$200,000 pesos, an amount which by itself is nearly 30% greater than total ejido income for 1970. According to projected figures, the percentage of fields in production will decline to about 50% in 1980, and to approximately 40% by 1981. It seems most likely that the remaining debt, and the compounding interest charges, will once again increase drastically for the ejidatarios and the ejido, in the long run, must be classified as a losing operation.

Ejido Productive Efficiency: Criticisms of Land Reform

Critics of agrarian reform in Yucatán rely on the evidence of aggregate statistics to demonstrate the relative under-productivity of the ejidal sector as compared to productivity on the private holdings. Calculations of average expected production (Manero, 1966), of comparative State average production in the private and ejidal sectors (P.R.I., n.d.; Dirección de Planeación, 1969) and the comparative calculations of production in San Antonio all appear to support the conclusion that the ejido is the most inefficient productive unit functioning within the henequen industry. Rather than place the blame on the ejidatarios, this section establishes the fact of under-production

and examines key factors contributing to the problem. The following table (Table 20) establishes a baseline for discussion of variation which exists in the average yield of fiber in the ejido of San Antonio, the pequeña propiedad or residual holdings of Hacienda San Antonio, and State average yields. Yields have been calculated in terms of millares (thousands) of leaves, kilograms of fiber with respect to hectares and mecates³⁰ of land in actual production.

TABLE 20.--Comparative Annual Yield of Henequen Lands in Production.

Source/Category	Mecates in Production	Millares/ Mecate	Kilos/ Millar	Kilos/ Mecate	Kilos/ Hectare
Average calculated Yield (Manero, 1966)	1	2.74	25.9	71.0	1,775
State Average, Private Holdings (P.R.I., n.d.)					1,200
Average, Pequeña Prop. of San Antonio ^a	3,760	1.69	30.0	50.8	1,270
State Average, Ejidos (P.R.I., n.d.)					542
Ejido Average, San Ant. ^b					
(a) Kilos Shipped, 1970	5,066	1.09	22.8	24.8	625
(b) Kilos Produced, 1970	5,066	1.09	26.2	28.5	712

^aBased on two years of production (1968 and 1970) for which data were made available.

^bAs noted earlier, approximately 15,000 kilos of fiber were produced in the final part of 1970 but not shipped during that fiscal year.

In the case of the ejido of San Antonio, average production is greater than the State average for all ejidos, but still considerably less than that detailed for the pequeña propiedad. A combination of

factors, related to all phases of field maintenance and cultivation of henequen, are responsible for this difference, but most significant are the practices of planting, weeding (chapeo) and the cutting of leaves. The same pool of laborers (the ejidatarios) perform the same kinds of operations on both the pequeña propiedad and the ejido fields, yet productivity in the latter is almost half that found on the private holdings.

Cutting operations on ejido fields are probably not significantly different from those practiced on the fields of the pequeña propietario. The kilogram production is close enough (26 and 30 kilograms, respectively) to assume that bundles of leaves approach the required amount (40 leaves per bundle, 5 bundles per millar). One problem acknowledged by the ejido workers themselves concerns the length of distance from parts of planted fields to access roads where the leaves are to be picked up. Usually, six to eight leaves are cut per plant during each of three harvesting periods during the year. With the longer distances, and given an amount of leaves specified by the Bangrario to be cut, the tendency is to cut more leaves from plants closest to the access road and fewer leaves from plants farther away. Plants close to the road tend to be overcut, resulting in an eventual loss of fiber per leaf as younger leaves are cut. As plants further from the road produce more leaves, passage becomes hindered and effective weeding becomes more difficult. In the pequeña propiedad, both weeding and cutting operations are supervised by the hired encargado or manager, and the ejidatarios realize that the operations must be properly performed if they are to continue working for the owner. The proximity of the town of Xamach

also signifies an availability of laborers for the pequeña propiedad, should the ejidatarios not perform the assigned tasks adequately. A minority of the workers employed in the fields and in the decorticating factory presently live in Maax, and the majority are recruited from the members of the ejido community of San Antonio.

The major difference in production of the two sectors of San Antonio seems mainly related to the density of plants per unit of land, and the effectiveness of weeding operations. The pequeña propiedad averages close to 100 plants per mecate of land, and the ejido averages about 70 henequen plants per mecate; the average calculated for the henequen zone for fields that are considered to be properly exploited is between 100 and 114 plants (Manero, 1966: 39). For the ejido, an examination of the density of fields by period of planting reveals a correlation between the density and the institutional period of control. The following table (Table 21) is based on field density as calculated by the National Insurance Company (Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera, S.A., 1969) assessment and it is on the basis of these calculations that fields are insured for fire and disaster coverage. Individual plantings amounting to less than 500 mecates (20 hectares) were not evaluated, but the remaining fields do constitute the majority of fields in production.

The lowest density fields were planted during the period of control by Henequeneros de Yucatán and during the first full year of operation under the Banco Agrario de Yucatán. Certainly the period under Henequeneros is difficult to understand since the ejido was managed by a full-time administrator who was assigned the task of

TABLE 21.--The Ejido of San Antonio: Henequen Plants Per Mecate.

Year Planted	Period	Mecates	Plants/Mecate
1951	Henequeneros	972	37.9
1955	Banjidal	578	79.8
1956	Banjidal	998	96.6
1958	Banjidal	508	66.6
1962	Banjidal/grario	664	66.1
1963	Bangrario	608	53.3
1968	Autonomo/ Bangrario	501	100.0

Source: Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera, S.A., 1969.

overseeing all ejido operations. The highest density fields were planted during the first full-year operation of the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal and during the period of credit association with the pequeño propietario rather than the Bangrario (the autónomo period). One might conclude that both the early period of the Banjidal and the autónomo period had promised, if not actually accorded the ejidatarios, some measure of independence and the chance to realize profits from their own efforts. The profit motive was promised by both the government, upon forced termination of Henequeneros, and the pequeño propietario in convincing the ejidatarios to apply for autónomo status. The former profits did not materialize due to the unbalanced nature of the fields and the prolonged requirement of continuing investment without significant returns, and the latter was reduced by the falling price of henequen on the world market. In spite of the decline in price, autonomy from the Bangrario had still resulted in the planting of the highest density

field in San Antonio, one which compares most favorably with those found on pequeñas propiedades in Yucatán.

One final operation which effectively reduces production concerns the weeding of fields. Competing plants must be continually cleared from the fields to maximize the amount of moisture and soil nutrients available to the henequen. Excessive competition for these resources will reduce the length of the leaves and, consequently, the length of the fiber, and will also reduce the quality and color grade of the fiber itself. The ejidatarios of San Antonio realize that their fields are inadequately or at least unevenly weeded. They blame this, in part, on the Bangrario reduction of weeding in older fields to one cycle per year instead of the customary two cycles. The Bangrario pays for only two cycles of weeding in the fields under cultivation in spite of the fact that both the pequeño propietario and the ejidatarios state that three cycles are necessary for a field of young, relatively vulnerable plants to thrive. Both sectors of San Antonio understand that a field's productive life is influenced by the care taken in the planting and weeding operations through the first few years.

The ejidatarios of San Antonio also blame themselves and collectivization as reducing the effectiveness of weeding operations. The fact that ejidatarios do not weed the same area twice in succession is the main problem. As explained by Don Chato, a past president of the ejido,

Why should you do a good job when you know that you are probably just fixing the bad work of the person who weeded before you? Look at Don Pasto, for example. He is one of the worst

chapeadores (weeders) in the ejido. He never does a good job. But if you go out to his (personal) plot, you will see something beautiful! Out there, you won't even see the smallest weed plant in between the henequen. The plot is clean and he is constantly weeding it.

Concerning the effects of diligent weeding on the productivity of henequen fields, Don Chato mentioned another ejidatario who had a small, personal plot of land (three mecates) and "who cleaned it well and constantly and after just three years, was harvesting henequen; his henequen was bluish in color and beautiful and, right beside it was ejido henequen all yellowed and ugly!"

The plots which were originally made available to the acasillados during the early part of this century are still being utilized as private individual holdings by some of the ejidatarios. They have been transferred both within a family by inheritance and between ejidatarios if cash is needed by the parcel holder. In the case of an abandoned field, an individual's relative will begin to cultivate it and, in effect, declare usufruct rights to that parcel for the duration of the henequen life-cycle. More frequently, the parcels will pass from father to son as part of the patrimony, in some cases merely transferred in effect as an older father does less of the work and his son or sons assume more of the tasks involved. At the time of fieldwork the total of approximately twenty hectares of parcelized land was being exploited by twenty-eight ejidatarios with each working an average of 15.6 mecates. In 1969, Don Chato had made a detailed study of the production of fiber from these individual parcels, which is summarized below (Table 22) in a form comparable to the calculations of productive yields of the other sectors of San Antonio.

TABLE 22.--Parcelized Production in San Antonio.

Category	Production	Cultivo	Total
Total Land	436 mecates	61	497
Millares/Mecate	2.62		
Kilos/Millar	28.1		
Kilos/Mecate	73.0		
Kilos/Hectare	1,825		

The individual, careful, and intensive cultivation of henequen by the ejidatario-parcelarios results in a productive yield that easily out-produces both the ejido fields and those of the pequeño propietario, and this on fields cultivated by individuals in addition to their normal work scheduled on ejido or private fields.

Don Chato had originally undertaken his study to examine the possibilities of selling the fiber through the Banco Agrario and enjoying the benefits afforded ejidatarios by the generous subsidy (averaging \$2.26/Kilo in 1971 for low-quality fiber, price and subsidy). The ejidatario-parcelarios were interested by the plan but were suspicious that the Bangrario would merely pay them for "authorized" work and that the rest of the amount derived from the sale of their fiber would simply be applied against the outstanding ejido debt.³¹ Instead, the parcelarios continued to sell their leaves to the pequeño propietario at a flat rate of \$15.00 pesos per millar of leaves or, given the average yield calculated by Don Chato, approximately \$0.53 pesos per kilogram of fiber. By comparison, the 1971 Bangrario might have paid, after deductions for taxes, decortication, etc., \$1.39 pesos per kilogram of fiber or more

considering that the henequen was of a higher quality than that produced by the ejido. Because of their distrust of the Bangrario, and the probable veracity of their suspicions, the ejidatarios lost an average of \$0.86 pesos for each kilogram of fiber produced from their leaves. The average income from individual production amounted to \$610 pesos per parcelario rather than the more than \$1,500 pesos each they might have received from the Bangrario.

The owner of the pequeña propiedad processes the leaves and manages the sale of fiber. Since he does not receive governmental subsidies offered ejidos, his price per millar of leaves is competitive. Don Manuel, in fact, recognizes the high quality of parcelario fiber and therefore pays fifteen pesos per millar rather than the thirteen pesos which he offers parcelarios from the towns of Maax and Xamach.

Summary and Conclusions

Land reform was by no means a simple or straightforward process in the henequen zone of Yucatán. Land reform proceeded, and is still proceeding, by stages. Neither the ejidos nor the haciendas preceding reform nor the pequeñas propiedades following, can be stereotyped or easily classified. The hacienda of San Antonio changed hands as a result of the post-revolutionary political and social reforms. The new owner attempted to defeat the process of agrarian reform in the second phase, and was himself defeated. While the ejido of San Antonio was being controlled by, first, Henequeneros and, later, the Banjidal, a series of engagements took place between the heirs with, finally, Don Manuel emerging as main owner of the pequeña propiedad of San Antonio.

When compared with the pequeña propiedad, the ejido of San Antonio is relatively unproductive, relatively inefficient as an economic operation. However, the data and analysis presented in this chapter do not support the conclusion that ejidatarios, without supervision, cannot adequately manage the cultivation of henequen. What has emerged, however, is a picture of an ejido whose productivity has been seriously affected by restrictive and apparently inadequate control by State and Federal institutions, and of ejidatarios whose incentive has been impaired by the contradictions of official reform ideology and the realities of the limited anticipo salaries received from the Bangrario.

The three instances which have resulted in increases in effective exploitation of the land have all been related to simulated or actual autonomy from external institutional control. The first two instances are related to the initial period of autonomy from Henequeneros (1956), and the period of autonomy from control exerted by the Bangrario (1968). During both of these periods, field plantings increased significantly in terms of number of plants per mecate (only the one field was planted during the autónomo period). In the third instance, an analysis of the productivity of individual family plots demonstrates the care and effectiveness of the ejidatario when he is able to receive the full fruits of his own labor.

The apparent contradiction in effectiveness and efficiency of productive efforts is associated with conditions of employment rather than the structure of production. On the lands of the pequeña propiedad, quality of the work performed by an individual is the major criterion for continuing employment. On the lands of the ejido, both law and

reform ideology stress an ejidatario's birth right to derive a living from the resources available to the ejido community for as long as that individual continues to perform assigned tasks. Rather than conclude that private holdings are more productively efficient than collectivized ejidos, it seems more reasonable (i.e., more consistent with the data) to conclude that ejidatarios, under strict institutional control, find no reason to invest extra productive effort without appropriate compensation. The Bangrario has become an institutional "patrón" which absolutely controls production, which absorbs the profits of the productive efforts of the ejidatarios, but which can make no changes in the constituted membership of the labor pool. The legal authority to decertify ejidatarios, were it to reside with the Bangrario rather than the federal Department of Agrarian Affairs (DAAC), would constitute the final destructive blow to the facade of agrarian reform in the henequen zone of Yucatán. It is proposed here that, based on the evidence, productivity in the collectivized ejido of San Antonio would significantly increase and, in time, approach that of the pequeña propiedad if the ejidatarios were to receive, like the pequeño propietario, economic returns proportionate to the quantity and quality of productive efforts; in other words, be able to realize profits relative to productivity.

CHAPTER III--FOOTNOTES

¹McBride states (1923: 106): "It was but natural that many of these new settlements, particularly those established in centers of agricultural production, should take on the character of the Castilian agricultural villages with which the conquerers and their home government were most familiar. The towns of Castile had been, from very ancient times, landholding bodies, possessing more or less extensive territories. Thus, every town had what were known as propios, lands owned by the village itself and administered by the town officers. These propios were rented year by year, and from the income thus obtained the expenses of local government were met as well as the taxes levied on the community by higher authorities. In addition to these cultivated lands each town possessed an area just outside the city gates that was styled the ejido (from Latin exitus). . . . The custom of maintaining the ejido for the common use of the inhabitants had been recognized, if not established, by the law of the Siete Partidas" (1256-1265).

²Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 provides the basis for land reform and the establishment of ejidos with sufficient resources to adequately support the ejidatario population: "Proposition X. Centers of population which have no ejidos or are unable to have same restored to them due to lack of title, impossibility of identifying such lands, or because they have been legally alienated, shall be granted sufficient lands, forests, and waters to constitute same, in accordance with their requirements; in no case shall they fail to be granted the amount of land which they need, which shall be expropriated for account of the Federal Government and be taken from that adjacent to the villages in question" (Simpson, 1937: 753).

In 1947, Article 27 was revised and the following addition was made to Proposition X of that Article: "The area of individual allotment of land in the future should not be less than 10 hectares of irrigated or humid land or, lacking these, the equivalent in other types of land as specified in the third paragraph of section XV of this article" (Whetten, 1948: 620).

I have added the emphasis to this addition to indicate the point that the ejidatarios of San Antonio were unable to expand their holdings from the original four hectares per individual to the indicated ten hectares. This point is discussed further in the chapter.

³The 1942 version of the Agrarian Code (Código, 1970) was in force at the time of fieldwork in Yucatan. The 1933 version of the Code (Simpson, 1937: Appendix D) was in effect at the time of the creation of the ejido of San Antonio and the immediate future of San Antonio will be governed by the revised Agrarian Code passed during the early part of

the administration of President Luis Echeverría Alvarez (Código, 1971). Hereafter, references to the three codes will indicate the source or published version used.

⁴There is some inconsistency in the literature with regards to the date used when referring to the first Agrarian Code (Código Agrario) of Mexico. Some authors, such as Simpson (1937), refer to the 1933 date of enactment of the Code while others, such as Mendieta y Nuñez (1968), refer to the 1934 official date of publication of the document in the Governmental Diario Oficial.

⁵The 1933 version of the Agrarian Code specified that an ejidatario "must be a Mexican, male, over sixteen years of age, if single, or of any age if married; or, female, single or widowed if she is the head of a family" (Simpson, 1937: 768-769). Article 200 of the most recent revised Agrarian Code (Código, 1971: 79) has been changed to read: "be Mexican by birth, male or female, over sixteen years of age, or of any age if the head of a family." For the first time in the history of Mexican agrarian legislation, any female who meets the requirements of occupation, residence, and limits placed on personal wealth may qualify as a full member of an ejido.

The 1933 Code limited the personal worth of a campesino to not more than two thousand five hundred pesos (Simpson, 1937: 769); the present version of the Code limits individual capital holdings to ten thousand pesos in industrial or commercial capital and twenty thousand pesos in agricultural holdings (Código, 1971: 80).

⁶As a sign of the times, the most recent Ley Federal de la Reforma Agraria specifies an additional criterion that the campesino must never "have been convicted of sowing, cultivating, or harvesting marijuana, poppy, or any other stupefacient" (Código, 1971: 80).

⁷As noted in the previous chapter (Chapter II), the labor reform legislation and the termination of debt peonage affected the resident workers more. The population of the Hacienda declined following 1910 as a result of the combined factors of epidemics and outmigration.

⁸The 1930 Mexican census (Census, 1934) for the State of Yucatán lists a total of 291 inhabitants of San Juan and 158 inhabitants of Hacienda San Antonio. Of all the haciendas listed in the 1930 census as existing in the municipalities of Maax and Xamach, Hacienda San Juan had by far the largest resident acasillado population and San Antonio the second largest. Of the remaining fourteen haciendas listed as having acasillado populations, none numbers over one hundred inhabitants.

⁹The decree referred to in the Maax presidential resolution specifies that a maximum of 300 hectares will be respected as the pequeña propiedad with 150 of those hectares planted in henequen and the rest to be uncultivated. Since the holdings of San Antonio spanned two municipalities, the actual remaining pequeña propiedad amounted to approximately 230 hectares rather than the maximum allowable of 300 hectares. Don Arturo, reportedly, also planted extensively during the

decade of ownership and it is likely, although not specified by the available documents, that the corresponding proportion of uncultivated lands was simply nonexistent within the boundaries of San Antonio.

¹⁰The casco and decorticator of Hacienda San Juan were expropriated along with the lands and a large portion was donated to the acasillados of San Juan. The decortivating factory is presently operated and administered by the Banco Agrario de Yucatán. The loss of the decorticator represented the greatest financial loss to the family of Don Arturo.

¹¹The opposition leader had received the shares following the death of his wife who was the daughter of the original founder. He maintained his linkages with the family by marrying the second time to his own niece, granddaughter of the founder (marrying WiBrDa). When asked why the opposition had sold his share to his mother, Don Manuel replied simply that "he was very much involved in politics at the time and didn't want to have anything in his own name."

¹²The auction and public sale of the property would have had the effect of creating an obviously undisguisable tax liability for all of the socios.

¹³As elaborated in the first chapter, President Cárdenas had intended the ejidatarios to receive lands and at least usufruct rights to the decortivating factories, if not outright ownership. Very few of the decorticators were actually expropriated and, with the end of Cárdenas' term of office (1940), most of those which were expropriated had already been returned to their former owners. The control exerted by the ex-hacendados has been diminished more recently by means of governmental competition. At the time of fieldwork (1970-1971), 220 decorticators (of a total of 360 in the henequen zone) were in actual operation. Private producers controlled 180, the Banco Agrario de Yucatán operated 37 decorticators, and the Federal manufacturing complex of Cordemex had three decorticators in operation and seven more under construction. One of the new Cordemex decorticators was under construction just outside of the town of Xamach, two kilometers from the factory of San Antonio. Cordemex factories decorticate leaves of independent parcel owners. The present owner expressed concern that his income from the factory would be severely reduced if, as rumored, Cordemex and the Banco Agrario would agree to both process ejido and parcel leaves in their regional decorticators (P.R.I., n.d.).

¹⁴The Agrarian Code specifies that a community of acasillados may be included in an agrarian census if located within a radius of ten kilometers of an existing center of population (Simpson, 1937: 769, Article 45). Although the acasillado community is closer to Xamach, agrarian reform in the henequen zone proceeded by municipality rather than according to calculated radii from existing towns.

¹⁵ Attempts made to locate the archives of Henequeneros de Yucatán were unsuccessful. While searching for records with a Yucatecan colleague, Salvador Rodríguez, we were informed that they had been stored in a warehouse for a time but were finally burned. It was unclear as to who had actually authorized their destruction; apparently they had long been released by the Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior, the institution originally charged with the liquidation of Henequeneros. The only data concerning organizational management are those included in the archives of DAAC.

¹⁶ The original text, while perfectly clear, has one complete sentence. In attempt to maintain that clarity in translation, the grammatical structure was altered into several separate sentences. The structure of the original certainly seems to convey not only information, but a sense of moral outrage and indignation. Following this report, no other document was located, relative to San Antonio, which bore the same signature.

¹⁷ The Banjidal study did not include mortgage payments on equipment since, in their estimation, the majority of the decortication plants were quite old and therefore essentially paid for by the owners. It is also possible that the \$5.00 peso charge referred to in the DAAC report refers mainly to the few decorticators, such as San Juan, which had been totally expropriated. The amount mentioned would, then, correspond to the actual estimated costs of production.

¹⁸ The basic figures are taken from the 1951 DAAC report; the discounted amounts are those reported by Soberon (1959: 104) for 1954. Since the discounts are based on kilogram production, and not tied to either the quality, quantity, or market price of fiber produced per thousand leaves, the discounts are assumed to have been in effect in 1951.

¹⁹ Younger fields may be weeded three times per year, with the average for ejido fields in production of two weeding cycles per year.

²⁰ The governmental estimate of \$0.52/kilogram as the ejido income is substantially close to the figure which I calculated (\$0.517) based on the DAAC report of 1951, the equal split of fiber with the decorticator, and the reported discounts of 1954. The negligible difference between these figures would tend to validate my estimation of total ejido income after deducting the costs of production.

²¹ Henequen leaves, when harvested, are usually tied into bundles of fifty leaves each. The counter then has only to count the number of cords to calculate the number of leaves processed (a millar equals twenty cords). One of the criticisms against ejido production concerns the practice of producing bundles of less than fifty leaves. The ejidatario, it is claimed, does this to meet his quota of leaves with less work. The result is an apparent drop in ejido production per millar of leaves, at least statistically. In San Antonio, the ejidatarios have agreed that bundles of fifty are too heavy and have

settled on a standard of forty-leaf bundles, with twenty-five cords to be counted as a millar. The bundles are easier to manage and, in fact, with smaller bundles it is much more difficult to "miss" more than a few leaves.

²²The references to Articles contained in the Agricultural Credit Law are based on the following source: 1970 edition of the Código Agrario y Leyes Complementarias of the Colección Porrua (Código, 1970: 329-368).

²³Article 45 of the Agricultural Credit Law specifies that a "grupo" must have a minimum of ten members. Article 47 instructs groups to elect a representative, a socio-delegado, who will act as intermediary between the Bangrario or Banjidal and the ejidatarios. For single ejido-groups, such as San Antonio, the elected president of the Comisariado Ejidal becomes automatically the socio-delegado for that ejido.

²⁴Article 81 of the Agricultural Credit Law specifies that anticipo payment may be received only by local credit societies which collectively exploit the land. I once asked, in an interview with the assistant manager of the Bangrario, what would happen if the ejido members voted to terminate collective operation and parcelize ejido lands. He looked at me strangely and replied: "Nunca hemos tenido problemas de esta naturaleza." If unauthorized by the Bangrario, the ejidatario vote would be meaningless.

²⁵After several months, persistence on the part of myself and the ejido officials resulted in the Bangrario providing a copy of the decortication contract with the pequeño propietario and debt summaries for 1968, 1969, and 1970. We were not able to obtain summary records of the actual income for fiber, nor the bank's statement including salary and other payments (including decortication) made to and on behalf of the ejido of San Antonio. The ejidatarios had not received complete fiscal statements from the Bangrario since 1968 and believed that the Bangrario was simply trying to keep them from receiving dividends due if the statements (as they suspected) showed an actual profit to the ejido.

²⁶One official of the State Government of Yucatán maintains that as one of his last acts while in office (1964-1970), President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz cancelled all of the outstanding ejido debts from the Banjidal period. The official stated that the Bangrario personnel fear that unless the ejidos remain in debt, they will leave the bank (as grupos autónomos) and become once again involved in impossible credit arrangements with other institutions or individuals. Reportedly, the only concession made by the Bangrario to this presidential order was to terminate the mounting interest charges against the fiduciary debts. This assertion could not, at the time of fieldwork, be substantiated but the bank did, in fact, terminate the interest increases in 1969.

In 1972, the Bangrario announced a new comprehensive plan to restructure the indebtedness of the henequen ejidos according to the

individual ejido ability to pay on outstanding debts. The total value of the fiber produced for sale will be applied to the interest, avío and refaccionario loans which have accrued during the year. Of the remainder, 25% will be set aside for distribution to ejido members as dividend profits, and the other 75% will be applied to outstanding and overdue interest and loan charges. With regard to the indebtedness of the ejidos, the Bangrario set forth five points which signify a considerable reform in the financial operation of ejidos such as San Antonio:

1. The accounts of debts incurred up to 1969 will be consolidated;
2. An ejido will be required to pay installments on avío loans only up to an amount equal to 50% of the profits;
3. An ejido will be required to pay installments and interest on refaccionario loans only up to an amount equal to 25% of the annual profit;
4. No further interest will be charged against the consolidated account; and
5. As an ejido pays part of the avío or refaccionario capital in the consolidated (fiduciary) account, the Bangrario will cancel an equal portion of the outstanding interest (Diario de Yucatán, 2/26/1972: 9).

It would seem that the Bangrario is attempting to create incentives for the ejidos to improve both the quantity and the quality of production by making available at least a portion of the potential profit remaining after the payment of debts accumulated during the immediate agricultural cycle. Furthermore, the Bangrario is willing to at least reduce the size of indebtedness proportionately by cancelling interest charges as the older debts are repaid. With this new reform in the operation of the Banjidal, the fiduciary debt (as of 2/1971) would be potentially reduced from \$463,855.37 to \$265,727.43, and the total debt reduced from \$482,116.21 to \$283,988.27, a total effective reduction of 41% of the outstanding (now consolidated) debt.

²⁷Yucatac Mayas, seemingly a rather somber folk, do exhibit wit and humor. A peasant in San Antonio, during a conversation concerning the castigation of fiber, turned to me and said: "Deben llamar este Chingamex." When I asked why he replied: "Porque son los Mexicanos allá que nos están chingando!" His reply communicated a sense of humor, a rather low opinion of the actions of Cordemex, and, at the same time, another indication of the sense of separateness and distinctiveness of Yucatán and Yucatecans from "Mexico" and the "Mexicans." As another play on words, one of the ejidatarios of San Antonio remarked on the "S.A." following the titles of Banco Agrario, S.A., and Cordemex, S.A. He claimed that they stood for "suciedad anónima" ("anonymous dirt") rather than "sociedad anónima" ("incorporated"). Both Cordemex and the Bangrario are officially stock companies. The Federal Government holds the controlling shares, and the remaining shares are distributed to other banking institutions, and a minority of the total number of shares is distributed to private individuals. Aside from the fact that they are federally controlled, the Bangrario must sell ejido fiber to Cordemex since it exerts a monopoly over marketing and production of finished products from henequen fiber (baler twine, rope, etc.).

²⁸The ejidatarios of San Antonio did receive extra money at the end of 1970 in the form of a semana doble or "double payment" for work performed during the last week of the fiscal year. This last week was also the lowest in terms of work authorized by the Bangrario. Weekly income averaged \$3,000 throughout the year; the last week amounted to \$1,500 pesos or, with the semana doble, the normal \$3,000 pesos. The extra aguinaldo or "bonus" was listed as an "extraordinary" loan and added to the avfo account of the ejido in the Bangrario. This extra payment was accorded as the result of complaints by peasants (coordinated by officials of the National Peasant Federation--C.N.C.) over the well-publicized, high bonuses received by workers in the offices of the Bangrario and Cordemex (cf. Diario de Yucatán: 11/26/1970, 11/27/1970, 11/28/1970, 12/4/1970).

²⁹Manero (1966: 39) provides a chart of average henequen production per mecate according to the age of the planting. The chart is summarized below:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Kilograms/Mecate</u>
Mateo	7	10
Explotación	9	30
"	11	70
"	13	60
"	15	50
"	17	40
"	19	30
"	21	20
Decadencia	23	10
Lahpach	25	0

When a henequen field reaches the end of its productive cycle not only is production decreased, but the quality of the fiber produced deteriorates considerably. Income from fields is thus reduced in two ways: reduced by lowering quantity of production and the rate paid per kilogram of fiber.

³⁰Mecate refers to a section of land twenty meters by twenty meters, twenty five mecates to the hectare. Mecate is the most usual term used in discussing the size of fields. Fields themselves are marked with stone cairns (mojoneras) at the corners of measured mecates. Since governmental figures are often in both mecates (in State governmental reports) and hectares (Federal statistics), both are included in the table.

³¹There is support for this negative view. Article 117 of the Agricultural Credit Law of Mexico (Código, 1970: 364) specifies that, in this case, the regional ejido bank (the Bangrario), "cannot defer due payments on loans if other products are grown which could be applied to the debt."

CHAPTER IV

COMPADRAZGO AS AN ADAPTIVE STRATEGY

Introduction

The Nature and Flexibility of Ritual Kinship

Becoming Human: the Ceremonial Rites of Infancy

Quantification and the Methodology of Comparison

Compadrazgo and the Ties that Bond

Choice Patterns During the Hacienda Period

Agrarian Reform: the State Period

Agrarian Reform: the Federal Period

The Changing Patterns of Coparent Selection

Ascendant Emphasis: "Tradition" or Adaptation?

Dimensions of Coparent Relations

Summary and Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter examines compadrazgo (ritual co-parenthood) as one indicator of the pattern and process of social interaction in San Antonio. Since an element of choice is involved in the selection of ritual or fictive kin (compadres), the quantitative analysis of compadrazgo provides important information with respect to the strategies employed in initiating or intensifying lasting ties with others. Analyzed temporally, compadrazgo can be utilized as a significant means to identify kinds of social change that have occurred during the recent history of this ex-hacienda, ejido community.

While much has been written concerning the importance of the institution of compadrazgo in Latin America, only recently have anthropologists begun to deal with the "real" (as opposed to "ideal") choice-making process in the selection of co-parents. Foster (1969) has outlined some of the major problems involved:

Our data are deficient in at least 2 ways. First, most accounts represent ideal culture, the answers given by informants when asked to describe how the system works. Very little analysis of the institution has been based on real behavior in real situations. . . . Second, there has been almost no quantitative analysis of large samples aimed at revealing the inner dynamic of the compadrazgo, especially with respect to the exercise of choice, as it is manipulated in the building of social networks (1969: 263).

Aside from Foster, relatively few anthropologists (cf. Ingham, 1970; Deshon, 1963; and Thompson, 1971) have attempted statistically to describe the selection process and the general characteristics of compadrazgo as it is actually practised in rural Mexican peasant communities. In all instances, the various authors acknowledge the several ceremonies involving the selection of co-parents, yet sole

analytic emphasis is placed on the baptismal ceremony as producing the strongest, most important bonds for the participants involved. In this respect, the studies suffer from an analytic bias of a type acknowledged and legitimized by Mintz and Wolf in their classic article on the institution of compadrazgo:

This term (compadrazgo) designates the particular complex of relationships set up primarily, though not always, through participation in the ritual of Catholic baptism (Mintz and Wolf, 1950: 341).

In this chapter, three ceremonies involving sponsorship (ritual co-parenthood or compadrazgo) are examined: the Catholic ceremonies of baptism and confirmation (which Mintz and Wolf (1950: 344) identify as originally two parts of a single ceremony), and the Mayan "role baptismal" ceremony of Hetzmeek. The evidence indicates all three of these ceremonies are of considerable importance in the building and intensification of social networks and, in addition, the different ceremonies serve or had served to differentiate the categories of individuals to be included in the institutionalized network of ritual kin.

The data demonstrate the flexibility and adaptability of ritual co-parenthood revealing, in Foster's terms, the "inner dynamic" of the institution of compadrazgo. The temporal analysis of the data shows that the three ceremonies together form a strategy set which has changed with and adapted to the changing institutional context of this community. The patterns associated with the selection of co-parents have altered during each of the three major periods of pre- and post-agrarian reform in the henequen zone of Yucatán. From the end of the paternalistic hacienda period, through the period of control exerted

by the post-agrarian reform institution of Henequeneros de Yucatán, to the present period of extra-community control exerted by the Banco Agrario de Yucatán, emphases have shifted from vertical ties (inter-class and inter-generational) to horizontal ties of fictive kinship (intra-class and intra-generational).

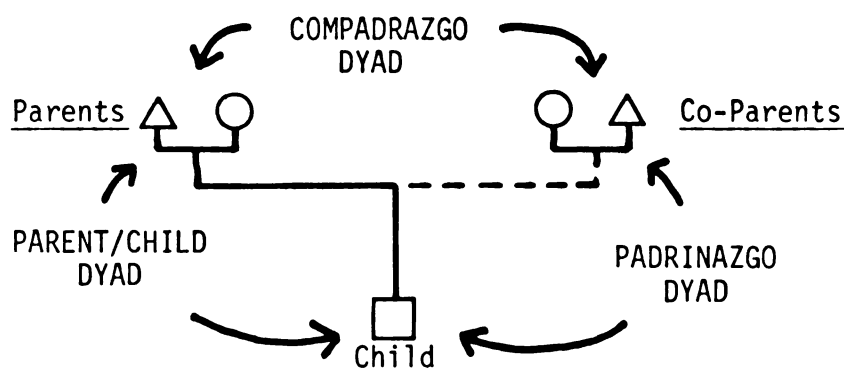
The final sections of this chapter add a further dimension to the study of compadrazgo and social change. The coordinated analysis of compadrazgo and demographic data support the hypothesis that changes in the patterns of selection within the community were facilitated by a dramatic decline in the incidence of early adult mortality and subsequent remarriage of a spouse. Given the incest prohibition against marriage between coparents, an individual would severely limit the range of potential remarriage partners if coparenthood were extended to include peers (intra-generational) rather than primary relatives (inter-generational), who are already excluded by custom and law as eligible or potential spouses. The decline in adult mortality reduced the necessity to select lineal ascending relatives (the selection of parents or grandparents) as coparents and, in a sense, further liberated compadrazgo to respond and adapt to the changing context of this ejido of acasillados.

The Nature and Flexibility of Ritual Kinship

Compadrazgo can be described as a triad set of dyadic relations formally initiated by means of a ceremony which requires the ritual sponsorship of a main participant. Typically, ritual sponsorship is associated with the Catholic ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, first communion, fifteenth birthday mass (quinceañera), and marriage.

Prior to the ceremony, the parents of a child request the services of an individual or individuals (frequently another married couple) to serve as the child's sponsor(s) during the ceremony. The termination of the ceremony signifies the completion of a triad set of enduring dyadic relations: (1) a parent/child dyad, which formally begins with the birth of the child; (2) a godparent/godchild, padrinazgo dyad; and (3) a parent/co-parent, compadrazgo dyadic bond. Of the three, the padrinazgo and compadrazgo dyads are specifically initiated by means of the ceremony itself (see Figure 5).

Figure 5.--Ritual Coparenthood.



Anthropologists have long recognized that in Latin American society, the duties and obligations associated with the parent/coparent relationship (compadrazgo) are more significant than those associated with the godparent/godchild bond (padrinazgo). Foster (1967) and others (Mintz and Wolf, 1950; Ravicz, 1967; etc.) have noted that compadrazgo

provides a mechanism to intensify, regularize, and stabilize social relations between non-kinsmen and, as well, to renew and strengthen relations with actual consanguineal and affinal kinsmen:

Tzintzuntzeños feel the need for an institution that has the formality and continuity of kinship, but which permits the freedom of choice of friendship. They find it in *compadrazgo* (Foster, 1967: 76).

The resulting ritualized *compadrazgo* dyadic bond is generally both permanent and predictable in terms of obligations and expectations; and the potential for extending one's *compadrazgo* ties to non-kinsmen is, seemingly, only limited by the number of one's progeny and the number of ceremonies involving ritual sponsorship.

Compadrazgo ties may be "horizontal," establishing reciprocal, enduring relations between socio-economic equals (co-workers, neighbors, friends, etc.); or may be "vertical," crossing class or social strata (upwardly) to formalize and intensify more asymmetrical patron-client relations. An individual who wishes to limit his obligation network of ritual kin ties may do so through a process of duplication, making "redundant choices" (Ingham, 1970: 286) so that for a given ceremony, the same coparent choices are made for successive children. This "double-loading" may also include the requested sponsorship of "close relatives with whom the parents already have significant relationships, with all of the attendant obligations and expectations" (Foster, 1969: 274).

The duplication or double-loading of *compadres* seems a logical strategy which at the same time satisfies the requirements of ceremonialism and provides a means to limit the extensiveness of obligatory ties. In San Antonio, "redundant choices" were frequently made and in

many cases, those individuals (kin and non-kin) selected as sponsors for the various ceremonies of the first born, would be repeated as sponsors of the same ceremonies for subsequent children. In some of the cases, different sponsors would be selected for male and female children and then repeated for subsequent children by sex of the child. Double-loading and, specifically, redundant choices, still occurred, but differentiated by the sex of the child. Informants indicated that the extension of ritual kin ties was undesirable: "too many compadres makes it difficult to get to heaven." Similarly, Redfield (1941: 221) noted that in Tusik, "the same godparents function for all children born of that couple: it is thought a sin to change godparents." For San Antonio, even in cases that show a change in the ceremonial sponsor from one child to another, very often the new name is that of a surrogate who had simply become the new spouse of a widowed comadre (female coparent) or a widowed compadre (male coparent). By this means, surrogate double-loading has occurred, a deceased coparent is replaced, and the spouse of a coparent is included in the already-existing network of social ties.

Emphasis on the selection and duplication of kinsmen as coparents correlates highly with the small size of the community of San Antonio and the tendency towards community endogamy. Given the extension of the incest taboo to include ritual kin and their children (Erasmus, 1950), the extension of compadrazgo ties would severely limit the number of potential marriage partners available to a child and, more importantly in the case of a high incidence of early adult mortality, would also limit the number of potential re-marriage partners

available to a widowed or widowed parent. Although I encountered no overt expression of this incest extension in San Antonio, I also found no instance in which coparents or the children of coparents had married.

Inclusion and duplication of kinsmen also reinforces their obligation to a child, reinforcing those obligations through the ties of padrinzago. In San Antonio there were two instances of adoption. In both cases, the parents were still living, but found it economically difficult to care for their large families. In one case, the child's grandparents (baptismal and Hetzmek compadres of the parents) assumed the economic and social responsibility for the care of the granddaughter. The other case involved the adoption of a girl by a childless couple who were the girl's padrinos for Hetzmek and first communion. The padrino (godfather) was, at the same time, the girl's patrilineal cross-cousin and his wife, the madrina (godmother), was the girl's mother's sister. It is difficult to determine, in these cases, whether kinship, ritual kinship, or a complex of the two is most important.

Extension as well as limitation of compadrazgo ties has been reported in the literature. In Pascua, Spicer (1940) noted that kinsmen of each of the compadres are also considered part of the obligatory network of ritual kin, thus extending the concept of compadrazgo from that of establishing dyadic ties between two individuals or couples to "polyadic" (Dávila, 1971: 403) or multiple ties that link two larger groups together. In Puerto Rican society, Elena Padilla Seda (1956: 295) and Sidney Mintz (1956: 387) have described "compadrazgo de voluntad" (voluntary coparenthood) for which there is no ceremony,

no godchild sponsorship, only the expression of a desire to formalize an already strongly felt bond of friendship. These polyadic and extra-ceremonial extensions or forms of compadrazgo were not observed in San Antonio.

Becoming Human: the Ceremonial Rites of Infancy

Baptism, confirmation, and Hetzmek constitute the three major ceremonies of infancy. All three ceremonies are ideally performed during the first year following birth and all involve ritual sponsorship of an infant by godparent-designates during the ceremonies. The first, baptism, recognizes the initiate as a member of the catholic church, as one who thenceforth is absolved of original sin and in possession of a soul. Confirmation, usually performed by a bishop, completes the sense of the baptism commending the initiate "signed and sealed as a soldier of Christ" (Attwater, 1958: 115). Finally, the Hetzmek, a Mayan "role baptismal" ceremony of precolombian origins (Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1934: 374), symbolically introduces the infant to the tools and techniques that will have to be mastered before it can become a successful, fully-functioning, adult member of the community. Finally, all three of the ceremonies require both the parents and the sponsors to expend capital, to assume part of the expense of the ceremony.

Baptism. The greatest danger to a new-born infant is that it should die before having been baptized; before it had been changed from a "creature" (criatura) into a "little angel" (angelito) with a soul. Especially dangerous to the unbaptized child is the ave de mal (WAI-CH'ICH) or "evil bird."¹ According to one local version, the bird

flies upside-down over the community early in the evening. You can hear it crying like a baby in the night and if it passes over a baby (criatura), the baby will die. You can take precautions (such as) taking a new, small, unused gourd cup (jicarita) and placing it under the infant's hammock. When the bird flies over and cries, turn the gourd upside-down. Turn the gourd back over and there you will find a feather and lo, you have caught it (y ya la casaste!). My father told me to look for godparents (padrinos) before a child is born, because otherwise the child won't be a Christian, a son of God, of Christ. If a child dies before it is baptised, its soul (alma) will be converted into the WAI-CH'ICH, the ave de mal. Angels, criaturas and the ave de mal are all white in color. These kinds of beliefs were held by our ancestors (Don Chato, field notes).

Another version of the "ave de mal," related by two females of the community, differs in certain details of color and origin of the bird:

Once in a great while, when it's cloudy out, a big black bird may fly over the houses upside-down. If there is a child crying, and the bird answers it (with a cry), the baby will continue to cry and die within twenty-four hours. The bird is actually a bad wind that takes the form of a bird and it always leaves a feather on top of the house. If it occurs to one that it was the bird that made the child sick and if the feather can be found, it can be used to cure the child (Field notes).

Baptism does not protect the child from the WAI-CH'ICH, but it will protect the soul of the child, preventing its transformation into another "ave de mal" and ensuring its entry into heaven and its transformation into an "angelito."

Since some expense is involved, it usually takes a month or more to arrange for the catholic mass, contact and secure the assistance of sponsors, and prepare for the ceremony, the ritual meal, and celebration that follow. The godparent-designates are first approached and asked if they will consent to sponsor the child:

Chato Jr. and his wife visited Chato about two weeks before the baptism. They stated that they had come to ask a favor and presented gifts to the godparent-designates. Chato replied by asking what the favor was and the couple answered: "to do us the favor of taking the baby to the baptism." When they visited Chato, they took the following gifts:

\$11.00	One bottle of habanero (aguardiente liquor)
5.50	Seven bottles of soft drinks (to cut the liquor)
2.00	One "ojaldra" (type of bread)
2.00	Small bread rolls
2.25	One kilogram of sugar
<u>2.75</u>	One pound of chocolate
\$25.50	Total cost, in pesos, to parents.

The sponsors arrange for a designated married woman to take the child from its house to the church. At the church, the woman (referred to as the XIU) hands the child to its mother who, in turn, hands it to either the godmother (if the child is female) or to its godfather (if a male). The godparents hold the child as the priest administers the baptismal blessing, places salt² in the baby's mouth, and anoints its head with holy water. The godparents then carry the child back to the parents' home, where it is handed back to the parents (to the mother first, if a female, or to the father if it is a male child). The godparents usually assume the financial burden of the expenses related to the baptismal ceremony, and the parents assume the cost of the celebration that follows.

Cost to padrinos (Don Chato and wife):

\$10.00	Paid to the priest
1.50	Candles to be placed in the church (chapel of San Antonio)
28.00	Dress, booties, and cap (female child)
<u>14.00</u>	Swaddling cloth (sobre pañal)
\$53.50	Total cost to padrinos (in pesos).

Cost to the padres (Chato Jr., and wife, the parents):

\$40.00	Value of two chickens (one supplied by parents, and one supplied by the child's maternal grandmother)
24.00	Twelve loaves of sliced bread (purchased in Mérida)
10.00	Ten small loaves of French bread
2.00	Chile jalapeño
2.00	Onion
1.00	Achiote (condiment: Bixa orellana)
15.75	Twenty-five bottles of soft drinks
60.00	One jug (5 Liter "garrafa") of cane liquor (habanero)
3.70	Bus ticket to Mérida to make purchases
11.00	One additional bottle of habanero liquor (presented to compadres at the termination of the celebration)
<u>\$169.45</u>	Total cost to parents (in pesos)

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\$248.45 Total costs related to the baptism.

\$100.00 Estimated weekly income of Chato Jr. (parent)

\$147.00 Estimated weekly income of Don Chato (godparent).

Although the baptismal costs are slightly less than twenty dollars (U.S.) they represent an amount nearly equal to the combined estimated weekly incomes of the child's parents and godparents, a comparison which places the financial burden in perspective as to its significance.

When asked about the responsibilities of the godparent, one informant responded:

The godparents should take the responsibility of educating the baby in the Christian faith. Actually, parents don't really like anyone meddling so the only responsibility is to say "hello compadre" when you see them and to help out if they should request assistance (Field notes).

Parents and godparents should acknowledge the relationship (compadrazgo) through formal patterns of address, and godparents should be ready to assist their coparents or godchild if it is requested. In practice, coparents used the formal mode of address ("comadre," if speaking to a female coparent, or "compadre" if speaking to a male coparent) only if not closely related. The baptism detailed above occurred shortly after the initiation of fieldwork and, for the rest of the period of observation, Chato and Chato Jr. never referred to each other as "compadre" but, rather, as "father" and "son."

Confirmation. Confirmation seems to be a highly variable ceremony as to the age of the initiate at the time of the ceremony. Accounts vary from reporting that confirmation "takes place at any time after baptism, and sometimes on the same day" (Foster, 1967: 78) to reporting that the confirmation occurs "one to two years"

following the first communion which itself takes place "when a child is between nine and twelve" (Nutini, 1968: 90). Attwater (1958: 114) states that:

Confirmation is received at the age of reason, preferably just before the First Communion; but in Spain it is often given immediately after Baptism and in Rome to every infant who seems in danger of death.

As described earlier (cf. Chapter II), infant mortality in this plantation community was extremely high for the first several decades of this century. Based on municipal death records, calculations indicate that for the decade 1911-1920, 68.8% of the children born had died before reaching five years of age. At the height of the epidemic periods of 1913-1915, and 1918-1920, 97.5% and 83.4%, respectively, of the children born failed to live beyond the fourth year of existence.³ Given this demographic context, it is not surprising that a preference would develop and be maintained to have a child pass through the confirmation ceremony, sometimes referred to as the "bishop baptism" (Buitrago Ortíz, 1973: 79), at the earliest possible date.

Informants stated that the bishop came to San Antonio once a year to administer the confirmation rites. Parents of the children born between visits would take their children to the church. Arriving at the church, the parent hands the child to the godparent-designate, or ritual sponsor, who waits in line to receive the rite administered by the bishop. Again, if the child is female, it is given to the *madrina* and, if male, it is given to the *padrino*. If the child does not cry excessively, the godparents carry it back to the house where it is returned to the parents. The ritual is less important financially to

both the parents and the coparents. The party is usually small, including the parents, coparents, and close friends or relatives. While no confirmation ceremony occurred during the period of fieldwork, one informant estimated that the cost to the godparents was approximately \$30 pesos for the child's clothes and the donation to the church.

Hetzmek. The Hetzmek ceremony is a community and family oriented, "role baptismal" ceremony. Although the ceremony takes place outside of the church and in the absence of a priest, syncretism is demonstrated in that the sponsor is referred to as the child's padrino or madrina (godparent) and the parents and coparents refer to each other as compadre or comadre.

During this ceremony, which usually takes place in the house of the godparents, the padrino (if the child is male) or the madrina (if the child is female) symbolically introduces the child to the tools and techniques that it will have to master later in life to become a fully functioning adult member of the community. Since the child is only a few months old at the time, the ceremony has primarily a symbolic function for the adults participating. Hetzmek is, therefore, a kind of role baptismal through which the child, the initiate, is introduced to the key technological and behavioral elements necessary to maximize survival. A more immediately functional aspect of the ceremony is to "open the legs" for the first time. During the ceremony, the padrino or madrina places the child astraddle the left or right hip, respectively, and forces the legs to spread apart. Following the ceremony, until the child is able to walk, this will be the common mode of carrying the child.

1: Everyone does it here in San Antonio. It's done so that the child will learn to walk soon. They say that if you don't do the Hetzmek that when a child mounts a horse, he will get a rash between his legs. They also say the child doesn't learn to walk and eat (solid food) as quickly but I believe he will learn anyhow--especially how to eat.

2: They say the baby will more quickly learn how to walk and how to work, but I think they will anyway even if the Hetzmek is not performed.

Ideally, the Hetzmek ceremony is performed when the child has reached the age of four months, if a male, or three months if the child is a female. The male emphasis on the number four is related (as explained by informants) to the four corners of the corn field (milpa). The number four is also significant with reference to other elements important to the cultivation of corn: the four seasons and the four directions which bring the various Mayan aquatic spirits associated with rainfall. The female number three is related (according to informants) to the three stones that support the comal on which the tortillas are cooked. In addition, the small table on which tortillas are made is supported by three legs, as is the metate stone for grinding the corn (while still found in the houses, the metate is presently used occasionally for grinding condiments). This extremely stable, three-legged tripodal structure associated with female occupations can be viewed, by extension, as symbolic of the importance of the woman to the stability of the household.

Hetzmek for females: Francisco and Piña were the padrinos for Manuela's daughter. Although the Hetzmek is usually held in the house of the padrinos, Francisco ran one of the stores and they were afraid the other children would "get into things," so the ceremony was held at the mother's house. Piña explained that if the ceremony were not held when the child was three months old, "it just wouldn't have any effect" (ya no sirve) on the child's walking early. Piña wasn't sure if it would affect learning its role but the mother maintained that children just don't learn very rapidly if the Hetzmek is not performed.

The madrina (Piña) taught Rubi (the infant) to sew, eat (eggs and tortillas), write, wash clothes, make tortillas, and boil eggs. When teaching her to eat, they gave the child tortillas made with chaya (herb) so she would "learn to eat a humble meal (comida humilde)." It was explained that the poor typically made a type of tortilla from the chaya leaf and, not able to purchase meat or beans, etc., fill the tortilla with small calabaza (gourd) seeds (pepitas). The madrina helped Rubi to make tortillas in the usual way except that the dough became green with the small bits of chaya leaf in it. Everyone present was served tortillas with ground meat and eggs (hard boiled and crumbled) as a filler and, during and after the ceremony, everyone ate roasted pepita seeds (Field notes, Barbara Kirk).

Piña's expenses:

\$1.00 Pepitas

2.40 Four eggs (from Piña's chickens, but she would otherwise sell them in the community for \$0.60 each.

3.75 Diaper and swaddling clothes

2.00 Dress (made locally from a remnant of cloth)

\$9.65 Total cost to the godmother (in pesos).

The following account of a Hetzmek ceremony as performed for a male child is somewhat atypical; an expression of interest in the ceremony resulted in my being asked to act as the sponsor and godparent of the child. One evening, I was approached by Don Peto and asked if I would take his sick "grandson" to see a doctor in a town some fourteen kilometers distant from the community (there being no doctor in either Maax or Xamach at the time). The child was not literally "his grandson" but was the great-grandson (DaDaSo) of his second wife. A few days after the trip, Peto and his wife arrived at our house, in the evening, with four bottles of Coca-Cola as a gift. Thinking it was simply another example of reciprocity for my refusing payment to take someone to visit a doctor, we proceeded to converse for almost two hours. Finally, as the two got up to leave, Peto turned and said: "I wonder if I could ask a favor of you?" I asked what it was, and he replied: "To be the padrino of my grandson." Not wanting to

enter into ties so early in the fieldwork period, I responded apologetically that I really couldn't do it since I was not a member of the Catholic church. I was still thinking that he was asking me to sponsor the child's baptism, when he replied: "Oh, that doesn't matter, its for the Hetzmek ceremony, and it doesn't have anything to do with the church!" Not having any other recourse, I accepted and the ceremony was set for the following Sunday.

My acceptance resulted in Don Peto's becoming one of the more open and cooperative of the various informants and, accordingly, we became quite close during the remaining months of our stay in San Antonio. I was not, however, Peto's compadre; I was the compadre of the child's parents (Peto's WiDaDa and her husband). The first time I visited the household⁴ following the ceremony, Peto immediately instructed me to go into the back yard and "say hello to your compadres and ahijado (godson)." Peto looked pleased as I approached the mother (cómo está, comadre) and father (y usted, compadre?) and proceeded to give Bombo, my godchild, a rather cautious tickle. The father of the child seemed uncomfortable using the reciprocal term, in large part, I suspect, because he had not taken the customary responsibility himself of requesting that I sponsor his child.

Analysis of the event and community-wide patterns of coparent selection (discussed below) lead to two conclusions concerning Peto's actions. First, Peto, as eldest lineal ancestor of the child (surrogate great-grandparent), had been asked to perform the ceremony and had himself decided to pass that right on to a person who had assisted in helping the child overcome an illness. Secondly, Peto's action

indicates that compadrazgo is not used to initiate a relationship, per se, but that an already existing relationship is utilized and intensified by means of the ceremony. Peto, in making the request, acted as intermediary between myself and the parents. The father should have made the decision and the request but since we had had very little contact with each other, he had not. Peto, with whom a relationship had already been established, usurped, with his consent, the father's role.

Hetzmek for males: After eating the special lunch prepared by Peto's wife and daughter, I asked Peto to explain the ceremony of Hetzmek. He said that the padrino takes the child (four months old), holds him on his left hip with his left arm; a pañuelo (cloth) is placed around the child, and the padrino carries him out into the field (plantel). In the plantel, the padrino puts a calabacita (drinking gourd) in the child's hands and then, in turn places koa (cutting knife), axe, and machete into the child's hands with the padrino showing the child how to cut leaves (el corte), weed (el chapeo), and how to cut wood (cortar leña). The padrino then takes the child to the well and shows him how to draw water.

Peto then said that people did not do it exactly as it had been done in the past, and he added that we would just do the ceremony in the yard since it was too hot to take the child out into the open (henequen) field.

We finally got around to the ceremony, and Peto asked me for a couple of pesos (par de pesitos) to get the child started in life. I handed him a five peso note which he returned, saying "he's too young to be rich." I handed him two one-peso notes which he placed inside the folded cloth (pañuelo) and tied around the child. The mother passed the child to Peto who passed it to me. I had just placed the child on my left hip when Peto remarked that it was too bad I was not fatter since further spreading of the child's legs would have made him a good runner. I placed the various tools in the hands of the child as they were passed to me; I then took the child around the lot (solar) and into the Mayan choza hut, passing around the four corners of the hut before returning to the yard. All the while observers present were eating toasted calabaza seeds (pepitas) as they followed the padrino and ahijado. I was asked to sit at a table behind the house and, with paper and pen provided, I was asked to "show" the child how to write. With that, Peto indicated that the ceremony had ended (ya estuvo!) and the mother took the child as Peto handed me a "jaibalito" of mixed coke and rum.

Elements of both the Hetzmek ceremonies described suggest a further dimension or significance of this Mayan "role baptismal" ceremony. Not only is a child symbolically learning how to survive, but the child seems to also be "learning" its status and role in the context of the larger society. The child must not be deluded into thinking it had been born rich (only a "par de pesitos" should be placed in the boy's cloth). A child should learn to eat humble food, the food of the poor (tortilla dough mixed with chaya leaf). During both ceremonies, the other people present ate pepitas, the seeds of gourds or squash which are acknowledged as the food of the poor, as the filler to be placed in the tortillas if one has nothing else.

Baptism and confirmation make the child a christian, in possession of a soul and assured of entry into heaven should death befall it. The priest, during the mass and accompanying baptism, reminds the people of San Antonio that they should bear their poverty and suffering, that they will be themselves assured of, and deserving of, everlasting peace and bliss in heaven. The Hetzmek ceremony "tells" the child that it is born into a life comprised of hard work and poverty. The child should "accept" that role and status in life and not start out with delusions or pretensions which would make it otherwise difficult to function and survive as a member of the Yucatec Mayan community.

Quantification and the Methodology of Comparison

During the last month of fieldwork in San Antonio, key adult informants in each of 54 households were interviewed to secure specific information concerning compadrazgo. Those interviewed were asked

primarily two types of questions: (1) who are the padrinos of your children, and (2) who are your own padrinos? The first question asked the parents to name their compadres (coparents), by child and ceremony, and the second effectively asked the informants to name their parents' compadres. For each of the ceremonies involving ritual sponsorship, the padrino's name, kin relation (if any), primary occupation and place of residence, were sought. The ceremonies included in the questionnaire were the baptism (bautizo), Mayan role baptism (Hetzmeek), confirmation (confirmación), first communion (primera comunión), fifteenth birthday mass (quinceañera) and marriage (matrimonio). The first communion and the fifteenth birthday mass, especially the latter, seem only recently introduced into the ceremonial inventory of the community.

Marriage ceremonies, not included in this analysis, presented special problems concerning the analysis of choice-making patterns due to the unevenness in the selection process for padrinos of the couple to be married. Padrinos were, in the various cases, selected by either or both sets of parents and the betrothed couple themselves occasionally participated in this process or completely determined the selection of their "padrinos de boda."

Still another problem concerned the determination of kin relations, particularly those existing between an older member of the community and a long-deceased padrino. Frequently a name would be provided, the informant would state that the padrino had been a relative, but the exact relationship could not be specified. Where a kin relationship between a padrino and ahijado was suspected or in doubt, the information was cross-checked with household genealogies

and the municipal marriage records which had been copied from the archives of the Maax civil registry office. The marriage records, dating back to 1866, included the names of the parents of the individuals and often included the names of their grandparents as well.⁵ This information proved invaluable in reconstructing family genealogies three and, in some cases, four generations beyond the shallow recollections of the informants. An informant, for example, would state the name of a baptismal godparent, declare that person to have been a grandparent, and then be unable to account for an obvious difference in surnames, replying: "he died before I knew him, I was just told that he was my padrino and my grandfather." In checking the marriage records of the municipality, it became clear that adult mortality (at a relatively early age) had been high, and remarriage frequent. The practice of serial monogamy and the remarriage of widows or widowers would result in someone with a different surname from the godchild "standing in" for, or taking the role of a surrogate primary relative. In the example given, the individual's godparent was not the biological grandfather (or genealogical grandfather), but was the classificatory grandfather and, for the purposes of this analysis, coded as such.

The interviews were often prolonged and problematical if the padrino or compadre whose name I was requesting was deceased. I had to insist, in almost every case, that I did want to know the name of the individual even though he or she were no longer living. I have no evidence of the existence of a taboo against naming deceased relatives or compadres, but feel that the informants simply could not understand the investigator's interest in someone who was no longer living.

For each individual in the community the padrinas (their padrinos, their parents' compadres) information was coded as to ceremony, kinship relation, occupation, and place of employment for each padrino. Inclusion of the age of the initiate at the time of fieldwork allowed for a determination of the approximate time period during which the ceremonies of baptism, Hetzmek, and confirmation had been performed (occurring during the first year after birth). Accordingly, this indicated the time period during which the parents had selected the individual to be their coparents, the godparents of their child.

Compadrazgo and the Ties that Bond

Preliminary analysis of the data provides an indication of the relative importance of the three ceremonies of infancy (see Table 23). The baptismal ceremony, according to the percent of responses elicited (83.7%), is the most important of the three. Hetzmek (73.4% responding) and confirmation (74.1% responding) are also important, but fewer individuals could remember the exact names of coparents or godparents. By comparison, the first communion ceremony, which will not be considered here in detail, only elicited responses (named padrinos or compadres) from approximately 40% of the sample.

An examination of the responses, by ceremony, for select age groups indicates a relative greater importance of the coparent ties established (compadrazgo: 91.7% responding) over the godparent/godchild dyadic bond (padrinazgo: 44.4% responding). The group five to fourteen years of age represents those still living in the households of their parents. Accordingly, the parents, the key informants, were providing the names of their coparents (compadres). The group comprised of those

TABLE 23.--The Ceremonies of Infancy.

Ceremony	% Responses for all age groups. (N=282)	Compadrazgo	Padrinazgo
		5-14 years (N=80)	30 years and older. (N=84)
Baptism	83.7%	93.8%	58.3%
Hetzmek	73.4%	87.5%	34.5%
Confirmation	74.1%	93.8%	40.5%
Ave., all three	77.1%	91.7%	44.4%

individuals 30 years of age and older were themselves the key informants and had been asked to recollect and name their own godparents (padrinos). With respect to both compadrazgo and padrinazgo, the Hetzmek ceremony proved to be less important than the other two ceremonies; fewer respondents could remember the names of their coparents or godparents with respect to this particular ceremony.

In order to ascertain patterns in actual coparent selection, five basic dichotomous choice sets were examined:

1. Are kinsmen or non-kinsmen given preference?
2. If a kinsman is selected, are the child's matrikin or patrikin preferred?
3. If a kinsman is selected, is he/she selected from the child's or child's parents' generation (0, +1), or from the elder generation of the child's grandparents or great-grandparents (+2, +3)?
4. If a non-kin is selected, is the resulting dyadic bond horizontal in nature (parents select friends, neighbors, or co-workers

from the same socio-economic stratum), or is it vertical (parents select compadres from a higher class or socio-economic stratum)?

5. If a vertical, non-kin dyad is established, is the coparent one who affects family income such as the patrón or work manager (hacienda owner, ejido or pequeña propiedad administrator, etc.), or is the coparent a professional or merchant who affects family expenditures (store owner, school teacher, doctor, nurse, etc.)?

Aggregate analysis of the distribution of choices (see Table 24), indicates that kinsmen are given slight preference over non-kin (54.4%/45.6%) for the three ceremonies. Within the kin group, the child's mother's kin are given preference (58.3%/41.7%) over father's kin and of all kinsmen selected, members of the generations of elders are preferred in the majority of cases (72.7%/27.3%). If a non-kinsman is selected, he may be of the same socio-economic class (50.5%) or belong to a higher class stratum (42.1%). If the choice within the non-kin group establishes a vertical dyadic tie (crossing class lines), slight preference is given to professionals and merchants (22.6% of the non-kin choices) over individuals exerting control relative to the distribution of work and household incomes (19.5% of the non-kin ties involved the patrón or work manager).

Distribution of choices within each of the three ceremonies indicates the application of differential strategies in the selection of coparents. In order to test the significance of these observed differences, the Chi-Square test was utilized. For each of the dichotomous choice sets, the Chi-Square was computed and a determination made of the probability that observed differences could be attributed to random statistical error. For each of the five choice

TABLE 24.--Aggregate Patterns of Coparent Selection.

Padrino/Compadre Selection Alternatives	Baptism	Hetzmek	Confir- mation	Total
<u>Kin vs. Non-Kin</u>	(N=236)	(N=207)	(N=209)	(N=652)
Kinsmen selected.	51.7%	78.7%	33.5%	54.4%
Non-Kinsmen selected.	48.3%	21.3%	66.5%	45.6%
<u>Within Kin Group</u>	(N=122)	(N=163)	(N= 70)	(N=355)
Mother's Kin selected.	50.0%	62.6%	62.9%	58.3%
Father's Kin selected.	50.0%	37.4%	37.1%	41.7%
Peers (0, +1)	19.7%	27.0%	41.4%	27.3%
Elders (+2, +3)	80.3%	73.0%	58.6%	72.7%
<u>Within Non-Kin Group</u>	(N=114)	(N= 44)	(N=139)	(N=297)
Vertical: Merchants, teachers, doctors.	23.7%	6.8%	26.6%	22.6%
Vertical: owner, managers, work administrators.	34.2%	0.0%	13.7%	19.5%
Vertical: total ties.	57.9%	6.8%	40.3%	42.1%
Horizontal: total ties, co-workers, neighbors, etc.	36.0%	79.5%	53.2%	50.5%
Non-Kin: Unidentifiable.	6.1%	13.6%	6.5%	7.4%

sets, two null hypotheses were tested to compare differences (a) between all three ceremonies and (b) differences between the two catholic ceremonies (baptism and confirmation). The null hypotheses posit that:

- H_0 (a) There are no statistically significant differences in the selection of compadres for the three ceremonies (baptism, Hetzmek, and confirmation).
- H_0 (b) There are no statistically significant differences in the selection of compadres for the two catholic ceremonies (baptism and confirmation).

General propositions and the test of differences between ceremonies (see Table 24):

1. While there is no apparent preference of kin over non-kin for the baptismal ceremony, kinsmen are emphasized for the Hetzmek (78.7%/21.3% over non-kin) and non-kin are preferred choices for the confirmation (66.5%/33.5% over kin choices). The probability (at the $p < .001$ level of significance) is absolutely minimal that these differences can be attributed to random statistical error.

$$H_0 \text{ (a) } \chi^2 = 87.01, p < .001, 2df$$

$$H_0 \text{ (b) } \chi^2 = 15.00, p < .001, 1df$$

2. Within the kin group, equal preference is given to both mother's and father's kin. Both Hetzmek and confirmation demonstrate a slight preference of mother's kin (63%) over father's kin (37%). With the computed Chi-Square significant at the $p .10$ level, the null hypotheses cannot be rejected completely; the observed differences may be attributable to random error.⁶

$$H_0 \text{ (a) } \chi^2 = 5.28, p < .10, 2df$$

$$H_0 \text{ (b) } \chi^2 = 2.95, p < .10, 1df$$

3. If a kinsman is selected, he or she will most likely be an elder, primary relative of the child (grandparent or great-grandparent). Greatest preference for elder relatives occurs for the baptismal ceremony (80.3%/19.7%), declining for the Hetzmek (73%/27%), and lowest for the confirmation ceremony (58.6%/41.4%). The differences observed between the three ceremonies are significant and the Chi Square test indicates differential strategies are involved in each of the three ceremonies.

$$H_0 \text{ (a) } \chi^2 = 10.64, p < .01, 2df$$

$$H_0 \text{ (b) } \chi^2 = 10.59, p < .001, 1df$$

4. Within the non-kin group of choices, baptism and confirmation are functionally opposite; the former mildly stressing vertical, non-kin ties (57.9%/36.0%) while the latter stresses the selection and establishment of horizontal, intra-class bonds (53.2%/40.3%). Hetzmek non-kin choices are overwhelmingly selective for the establishment of horizontal dyadic bonds of coparenthood (79.5%/6.8%). The Chi-Square test indicates that these differences are statistically significant and the probability is high that, again, differential strategies are applied to each of the three ceremonies.

$$H_0 \text{ (a) } \chi^2 = 33.41, p < .001, 2df$$

$$H_0 \text{ (b) } \chi^2 = 8.10, p < .01, 1df$$

5. Within the vertical, non-kin choices, baptism and confirmation are again functionally opposite. The baptismal preference stresses ties with the patrón or work administrators (60% of the vertical choices made) while confirmation emphasizes establishes ties primarily with merchants or other professionals (67% of the vertical

choices made). The vertical bonds intensified by means of the Hetzmek ceremony are negligible (less than 2% of the entire Hetzmek sample) and two of the three cases involved a community merchant or store-owner. Since the Hetzmek sample was so small, the Chi-Square test could not be used to test the first null hypothesis. Comparison of the two catholic ceremonies indicates that the reversal in strategies observed in the frequency distribution are very unlikely due to random error.

H_0 (a) Hetzmek sample size too small to apply test.

H_0 (b) $\chi^2 = 7.64$, $p < .01$, 1df

As demonstrated above, the three ceremonies involve significantly different choice strategies for all except the second category (mother's kin versus father's kin as selection alternatives). These differences are difficult to interpret unless one takes into account the fact that the padrino data span an actual time period of approximately 80 years. Since all three ceremonies are, by preference, usually completed within the first year following birth, the data were split according to the ages of the initiates. Examination of the data by five-year age intervals indicated that changes had occurred in the selection process and that observed trends coincided with major changes in the pre- to post- agrarian reform institutional context of this community. Based on the observed trends, the data were collapsed to coordinate age groups with major institutional periods. The major periods are those discussed in more detail in Chapter III: the hacienda period, the period of post-reform ejido control under the state run Henequeneros de Yucatán, and the post-reform period of federal control under, in

turn, the Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal (Banjidal) and the Banco Agrario de Yucatán (Bangrario). The following categories describe the age group and reiterate major characteristics of the institutional period:

1. The age group comprised of individuals thirty years of age and older includes those born before 1940. The majority of the individuals in this category were born and had passed through the baptism, Hetzmek, and confirmation ceremonies during the latter part of the hacienda period in Yucatán. The community of San Antonio and the surrounding lands were part of the hacienda property and the people of San Antonio (peones acasillados) were strictly controlled socially and economically by the hacendado (patrón) and his managers (encargados and administradores).

2. The group made up of those individuals between the ages of 15 and 29 years corresponds to those born during the post-agrarian reform period, 1940 through 1955. During this time, San Antonio became an ejido community productively organized to utilize assigned expropriated hacienda lands, and controlled by the state agency of Henequeneros. The "Gran Ejido" operated as a giant state corporation (as noted in Chapter III) and although ejidos achieved some measure of political autonomy from the hacienda owners (now pequeños propietarios), work assignments in the community were determined by managers, who were not themselves from the community, appointed by the state agency. Elected ejido officials had little power and workers were often assigned work on land belonging to other neighboring ejidos within the general region.

3. The group comprised of those individuals 14 years of age or younger, coincides with the period, 1956 through 1970. During this period, the federal government regained control over the henequen ejidos in Yucatán, dissolving the state agency. Administration of the ejidos was affected by the national Banjidal and, later, the regional and subsidiary Bangrario. Under federal control, ejidatarios are paid for work performed on ejido lands belonging to the community. The federal and regional banks controlled wage scale, the amount and categories of work to be performed on ejido lands, yet the actual distribution of work assignments has been left to the elected ejido officials.

Choice Patterns During the Hacienda Period

The data clearly indicate (see Table 25) that different bonding functions or choice strategies can be ascribed to each of the ceremonies involving ritual sponsorship. Application of the Chi-Square test to the ratio of kin to non-kin choices indicates a strong rejection of the null hypothesis that observed differences between the ceremonies can be accounted for by random error ($\chi^2 = 33.07$, $p < .001$, 2df). While baptismal selection only showed a slight bias towards the selection of kin over non-kin (57.1%/42.9%), Hetzmek was almost exclusively oriented towards the selection of kin over non-kin (86.2%/13.8%). Confirmation, balancing Hetzmek, was used to primarily establish ties of compadrazgo with non-kin (85.3%/14.7%).

Within the kin-group choices, baptism was used to intensify bonds with the child's patri-kin (67.9%/32.1%) and Hetzmek, the functional or strategic opposite of baptism, used to intensify ties

TABLE 25.--The Hacienda Period Prior to 1940.

Selection Alternatives	Baptism	Hetzmek	Confirmation
<u>Kin vs. Non-Kin</u>	(N= 49)	(N= 29)	(N= 34)
Kinsmen selected.	57.1%	86.2%	14.7%
Non-Kinsmen selected.	42.9%	13.8%	85.3%
<u>Within Kin Group</u>	(N= 28)	(N= 25)	(N= 5) ^a
Mother's Kin selected.	32.1%	64.0%	(80.0%)
Father's Kin selected.	67.9%	36.0%	(20.0%)
Peers (0, +1)	7.1%	12.0%	(20.0%)
Elders (+2, +3)	92.9%	88.0%	(80.0%)
<u>Within Non-Kin Group</u>	(N= 21)	(N= 4) ^a	(N= 29)
Vertical: Professionals, Merchants, etc.	9.5%	(0.0%)	20.7%
Vertical: Owner (patrón)	76.2%	(0.0%)	34.5%
Vertical: Managers, work Administrators.	0.0%	(0.0%)	10.3%
Vertical: Total	85.7%	(0.0%)	65.5%
Horizontal: Total co-workers, neighbors, etc.	9.5%	(75.5%)	34.5%
Non-Kin: Unidentifiable	4.8%	(25.0%)	0.0%

^aSample size small and therefore subject to random error.

with the child's matri-kin (64%/36%). While the small sample size (5 cases identified) makes it more subject to random error, the confirmation ceremonial choices do indicate a preference of matri-kin over patri-kin (80%/20%). With respect to the kin-group choices for all three ceremonies, the overwhelming preference was for elder lineal kinsmen (maternal and paternal) of the child (baptism: 92.9%/7.1%; Hetzmek: 88%/12%; confirmation: 80%/20%).

Within the non-kin group of choices, both baptism and confirmation were used to establish or intensify vertical ties that cross-cut class strata (baptism: 85.7%/9.5%; confirmation: 65.5%/34.5%), with a lesser emphasis being placed on horizontal, intra-class bonds. Hetzmek frequency distributions suggest exclusive emphasis on horizontal, non-kin bonds (75.5%) but the sample size is too small (4 cases identified, and one of those not identifiable) to completely ignore the effects of random error.

Close examination of non-kin vertical choices demonstrates the importance of the hacienda owner and his work managers. Of the baptismal non-kin choices, 76.2% of the choices directly involved the owner (*patrón*) or a member of his family (representing 89% of all the vertical, non-kin choices). With respect to confirmation, 44.8% of the non-kin choices involved the owner (34.5%) or his managers or administrators (10.3%); approximately one-third of the non-kin, vertical choices involved store owners, teachers, etc.

During the pre-reform period, 1926-1938, Hacienda San Antonio became the property of a new *patrón* (cf. Chapter III). While most investigators emphasize the lower sector as initiating vertical

compadrazgo ties, informants indicated that the new patron had himself initiated many of the ritual ties related to baptism and confirmation. Informants stated that the patrón would bring a priest into the community, would pay for his transportation and the mass, and would essentially name himself as sponsor to all those individuals baptised or confirmed. The new patrón apparently used compadrazgo to intensify workers' obligations to perform as well, as obediently, and as faithfully for him as they had for the previous owner. While the owner initiated these vertical ties, in no instance did he request a member of the community to act as the godparent for his children, even though two of his children were born during this period of ownership. The owner utilized the compadrazgo bond without contradicting the general notion that vertical bonds are oriented towards establishing ties with individuals of a higher class or stratum of the society. The relationship was initiated by the owner yet the structure of that relationship was not exceptional: the vertical compadrazgo bound parents of a lower stratum with a coparent of a higher socio-economic stratum of that system.

Agrarian Reform: the State Period

Due to the changes which followed expropriation and agrarian reform, this period (1940-1955) was one of stress for the community of San Antonio. The patrón defaulted on his purchase payment following reform and what was left of the hacienda (the pequeña propiedad) reverted back to the heirs of the original founder. Control over the distribution of work in the community had been vested in a work administrator appointed by the state agency of Henequeneros de Yucatán.

Although not from the community, the administrator's control was nearly absolute. The ejido community elected its own officials but they exerted little influence over the productive and economic aspects of life in this ejido colectivo de acasillados. In addition, the community store, which had been the hacienda tienda de raya (company store), was now operated by an independent concessionaire and the store operator himself, rather than the hacienda owner, determined credit policy.

Major changes in the patterns of coparent selection involved both the new work manager of the ejido and the concessionaire operating the community store (cf. Table 26). The influence of the heir-owners was considerably less than that exerted by the patrón during the hacienda period. For both baptism and confirmation, very few of the non-kin vertical choices involved the new pequeños propietarios (5.1% and 6.5%, respectively, of the non-kin choices). Emphasis shifted towards the selection of the store operator (baptism: 25.6%; and confirmation: 34.8%, of the non-kin choices) and the ejido work manager (38.5% of the non-kin baptismal choices). While still significant, vertical non-kin bonds decreased from the hacienda period as parents began to select a greater proportion of neighbors, friends and co-workers (intra-class) as coparents.

Emphasis on the selection of kinsmen declined slightly with respect to baptism and although still representing less than one-third of the choices involved in the confirmation ceremony, the proportion of kinsmen had increased for that ceremony when compared with the earlier hacienda period. Within the kin group, emphasis on the selection of mother's kin increased for both Hetzmek and baptism,

TABLE 26.--The State-Run Ejido Period (Henequeneros de Yucatán):
1941 to 1955.

Selection Alternatives	Baptism	Hetzmek	Confirmation
<u>Kin vs. Non-Kin</u>	(N= 68)	(N= 65)	(N= 66)
Kinsmen selected.	42.6%	84.6%	30.3%
Non-Kinsmen selected.	57.4%	15.4%	69.7%
<u>Within Kin Group</u>	(N= 29)	(N= 55)	(N= 20)
Mother's Kin selected.	41.4%	67.3%	65.0%
Father's Kin selected.	58.6%	32.7%	35.0%
Peers (0, +1)	17.2%	20.0%	50.0%
Elders (+2, +3)	82.8%	80.0%	50.0%
<u>Within Non-Kin Group</u>	(N= 39)	(N= 10)	(N= 46)
Vertical: Professionals, Merchants, etc.	25.6%	0.0%	34.8%
Vertical: Owner (patrón)	5.1%	0.0%	6.5%
Vertical: Managers, work administrators	38.5%	0.0%	6.5%
Vertical: Total	69.2%	0.0%	47.8%
Horizontal: Total co-workers, neighbors, etc.	28.2%	100.0%	50.0%
Non-Kin: Unidentifiable.	2.6%	0.0%	2.2%

but decreased in emphasis for confirmation. For all three ceremonies, preference had decreased with regard to the selection of elder, lineal relatives as coparents, with the decline most marked in the case of confirmation sponsorship by kinsmen. Of the three ceremonies, Hetzmek changed least from the pattern described for the previous hacienda period.

Agrarian Reform: the Federal Period

With the dissolution of Henequeneros (1955), the ejidatarios of San Antonio began to achieve relatively greater political and economic autonomy, achieving greatest independence from governmental agencies during the brief period spanning 1964 to 1968. Resumption of control over the ejido by the regional bank, the Bangrario, resulted in that agency fixing total allowable work assignments and income but, nevertheless, distribution of the assigned work was left up to the local ejido officials. As noted in Chapter II, population growth was greatest during this most recent period and, as a result, the land/ejidatario ratio no longer meets the minimum specified by the agrarian reform law.

Kinsmen are again the predominant coparent choice for baptism (54.6%/45.4%) and they continue to be important choices for the Hetzmek ceremony (73.5%/26.5%) but to a lesser degree than exhibited in the previous two periods. Confirmation is still mainly selective for non-kin as coparents (58.7%/41.3%) but the trend towards an overall reduction of that emphasis has continued in this most recent period (cf. Table 27). Within the kin group, mother's kin are given preference in all three ceremonies (baptism: 61.5% of the kin choices were matrilineal; Hetzmek:

TABLE 27.--The Federal (Bangrario) Ejido Period: 1956 to 1970.

Selection Alternatives	Baptism	Hetzmek	Confirmation
<u>Kin vs. Non-Kin</u>	(N=119)	(N=113)	(N=109)
Kinsmen selected.	54.6%	73.5%	41.3%
Non-Kinsmen selected.	45.4%	26.5%	58.7%
<u>Within Kin Group</u>	(N= 65)	(N= 83)	(N= 45)
Mother's Kin selected.	61.5%	59.0%	60.0%
Father's Kin selected.	38.5%	41.0%	40.0%
Peers (0, +1)	26.2%	36.1%	40.0%
Elders (+2, +3)	73.8%	63.9%	60.0%
<u>Within Non-Kin Group</u>	(N= 54)	(N= 30)	(N= 64)
Vertical: Professionals, merchants, etc.	27.8%	10.0%	23.4%
Vertical: Owner (patrón)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Vertical: Managers, work administrators.	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Vertical: Total	38.9%	10.0%	23.4%
Horizontal: Total co-workers, neighbors, etc.	51.9%	73.3%	64.1%
Non-Kin: Unidentifiable	9.3%	16.7%	12.5%

59%; and confirmation: 60%). With respect to baptism, this emphasis on matri-kin represents a significant reversal of the emphasis on patri-kin observed for the previous two periods.

Within the non-kin group, the patrón-heir has ceased to be selected by the members of the community and the work manager of the pequeña propiedad sponsored 6 out of the total of 148 non-kin choices made for the three ceremonies (representing 11.1% of the baptismal non-kin choices). Vertical ties in general diminished as increasing emphasis became placed on the selection of co-workers, friends and neighbors and the establishment of horizontal coparent ties (baptism: 51.9%; Hetzmek: 73.3%; confirmation: 64.1%). Of the vertical non-kin ties, the majority were established with store owners, other merchants, teachers, etc. (Baptism: 27.8%; Hetzmek: 10%; confirmation: 23.4% of all non-kin ties). With respect to non-kin Hetzmek choices, only 3 of 30 cases involved vertical ties; one of those involved the anthropologist and the other two cases involved each of the two store owners, both members of the community of San Antonio. One of the store owners, Francisco who operates the CONASUPO outlet, works primarily for the pequeña propiedad and might, in some respects, more properly be considered a "co-worker" (the father of the child also works primarily on the pequeña propiedad). Discounting the anthropologist selected, the one remaining case (3.3% of the total non-kin choices) can hardly be taken as an indication that Hetzmek is changing from being anything but community and family-oriented in the kinds of bonds intensified by means of this non-catholic ceremony.

The Changing Patterns of Coparent Selection

Compadrazgo has changed with the changing institutionalized economic context of the community of San Antonio. The ceremonies have become increasingly similar in terms of the pattern of selecting compadres from the alternative choice sets and all ceremonies indicate an increasing emphasis placed on extensive, horizontal, co-worker ties. These extensive, horizontal ties, most obvious in the non-kin preference group, are also identifiable within the group of kinsmen selected as coparents for each of the three ceremonies.

Within the kin-group, these extensive ties are reflected in a number of ways:

(a) All three ceremonies have changed to show a consistent emphasis on matri-kin (60%) of a child rather than patri-kin (40%) (see Figure 6). Chi-Square calculations for the three ceremonies indicate they are virtually equal; the probability is extremely high ($\chi^2 = 0.093$, $p > .95$, 2df) that any observable differences can be completely attributed to purely random statistical error. From the father's point of view, this would constitute an extension of ties beyond his own kin to intensify relations already established by affinity.

(b) All three ceremonies exhibit a decreasing importance of the customary selection of elder lineal ascendants (grandparents, great-grandparents or their surrogates) as coparents and an increasing selection of age-mates (co-workers, etc.) of the parents of the child. Since the selection of affinal kin already constitutes an extension of ritual kin ties, the preference of peers over elders is most pronounced

for choices made within the patri-kin group. With respect to baptism, for example, 44% of the patri-kin choices involved peers rather than elders and within the matri-kin, only 15% of the choices involved peers while the majority (85%) of the choices favored elder lineal ascendants within the matri-kin group.

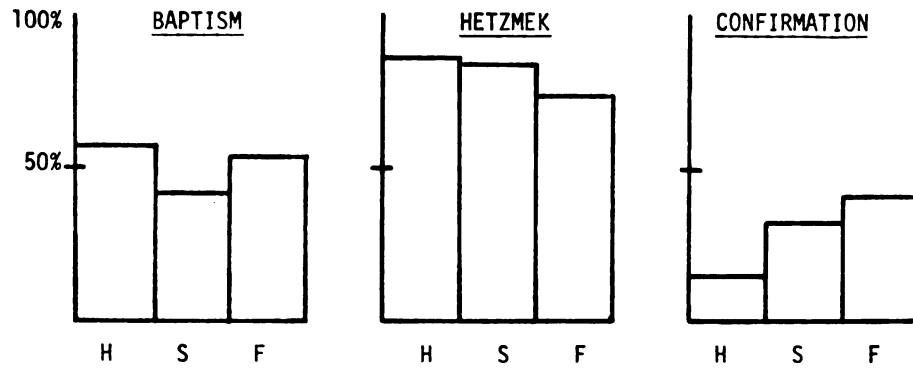
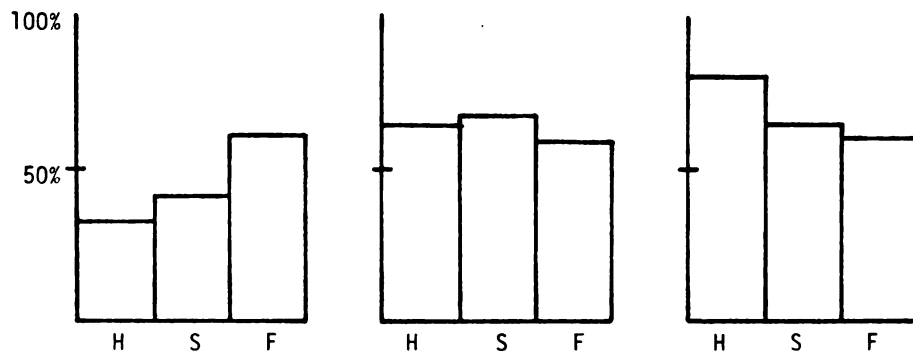
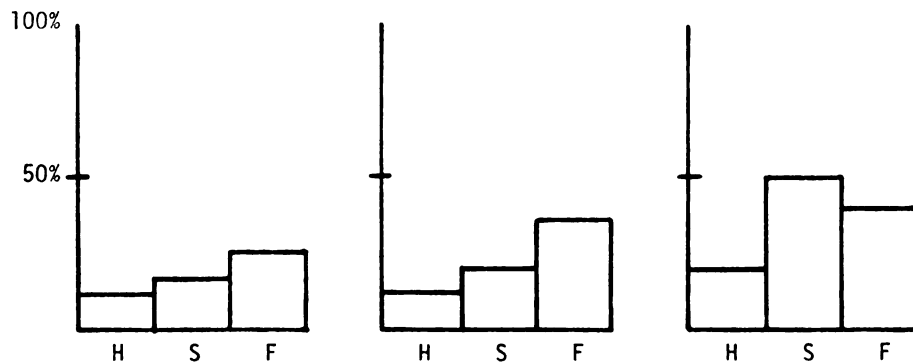
(c) The change from kin-oriented, vertical (inter-generational) bonds to an increasingly important selection emphasis on horizontal (intra-generational) bonds parallels the decreasing emphasis placed on vertical, non-kin (inter-class) ties as opposed to community-oriented, horizontal (intra-class) bonds (cf. Figures 6 and 7).

Except for the most recent period of the Hetzmek ceremony, there has been little difference in the selection patterns which can be correlated to the sex of the child (the initiate). For Hetzmek, however, there are apparent differences which indicate that if the child is a female, greater preference is given to elder members of the child's matri-kin over all others. If the child is male, nearly equal weight is given to matri-kin over patri-kin and to peers as opposed to elder lineal kinsmen. The following table summarizes the distribution by sex of the child:

TABLE 28.--Kin-Group Choice by Sex of the Initiate.

Hetzmek: Federal Period	Male	Female
Matri-Kin selected	46.8%	75.0%
Patri-Kin selected	53.2%	25.0%
Peers selected (horizontal)	44.7%	25.0%
Elders selected (vertical)	55.3%	75.0%

Figure 6.--Compadrazgo Selection: Kin Choices.

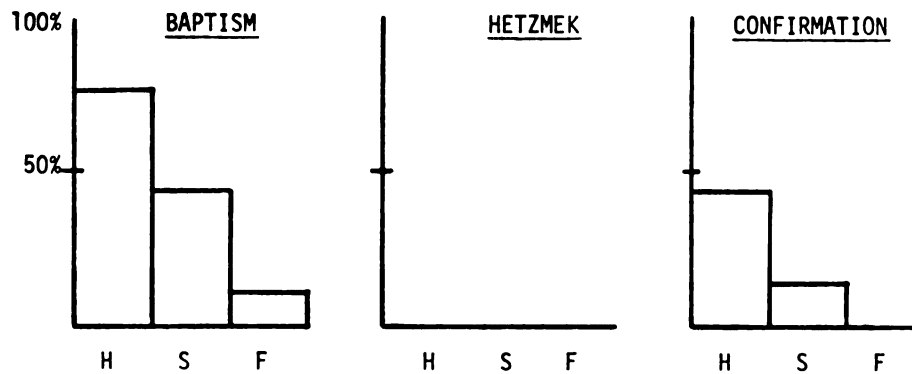
a) Percent of Kinsmen Selected (over Non-Kin).b) Within Kin Group: Percent of Matri-Kin Selected (over Partri-Kin).c) Within Kin Group: Percent of Peers Selected (over Lineal Ascendants).

H) Hacienda Period

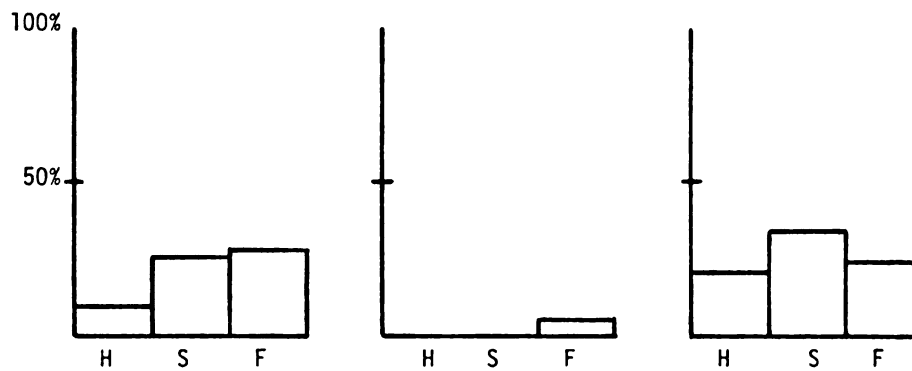
S) State Period

F) Federal Period

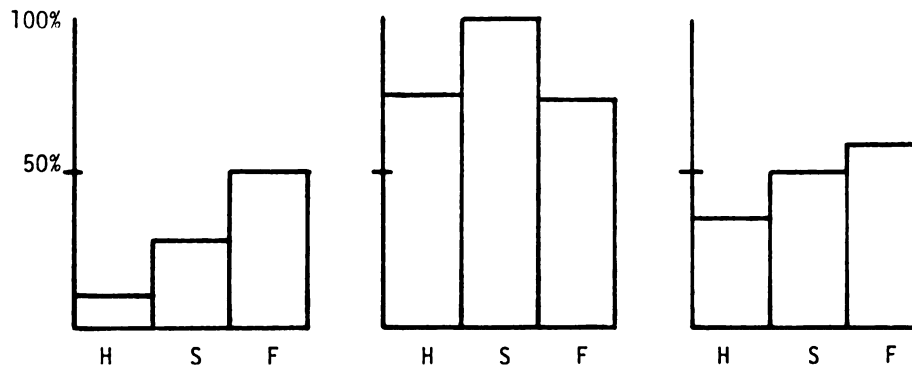
Figure 7.--Compadrazgo Selection: Non-Kin Choices.



a) Within Non-Kin: Percent of Vertical, Work-related Choices.



b) Within Non-Kin: Percent of Vertical, Professional Choices (Merchants, etc.).



c) Within Non-Kin: Percent of Horizontal, Intra-Class Choices.

H) Hacienda Period

S) State Period

F) Federal Period

The degree of change is best illustrated by noting that during the hacienda period, matri-kin had been emphasized for both sexes (male initiates: 63.2%; females: 66.7%), and emphasis on elder ascendants was virtually the same for both male (89.5%) and female initiates (83.3%). Female initiates now seem more frequently "used" in a traditional way, and male initiates have kinds of godparents selected for them who represent a greater departure from the "traditional" patterns of choice as evidenced for the hacienda period. The data suggest that women are assuming greater responsibility in the selection of godparents for the Hetzmek of their daughters, and that men assume a greater role in the selection of Hetzmek godparents for their sons. Comparisons of choice patterns by sex of the initiate for the other two ceremonies do not indicate a similar bifurcation of choice responsibilities between the parents of the child.

Ascendant Emphasis: "Tradition" or Adaptation?

As has been indicated above, the largest single sub-category given preference in the selection of coparents is that of lineal ascending relatives (or elder surrogates) of either the child's patri-kin or matri-kin. This preference, noted by many, is either briefly described as traditional (Redfield, 1941; Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1934; Villa Rojas, 1945) or merely mentioned and then ignored in favor of quantitative analyses of the matri-kin/patri-kin and kin/non-kin choice dichotomies (Deshon, 1963; Thompson, 1971) as they relate to, primarily, patterns of post-marital residence. While the latter type of analysis is useful in determining recent correlations between coparent selection and residence, it does not lend itself heuristically

to a discussion of the possible adaptive value of such an emphasis on the significance of the recent decline in the emphasis on lineal ascendants.

On the other hand, it is common for a man to ask his father or older brother to act as godparent of his child. . . . The old people say that only if one is compadre with one's father and mother will one meet with them in heaven (Gloria) (Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1934: 99).

If either pair of prospective grandparents is alive (preferably the paternal grandparents), they must be chosen. Paternal grandparents are the first choice, and even if only one is alive, he or she becomes the godparent and discharges all the obligations (Villa Rojas, 1945: 90).

The persons selected as sponsors are always persons whose relationship to the petitioners is already such that respect is properly felt toward them. If either pair of prospective grandparents are alive, these are properly the first choice; otherwise chiefs and maestros cantores are preferred (in Tusik) (Redfield, 1941: 221).

. . . first ascending generation kinsmen are the most common choices, followed by zero generation kinsmen. . . . A complete characterization of compadrazgo as a device for constructing interpersonal resource networks requires more precise analysis of both the kinship and nonkinship constituents of compadrazgo in the community (town of Ticul) (Thompson, 1971: 386).

Actually, the henequen hacienda exhibits a persistent dominant pattern of grandparent selection and horizontal relationships . . . we propose that the extended type or stage of a household has a conservative effect on sponsor selection in the hacienda, sustaining the traditional horizontal character of compadrazgo for the community as a whole. . . . The older forms were found to be horizontal and intensive. . . . (Deshon, 1963: 577, 580, 581).

For Redfield and Villa Rojas, grandparents are selected because they "must be" if they are still living. Thompson's "more precise analysis" correlates matri-kin and patri-kin choices with "patrilocal" and "nonpatrilocal" residence, but ignores the ascending category which he had already described as "most common." While Deshon presents a very interesting analysis of compadrazgo in the context of domestic

unit cyclicity (nuclear/extended/nuclear), she had decided not to distinguish intra-generational (horizontal) from inter-generational (vertical) kin ties, preferring to classify them all as socio-economically horizontal (intra-class).

The data and examples presented below support the hypothesis that selection of elder lineal kinsmen was highly adaptive to a situation in which adults frequently outlived one or more spouses and, as a consequence, familial ties of affinity were in a constant state of flux. Given the tendency towards community endogamy, and the high frequency of re-marriage following the death of a spouse, it would be counter-productive (and socially maladaptive) to emphasize horizontal, intra-class compadrazgo ties. Such an extension beyond the close lineal kin group, by extension of the incest taboo to include ritual kin, would eliminate potential "replacements" of deceased spouses. The selection of elder lineal (ascending) kinsmen as coparents would have the effect of (1) not affecting an extension of incest taboos beyond those already defined and prohibited through kinship, and (2) in the cases of re-marriage of the parent of the child or the ascending coparents, compadrazgo provides a means to extend intensified ties (and the incest prohibition) to one's "new" affinal relatives or to "new" (surrogate) ascending relatives.

The following two tables (Tables 29 and 30) reveal the effects of demographic changes on the frequency of re-marriage. A general decline in mortality rates and an increase in the average age at death (discussed in Chapter II) have resulted in a reduction of the incidence of re-marriage in the community of San Antonio. During the

TABLE 29.--Frequency Distribution of Marriage in San Antonio.^a

Time Period	Total Number of Marriages	Male: First Marriage	Male: Re- Marriage	Female: First Marriage	Female: Re- Marriage
1880-1894 (H)	44	77.3%	22.7%	77.3%	22.7%
1895-1909 (H)	45	62.2%	37.8%	64.4%	35.6%
1910-1924 (H)	21	61.9%	38.1%	71.4%	28.6%
1925-1939 (H)	22	81.8%	18.2%	90.9%	9.1%
1940-1954 (S)	20	85.0%	15.0%	90.0%	10.0%
1955-1964 ^b (F)	8	87.5%	12.5%	87.5%	12.5%

^aCalculations based on marriage records of the Maax civil registry office.

^bRecords available only through 1964; the small sample number of the last period (1955-1964) makes it most subject to random error.

(H) Hacienda Period (S) State Period (F) Federal Period

TABLE 30.--Average Age at Marriage and Re-Marriage by Sex.^a

Time Period	First Marriage		Re-Marriage	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1880-1894 (H)	18.8	17.4	36.8	30.1
1895-1909 (H)	19.0	17.0	36.6	31.8
1910-1924 (H)	19.9	16.7	35.1	28.8
1925-1939 (H)	21.3	17.5	35.5	36.5
1940-1954 (S)	22.2	16.9	46.0	44.5
1955-1964 (F)	22.9	17.9	52.0	49.0

^aCalculations based on the marriage records of the Maax civil registry.

first three decades of this century, at least one out of every three marriages recorded in the municipality of Maax (for the community of San Antonio), involved a re-marriage of widows or widowers (most often to each other, but in a few cases a widower would take an unmarried woman as his second or third wife). The increasing longevity of spouses is reflected in the overall decline in the number of marriages per time period (as the number of re-marriages declines), the increasing age at re-marriage, and the fact that in the most recent period, re-marriage occurs in slightly more than one out of every ten marriages recorded. That the re-marriage follows the death of a spouse is indicated by a word following the name indicating viudo (widower) or viuda (widow) in the Maax records.

For an anthropologist interested in analyzing genealogical aspects of social relations, the high incidence of remarriage can be devastating. The effects of this complicating factor illustrate the "all roads lead to Rome" principle; it is almost literally true that beginning with one individual and tracing consanguineal and affinal connections, that individual could be "linked" to any other individual and back again without ever using the same connecting genealogical link twice and, in addition, without ever having to trace links back more than two or three generations. Of the various anthropologists who have conducted community studies in Yucatán (Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1934; Redfield, 1941; Villa Rojas, 1945; Deshon, 1959, 1963; Thompson, 1971; Raymond, 1971), only Deshon mentions the occurrence of re-marriage (1959: 113); and none of the authors consider re-marriage and the subsequent re-alignment of affinal ties in their discussions

relative to kinship. These observations concerning the absence of discussions relative to re-marriage might lead one to conclude that it only occurs on henequen haciendas (Deshon, 1959) or that other investigators simply deemed it unimportant.

The following diagrams and discussion⁷ are not intended to illustrate some "typical" pattern of re-marriage nor do they reveal some set of rules that guide individuals in the restructuring of affinal ties and alliances. They are included to provide a glimpse at the complexity and fluidity of "affination" (if I may coin a term) involved in one's adult life during the latter part of the 1800's and the first part of this century. With respect to ritual coparenthood, the data indicate that the bonds of compadrazgo may be alternately used as a social basis for restructuring affinal relations, or used as a means to add further formality to a restructured set of affinal alliances. At the least, it is clear that when an individual selected a grandparent or grandparents as coparents, and repeated that selection for subsequent children, in most cases he or she was extending ties which, potentially, could include an extremely large number of different people.

The first diagram (cf. Figure 8) illustrates, with reference to a single generational group, what is here referred to as the fluidity of "affination." The order of re-marriage events is indicated by the year the marriage was recorded in the Maax office. In all cases, the re-marriage partners were described as a "widow" or "widower," meaning that the previous spouse had died during the period intervening between an earlier marriage and the year of re-marriage; none of the cases

indicated that re-marriage had followed a separation or divorce from the spouse recorded earlier. For all of the following diagrams, the following symbolic system will be utilized:

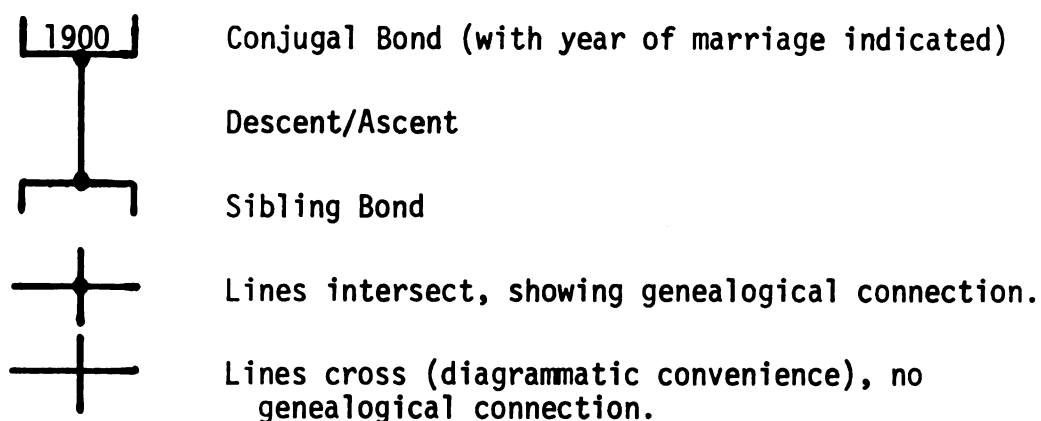


Figure 8 exhibits the fluidity of marriage alliances over time, connecting individuals within generations as well as between generations (cf. Inset 1a). Of especial interest with regard to *compadrazgo* are the marriages to the Ek-Chí sisters of Buenaventura (B.V.) Narváez and his father Esteban (Est.). In 1893, B.V. Narváez married Bonifacia (Bon) Ek-Chí and shortly after the re-marriage of BV's father, in 1894, Bon and BV had their first child, a girl (the year of birth was reconstructed from records of the child's marriage, 1915, and re-marriage, 1919, which indicated she had been born near the end of 1894 or early part of 1895). Following the birth of the child, it is most probable that Est. and his new wife were selected as the child's baptismal sponsors (68% probable selection of child's patri-kin and 93% probable selection of lineal ascendants during the hacienda period, see Table 25 above), thus intensifying and formalizing bonds between BV/Bon and Est/Puc (the latter, Puc, was recorded as

having married Est in March of 1894). For the child's Hetzmek ceremony, an elder female member of the child's matri-kin should have been selected as sponsor (64% probable selection of matri-kin, 88% probable selection of lineal ascendant). Bon's mother, however, had died (father's re-marriage recorded in 1887), leaving as a replacement either the step-mother of Bon, or her eldest sister Petronila (Pet) who had herself been widowed and re-married in 1892. It is hypothesized here that Pet, as eldest sister, was selected as surrogate lineal ascendant of the child and Hetzmek godmother to the child. By 1896 Est and Pet, experiencing again the demise of their respective spouses, had married each other, Pet becoming both step-mother and sister-in-law to BV, and Est becoming brother-in-law as well as father-in-law to Bon.

The above ethno-historical reconstruction of alterations in kin and ritual kin alliances supports three major propositions concerning the adaptive role of compadrazgo in the social system of this community.

1. Selection of lineal ascendants as coparents provides a means to intensify and formalize relations between a parent and his or her surrogate parent (following re-marriage of a lineal ascendant).

2. For cases in which intensive relations include both horizontal and vertical and, as well, affinal and consanguineal components, compadrazgo provides a means to emphasize the vertical and consanguineal components of these restructured relations. Since both father and son had married sisters, a potential for sexual competition and/or suspicion existed. The addition of compadrazgo bonds, however, would imbue such potential sexual encounters (between Fa and WiSi/SoWi, or between So

and FaWi/WiSi) with strong incestuous connotations. With the addition of compadrazgo, such relations would be unthinkable and interaction between compadres would be above reproach.

3. Alternation between the selection of child's matri-kin and patri-kin as sponsors provides a basis for social interaction between the coparents of the parents (co-compadres), without the addition of a prohibition defining that interaction as potentially incestuous. In the example above, it is posited that Estéban and Petronila (before and after the deaths of their spouses) had a basis for interacting which would not be considered scandalous: they could visit close relatives (BV and Bon) who were also their common coparents. Since Petronila and Estéban were not themselves compadres, no prohibition existed which would preclude their marriage to each other.

Relative to the above propositions concerning the importance of the incest taboo to the restructuring of social relations, Redfield noted that:

A myth collected in Merida includes the assertion that incest between compadres is even more terrible than that between father and daughter, which in turn is said to be more terrible than that between mother and son. Breach of the taboo with respect to compadres is certainly the commonest of the three; the myth is probably to be interpreted as putting the pressure of moral control where it is most needed (1941: 212).

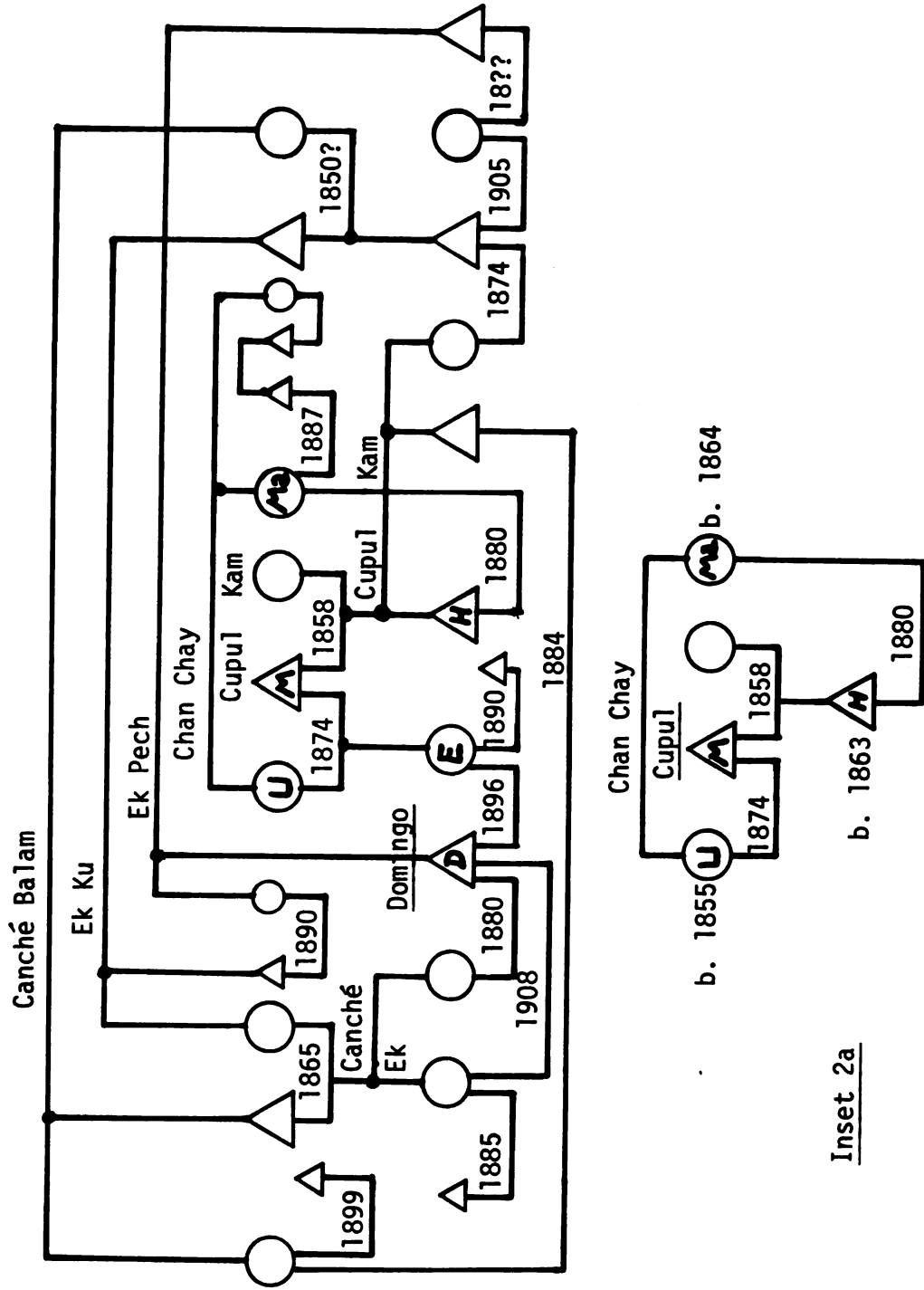
While Redfield interpreted the "myth" as merely a strong ideological expression of the associated incest prohibition extended to ritual coparents, it is my assertion that this "myth" should be taken more literally. Incest between compadres who are a part of a restructured network of affination is more serious than that between genealogical father and daughter or mother and son since the restructured relations would not otherwise be as strongly covered by prohibitions associated

with actual (genealogical) ascending or descending lineal relatives. It is compadrazgo that provides the mechanism to make the relations as nearly formal as actual father/daughter and mother/son kinship.

The following diagram (Figure 9) provides the additional proof required to validate the above assertion. It documents a case in which the same kind of re-marriage occurred, and the same kinds of relations established which included horizontal, vertical, consanguineal, and affinal components. In this case, however, the father's re-marriage pre-dates the son's marriage to his new step-mother's sister. In this case, compadrazgo and the selection of father and father's wife as coparents clearly would formalize relations in terms of their vertical components as asserted above. Here, the selection of coparents along "traditional" lines would obviate the possibility of sexual competition, actual or perceived, between father and son.

Inset 2a of Figure 9 illustrates a reversal of the previous case. Marcos Cupul (M), widower, married Eustaquia Chan(U) in 1874. Within a few years (1880), Marcos' son by his previous wife, Hilario Cupul Kam (H), married Maria, sister to Eustaquia. Ties of compadrazgo most probably had been established between Hilario and his wife (parents) and Hilario's father and step-mother (coparents); one of their children had lived to the age of marriage and thus was recorded in the municipal records. Maria herself had to re-marry in 1887 (following the death of Hilario in 1887, recorded as due to embriaguez or intoxication) and had selected the brother of another sister's husband. Elena (E), daughter of Marcos and Eustaquia (cf. Figure 9), married in 1890, became a widow, and re-married to Domingo Ek Pech (D), himself a

Figure 9.--Affirmation of Affination.



widower, in 1896. Following the death of Elena, Domingo re-married the sister of his first wife, who had been widowed. Domingo re-married the sister of his first wife and also one who was very likely the child of a compadre.

Comparing the complexities of affination as illustrated in Figures 8 and 9, one can conclude that the "traditional" emphasis on the selection of lineal ascending kin was highly adaptive to the demographic and social context of this community. Compadrazgo can be used to intensify restructured relations and, at the same time, can be used in such a way that it facilitates the selection of re-marriage partners without eliminating potential spouses. The following chapters elaborate further on the inter-relationship between kinship, re-marriage, compadrazgo, and the politics of alliance in San Antonio during the period of fieldwork.

Don Peto once described his own re-marriage to Doña Pacífica (1958). He said that following the death of his wife, life had become "very sad" for him. His elder daughter helped run the house until she finally married and moved to Xamach. At that point, he said, he decided to approach Doña Pacífica since "a man can't live without a woman to make his tortillas!" When I asked him if that was all, he replied, smiling, that of course that was all, they were too old to do anything besides keep each other warm in their hammock (Doña Pacífica giggled at this point). He knew Doña Pacífica from the community and since her sister had been married to Peto's brother, he stated that they were also "related." When Pacífica's husband died, she lived with her son Francisco until the time of Peto's decision.

Peto chose the day of action, waited until evening when the community had quieted down, and he approached and knocked softly at Francisco's door. Peto explained that he had come to talk to Pacífica and was allowed to enter the house. As Peto explained it, he was quite nervous at the time, but proceeded to tell Pacífica that he would like to have her come and live with him and that he would wait outside the door, giving her a few minutes to gather her belongings. Peto left the house, heard Francisco try to dissuade his mother and finally, much to his relief, saw Pacífica leave the house with her bundle. Don Peto and Doña Pacífica lived together for a few years until they were finally forced to marry; a priest who was to perform the marriage ceremony for Peto's younger son (by his first wife) refused to do so unless the "parents" were also married in the church.

Francisco and his wife remained childless but his sister and her husband began to name Peto and Pacífica as godparents to their subsequent children (5 in all). The husband alternated selection between Peto, his mother's (husband's mother's) second husband (who himself had been married three times), and Francisco.

Dimensions of Coparent Relations

As demographic pressures for the maintenance of the "traditional" pattern of selecting lineal ascendants has decreased, the choice patterns in the selection of ritual coparents have shifted from emphasizing inter-generational to intra-generational ties. A greater proportion of the ties of compadrazgo are being extended horizontally through the community, and fewer are being used to intensify vertical inter-generational or vertical inter-class bonds of ritual kinship.

The following case examples describe some of the negative aspects of vertical, inter-class coparenthood and some of the positive dimensions of horizontal, inter-class relations. These cases suggest that while establishing a formalized bond between oneself and a member of a higher class stratum may afford benefits, there is always the possibility that one may find himself abused in the relationship and, lacking relative power, be unable to avoid interacting with one who is a compadre or comadre. Rather than substitute vertical inter-class ties for the ascendant emphasis, the people of San Antonio have demonstrated a preference for compadrazgo ties that are potentially least hazardous.

Two separate conversations with Peto provided a glimpse at the positive and negative aspects of coparenthood between patrón and worker. I interviewed Peto one day as he was working in his small vegetable garden in a field adjacent to the bagazo (henequen waste) dump of the pequeña propiedad. At that time, I had been in the community only for about two months and while not hostile, Peto seemed reluctant to engage in an extensive conversation or to offer much information voluntarily:

- (Is this your own plot of land?)
- P: No, it belongs to the owner. ("dueño" or Don Manuel)
(Do you rent it from him? Do you pay him something for it?)
- P: No. (Followed by a long period of silence)
(Do you give him some of the produce?)
- P: Sometimes, but I don't really have to ("Lo hago por voluntad").
(Pues . . . how is it that you are able to use some of this land and not others of the community?)
- P: Es mi compadre, me tiene que ayudar si puede. (He's my coparent and he has to assist me if he is able.)

At a later point in time, the owner and his son had decided that they wanted to undertake an experimental horticultural project

using the fields of bagazo (which also included the area of Peto's garden). The project was publicized locally and in the Merida newspapers as a project to explore the economic aspects of truck gardening, to experiment with ways to diversify production in the henequen zone, and, ultimately, to benefit economically the ejidatarios of the zone. The owner's son ordered the foreman of the pequeña propiedad to begin dumping bagazo waste in the larger area, which included Peto's small garden plot. Peto and his step-son-in-law (Peto's second wife's DaHu), who worked with him, both lost their harvest. The plants were just beginning to produce in their adjoining gardens when the dumping operation was ordered. Just as the dumping had begun, I again interviewed Don Peto:

- (It looks as though you are going to lose your harvest.)
 P: I was able to get a few tomatoes, but most of it is lost.
 (Didn't you say anything about this to the owner?)
 P: No. Why should I say anything? He's the owner and he does what he wants with his land. That's the way life is!

In the case of Don Peto, one sees that the concept of compadrazgo was only selectively operable. In the first instance, the bond of compadrazgo was used to explain favored treatment by the owner (the use of a plot on the private holdings) and in the second instance, compadrazgo was not even mentioned. The dumping operation was simply an example of the private landowner exerting his right to utilize his own holdings as he wished. In no instance (as observed) did the owner or Peto refer to the other as "compadre"; the owner always used the familiar (tú) term of reference and Peto always replied using the more formal and respectful (usted) term.

Peto had been observed to interact very formally with a coparent of the community. One sunday afternoon while walking with Javier (28 yrs. old) and his family, Javier suggested we stop at Peto's stand to have soft drinks. As we approached, he explained that Peto was his compadre (Peto and his wife had sponsored Javier's son's baptism and his daughter's confirmation). When we arrived at Peto's, Javier and his wife very solemnly exchanged formalized greetings with their compadre and comadre (all using the "usted" term of reference). They each asked how the other had been, if they were in good health, and both Peto and his wife commented on how tall their godson (ahijado term used) was getting to be and how happy they were that he was turning out to be such a fine boy (he was 9 years old at the time). Javier and Peto were not closely related and, although they saw each other every day of their lives, the propriety of formality in interaction was stressed in every instance of social interaction. Between close relatives (siblings, lineal ascendants, or surrogates, or immediate affines) the terms "compadre" or "comadre" were never used in place of the actual name or kin term of reference. The intra-class bond between Javier and Peto, since they were not closely related, expressed fully the formality of compadrazgo.

Daniel and his wife (both in their late 30's) had established and maintained coparent bonds with Gustavo, former ejido work manager during the period of Henequeneros de Yucatán. Gustavo, following the end of Henequeneros, moved to Mérida, purchased some trucks and in a short period of time had become quite successful in his transportation business. Daniel and a couple of other members of the community continued

to request Gustavo to sponsor various of their children because, as they put it, "he always is willing and buys very nice clothes and gifts for the child." During fieldwork, Gustavo asked Daniel to send his daughter (Gustavo's god-daughter by baptism) to work as a servant in Gustavo's house in Mérida.

Within a few months, the daughter appeared once again in the community and obviously not for a short visit. Daniel's wife seemed especially outraged as she began to complain about the compadres. She explained that they paid their ahijada very little (\$80 pesos a month with meals), they made her do the work of two servants, and they hardly ever let her return to the community to visit her parents. They could not directly confront compadres with such complaints, however, so they waited until the girl's saint's day (birthday) celebration and asked the coparents to allow her to return home for her party. Once home, the mother sent a message that she (the mother) had been taken ill and the daughter would have to stay home and help maintain the household; they expressed regret that their compadres would have to look for another girl to work as servant. Within two weeks, the girl, who had made contacts through other servants in Mérida, obtained another job and left the community to work in another household but at the more current rate of \$200 pesos/month.

The above case illustrates some of the problems (actual or potential) that are created along with vertical, asymmetrical, inter-class ties of compadrazgo. The coparents obviously felt their godchild and her parents owed them the favor and, since the ritual kin tie existed, there would be no need to pay more than what was considered

(by the coparents) as adequate. The relationship was convenient and economically advantageous to the coparents, and resented as abusive by the parents. Confrontation was out of the question, but careful planning to achieve resolution of the conflict was not. The parents handled the problem in such a way that the coparents would be neither challenged nor insulted, yet the daughter's freedom from the situation would be gained.

The final case describes one informant, Máximo, who had selected his "friend" (also his MoSiSo), rather than his father, as baptismal sponsor for the first two of his children. The "traditional" practice was observed when Maximo's father sponsored the baptisms of the next two children, but the friend, Filo, who had been elected president of the ejido, baptized the fifth and youngest child. In this case, friendship was initially preferred to the customary practice of honoring one's parents. The customary privilege was afforded the patrilineal ascendants to sponsor two of the children's baptisms and, of the others, Hetzmek and confirmation were utilized to intensify bonds with the child's mother's parents and other close relatives and friends.

The birth of the fifth child provided the parent an opportunity to "remind" Filo (now ejido president) of their bonds of compadrazgo through the baptismal sponsorship by Filo of that child. The remainder seemed to work. The father, Máximo, was appointed ejido work inspector by Filo--a desirable job since it involves very little actual manual labor.

Compadrazgo ties with non-kin are highly variable in their effects. Bound to an outsider, there exists the probability that one

will either be ignored or, worse, economically or socially abused by the coparent. Within the community, compadrazgo is usually employed not so much to initiate a formalized relationship, but to give recognition, intensity, and permanency to already existing relations involving friendship, neighborhood association, and more distant bonds of actual kinship.

Summary and Conclusions

Aside from describing ceremonial and social aspects of compadrazgo and patterns of interaction between coparents, this chapter has been directed, utilizing methods of ethno-historical reconstruction, towards analyzing the dynamics of this highly flexible institution of ritual coparenthood. The tendency in the selection of ritual coparents has changed away from emphasizing vertical inter-class and inter-generational bonds as exhibited during the paternalistic hacienda period (cf. Table 31). Compadrazgo has changed in a way that is responsive to and reflective of the general, changing institutional context, and compadrazgo now serves more to extend horizontal bonds on an intra-class and intra-generational basis. Compadrazgo, reflecting the "proletarianization" of this plantation ejido, stresses more the intensification of ties between co-workers, neighbors, friends and peers, as well as close relatives. Compadrazgo assists in the formation of mutual support groups within this ejido community and appears to facilitate the equitable local distribution of work and to minimize the development of permanent competing factions.

Another important dimension of compadrazgo as it seems to have operated in this Yucatec-Maya community, concerns its utility as a

TABLE 31.--Changing Patterns of Coparent Selection.

	Baptism	HetzmeK	Confirmation
<u>Hacienda Period (to 1940)</u>			
Horizontal Choices ^a	8.3%	10.7%	32.4%
Vertical Choices ^b	91.7%	89.3%	67.6%
<u>State Period (1940 to 1955)</u>			
Horizontal Choices	23.9%	32.3%	50.8%
Vertical Choices	76.1%	67.7%	49.2%
<u>Federal Period (1955 to 1970)</u>			
Horizontal Choices	39.5%	51.7%	58.4%
Vertical Choices	60.5%	48.3%	41.6%

^aHorizontal: intra-generational, intra-class.

^bVertical: inter-generational, inter-class.

means to formalize social networks restructured by demographic fluctuation. Examined in the context of the previously high rate of re-marriage, emphasis on lineal ascendant relatives (grandparents or great-grandparents of the child) is viewed as not merely "traditional," but adaptive. Compadrazgo lends formality where it might not otherwise exist and it provides one basis for individuals in search of spouse "replacements" to interact with others without eliminating potential mates by extending to them the incestuous prohibitions of compadrazgo.

In a following chapter (Chapter VI), the discussion and description of the "Politics of Candidacy" adds to the analysis of the highly flexible and varied institution of compadrazgo. In discussing alliance or social interaction in this community, it is

difficult to fully understand the processes and strategies involved without including a discussion of the existing bonds of fictive kinship.

CHAPTER IV--FOOTNOTES

¹Redfield (1941: 307) notes another variation in the color of the WAI-CH'ICH or ave de mal: "A supernatural nocturnal bird, blue in color, brings illness to children when it flies above them as they sleep."

²Attwater (1958: 44) refers to the priest giving the child "the salt of wisdom."

³These figures related to infant mortality may be even higher. Parents often would not register children who had died at birth. Informants stated that some people would even wait a few weeks, or until the child was baptized, until registering the birth. If the child died before baptism, it was still a criatura, not yet human, and the parents would see no need to make a trip to the municipal center to record both the birth and death of an "unfortunate criatura."

⁴Peto's house lot (solar) contained three dwellings (a block house, an attached shed which served as soft drink stand and house to Peto, and a Mayan choza thatched hut) which housed Peto and his second wife (the soft drink stand), wife's daughter, husband, and children (the block house), and two of Peto's wife's daughter's daughters and their husbands and children (the choza). In this case a compound household was comprised of four nuclear family units connected by a lineal core of matri-kin. The household is identified as compound rather than extended; the sets of spouses are economically independent (purchase food and cook separately, etc.), although they do pool resources occasionally such as in the case of a particularly costly illness. While households connected by a matrilineal core are rare (this was the only case in San Antonio), the existence of compound households is not (cf. Deshon, 1959: 238-239).

⁵The practice of listing parents and grandparents of the couple being married was continued from 1866 until 1908, at which time the practice was changed to include the parents of both, but only the paternal grandparents of the groom. Following 1915, only the parents of the bride and groom were listed. In total, 174 marriages were recorded for San Antonio in the municipal records and 44 of those (25.3%) listed as re-marriages for males, and 37 (21.3%) listed as re-marriages for females.

⁶For the purposes of the statistical analysis of compadrazgo, the $p < .05$ level of significance was selected as necessary to justify rejection of the null hypotheses.

⁷The methodology used to reconstruct re-marriage patterns involved coding information for each spouse listed in the Maax marriage records in such a way that the data could be easily manipulated and information retrieved efficiently. Each individual recorded as having married was assigned a single Unisort card which contained the following information, as recorded and coded:

- (a) Entry Number (cross-referenced with master list of marriage records)
- (b) Year of Marriage (coded by decade)
- (c) Ego: First Name
First Last Name (coded)
Second Last Name (coded)
Sex (coded), Age (coded), Year of Birth.
Place of birth (coded by general category)
First Marriage or Re-Marriage (coded)
- (d) Spouse: Same information as Ego, but uncoded. Spouse is listed on a separate card as Ego and coded.
- (e) Full names of Ego's father and mother.
- (f) Previous Spouse (full name, entry number and year of previous marriage (of Ego).

The first and second last names of individuals, categorized and coded singly or in groups depending on their frequency of occurrence, proved most valuable in locating individuals and tracing family lines, in some cases, back to at least 1850. Although kin reckoning is bilateral (cf. Villa Rojas, 1969: 265-268) a patrilateral bias is indicated by the pattern of patronymic inheritance whereby an individual receives his or her first last name patrilaterally (Fa and FaFa first last name) and receives a second last name inherited from his/her matrilateral patri-kin (MoFa and MoFaFa first last name). The tracing of individuals and family groups is facilitated by the fact that neither males nor females change their names (regardless of marriage or re-marriage) during their life. Occasionally orthography would change over time (a common surname presently written as "Sulub" would appear also as "Sulu'," "Xulu'," or "Xulub") but in the majority of cases, the inclusion of the names of matri-kin and patri-kin of the individual (lineal ascendants) would permit verification of the surname and the standardization of codes to further facilitate analysis.

CHAPTER V

COMMUNITY LIFE: THE CYCLICITY OF DOMESTIC GROUPS AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL

Introduction

Estimated Average Income in San Antonio.

Martín: Nuclear Family in a Compound Domestic Group.
(The Outsider's Strategy: Compadrazgo and Uxorilocal Residence.)

Javier: The Nuclear/Neolocal Phase of the Domestic Group.
(The Untimeliness of Time Payments)

Máximo: The Nuclear/Neolocal Phase of the Domestic Group.
(The Skill to Augment Income and the Debility of Health.)

Prudencio: The Nuclear/Neolocal Phase of the Domestic Group.
(Transitory Affluence and the Beginnings of a Family.)

Jorge: The Nuclear/Post-Extended Family Phase of the Domestic Group.
(Filial Engagement and Socio-Economic Change.)

Alejandro: An Extended/Compound Domestic Group.
(Marriage, Virilocality, and Resource Allocation in a Changing
Domestic Group.)

Time and Domestic Group Survival.

Summary and Conclusions.

Introduction

Continuing the general emphasis on socio-economic dimensions of life in the ejido plantation community of San Antonio, this chapter focuses more specifically on aspects of domestic group¹ cyclicity. Variability in household composition, that is, the structure of the domestic group, is examined as it relates to associated variability in the income structure and the strategies employed in the allocation of those scarce resources to ensure the economic survival of that group.

The cyclical pattern of fluctuating household composition observed in San Antonio closely parallels that reported by Redfield (1941: 191-193) for Yucatec Maya communities in general, and by Deshon (1959: 238-239) for a Yucatec hacienda community (Mukui-il). Domestic groups typically alternate between nuclear, extended family, and compound family forms of organization. When an individual marries, post-marital residence (preferably virilocal) incorporates the married couple into an extended family group; economic resources are pooled and the household can be characterized as a single unit of production and consumption. The married couple may continue to reside virilocally but, after the birth of the first child, becomes part of a compound family domestic group, with each basic nuclear component assuming relatively autonomous control over consumption and the allocation of its income. In yet other circumstances, the domestic group may undergo fission after the birth of the first or subsequent children, with the younger family unit entering into a nuclear/neolocal phase of residential organization. This phase continues until the children of that union marry and the domestic group once again passes through extended and

compound family stages but with the husband assuming the temporary role of patriarch instead of being economically subordinate as in the previous extended/compound family phases.

Production (income) and consumption patterns exhibited by domestic groups grossly vary as the transition is made from one phase to another. A seemingly obvious but often neglected result is that the per capita income of the domestic group varies cyclicly with the changing ratio of consumers to producers. The ratio is relatively low at marriage and increases steadily with the birth of each additional child. As male children become older, usually beginning at about ten years of age, they begin to assist the father in the cultivation of a household garden and in completing work assigned in the henequen fields. Upon reaching the age of sixteen, the child may legally become a productive member of the ejido and contribute further to the maintenance of the domestic group. As members of the group make the transition from consumers to worker-consumers, per capita income of the domestic group increases proportionately.

With the marriage of a male child, another female is added to the domestic group (the wife, if the virilocal preference is followed), and the group becomes re-structured as an extended family. While difficult to measure in terms of monetary equivalents, the woman contributes much to the survival of the domestic group, not only with respect to the completion of householding tasks but also in the care and raising of domestic animals (chickens, turkeys, pigs, doves, etc.). These animals, as will be demonstrated below, are absolutely essential to the economic functioning and survival of the domestic group and

represent, in a real sense, the sum total investments and savings of the domestic group.

As children marry and leave the household, the domestic group again approaches a nuclear form of organization similar to that experienced in the initial post-marital phase. The transition is slower if there are several male children able to successively contribute to the maintenance of the domestic group both prior to, and subsequent to, their own marriages. While per capita domestic group income increases over time, much of that increase may be reduced by continuing ceremonial expenses associated with birth, infancy, courtship, marriage, and the material costs of fission and the establishment of a new (nuclear/neolocal) domestic group in the community.

As a married couple advances in age, they may begin to rely on an informal, extended family network in which married children may be expected to provide assistance, particularly if the couple (or the surviving spouse) cannot entirely provide for itself. At this point, two domestic groups (parents and a married child), or one domestic group and the remnant of another (a surviving parental spouse), may again combine into an extended form of organization, but with the married son or son-in-law controlling the allocation of productive income rather than the parent (or parents).

Female children have a different effect on the domestic group. Females are generally viewed as absolutely essential to the survival of a domestic group and, indeed, as essential to the survival of every adult male. The female, prior to marriage, assists her mother in the completion of domestic tasks and, if there are no sons old enough, may even assist her father in the cutting operations associated

with the harvesting of henequen (usually assigned the task of trimming spines from the leaves, and tying leaves into bundles). During the period of courtship, the female's parents periodically receive visits and gifts from the prospective groom and his family as a demonstration of their good faith and of the male's ability to provide for the female and the future grandchildren of her parents. This receipt of goods seems more symbolic than compensatory for the real economic loss to the parents of the female upon the occasion of her marriage. The loss is relative, however, and future reciprocal assistance may be recieved as granddaughters increase in number and age, and are "loaned" to assist the grandmother in the making of tortillas, the washing of clothes, etc.

The above brief description of the economic and social cyclicity of domestic groups is "typical" for a Yucatec Mayan community such as San Antonio. Since it is also "stereotypical," no single case fits the pattern precisely. If the virilocal household is too crowded, or if personalities conflict, for example, post-marital residence may be uxorilocal or, if a house is available in the community, neolocal. In the case of deviation from the virilocal preference, the groom's parents may encounter difficulties as they attempt to pay back money or animals borrowed to cover costs associated with courtship and the marriage of their son. If a couple wishing to marry encounters parental disapproval or financial barriers, they may forego the civil and church ceremonies, entering into a "free union" (unión libre) marriage. To accomplish this, a couple will typically arrange to "disappear" from the community, perhaps planning to meet at a fiesta in a nearby town. Remaining

together for the night, or for a few days, the couple will return to the community and present themselves (and the *fait accompli*) to one or both sets of parents. Recognizing the futility of opposition after-the-fact, the couple would usually be accepted as married, and in many cases the union would be legitimized through a civil ceremony or, perhaps, a church ceremony as well. These examples of "free union" marriages, although relatively infrequent (less than 12% of the family units recorded during field work), are nevertheless significant as variant types of union.

In order to examine diversity and the socio-economic dimensions of domestic group cyclicity, seven "case families" were studied in detail during the period of field work.² Aside from being interviewed intensively, the families maintained daily logs listing itemized income and expenditures (including credit, *fiado*, purchases as well as cash flow) for periods of time ranging from ten to fourteen weeks in duration (beginning in March of 1971). The summary data presented in this chapter have been calculated as weekly averages based on the ten week period from March 20, 1971, through May 28, 1971. The families were selected on the basis of two major criteria: first, their indicated willingness to cooperate in maintaining detailed daily expense records and, second, whether they represented a cross-section of diverse stages or phases in domestic group development and cyclicity.

Except for a few personnel retained on salary (ejido officials and some employees of the private holdings, such as the muleteer, machinist and caretaker), incomes received by the workers of San Antonio fluctuate with the seasonal nature of plantation agriculture. Incomes increase during the periods of harvest in the ejido and the

pequeña propiedad, and decline during the intervening weeding operations. During the period of fieldwork, incomes further fluctuated as a result of necessary repairs and alterations made on the decortivating machinery (December, 1970, and January, 1971) which halted both harvesting and decortivating operations. In addition, an extraordinary drought (cf. *Diario de Yucatán*, 4/30/71 and 5/5/71), which extended from November, 1970 until the latter part of May, 1971, drastically reduced the quality and quantity of fiber produced from the henequen leaves. During the latter part of this drought, not only were harvesting operations reduced, but weeding operations, which usually are undertaken to provide income between the harvesting cycles, were no longer necessary since the weeds disappeared during the prolonged absence of rainfall. Fortunately, in the latter half of May, both rainfall and salaries increased.

An adult male or female in San Antonio is not an individual so much as a member of a complex network of social relations. While born into a group of consanguineal kin, one remains isolated from both the extending ties of affinity and those of *compadrazgo* (ritual coparenthood) unless that individual marries and thereby makes the transition from membership in a family of orientation to partnership in a domestic, productive/consumptive/procreative group.³ One's primary responsibility is not to him or herself, but to the basic domestic group, however it may be structured at the particular point in time (including nuclear or extended family phases, but excluding, to some extent, the compound family phase). Secondly, one is responsible for assisting, insofar as one is able, those close fictive and actual kin with whom one has also maintained close ties of friendship and alliance. Even

those nuclear/neolocal domestic groups, described below as residentially autonomous, are by no means exempt from the responsibilities of aiding and assisting actual and fictive kin.

Two major themes are explored and analyzed with regard to the cases presented below. The cases are utilized to not only elucidate socio-economic dimensions of domestic group cyclicity but, where relevant to the particular case, additional material is presented with respect to individual life-cycle information and associated socio-economic effects on the domestic groups in this plantation ejido community. The following summarizes (a) the type of domestic group represented by the particular case and (b) the supplementary behavioral themes explored in greater detail for each case:

1. Martín
 - a. Nuclear family, member of a compound domestic group.
 - b. Originally from outside the community, Martín not only resides uxorilocally, but has further intensified affinal ties (to community members) through compadrazgo.
2. Javier
 - a. Nuclear family, autonomous (neolocal) domestic group.
 - b. Low income and the purchase, on time, of a water pump are reflected in the mounting indebtedness of this domestic group. Strategies to allay indebtedness include the raising of animals for later sale, gardening, and the periodic cash income derived from a private (inherited) parcel planted in henequen.
3. Máximo
 - a. Nuclear family, autonomous (neolocal) domestic group.
 - b. Augmenting his income by using his skills as a sastre (tailor), Máximo is able to offset some of the expenses associated with health problems in the family.
4. Prudencio
 - a. Nuclear family, autonomous (neolocal) domestic group.
 - b. Recently segmented from an extended/compound (virilocal) domestic group, Prudencio enjoys the economic advantages of a non-fluctuating (salary) income and small family size. The case is supplemented by ethnographic data concerning child birth.

5. Jorge
 - a. Nuclear, post-extended family phase of a domestic group.
 - b. The second husband of Prudencio's mother, Jorge's potential earnings are reduced significantly by an accident associated with the remaining step-daughter's engagement. The engagement changed the economic characteristics of the domestic group, and the appearance of the step-daughter (who, as will be discussed, changed from a mestiza to a catrina style of dress).
6. Alejandro
 - a. A domestic group which exhibits elements of both extended and compound family forms of organization.
 - b. Two married sons reside (virilocally) in this domestic group: Pablo (originally an unión libre marriage), whose family is economically independent within the group, and Eduardo (married during the period of field work), whose family pools resources with, and is socio-economically subordinate to, Alejandro. The description of Eduardo's engagement and marriage focuses on the economic aspects of this important rite of passage.

The final portions of the chapter examine general socio-economic characteristics of domestic groups in San Antonio. The case groups are compared from the perspective of per capita group income and expenditures, and conclusions drawn as to the cyclical nature of domestic groups and their apparent "survivability."

Estimated Average Income in San Antonio

As part of an initial household survey conducted early in the period of fieldwork (September to October, 1970), individuals were asked to specify their community occupations and estimate their average weekly income. Of a total of 85 workers directly involved in the cultivation, harvesting and processing of henequen, 53% worked primarily for the ejido and 47% worked primarily on the lands and in the decorticating factory of the pequeña propiedad. Of those working on the lands of the ejido (45 workers), 49% performed additional tasks for wages on the private holdings and 40% of those working on the

private holdings (40 workers) performed additional tasks allocated to them as ejidatarios. Of the total henequen labor force in San Antonio, then, almost half (45%) derive incomes from work performed on both the ejido and the pequeña propiedad.

The partial mobility of the work force (the capability of alternating work between the private and the ejidal sectors) assists in reducing the effects of the seasonal nature of plantation agriculture. Income fluctuation is considerable (see below) but would probably be much more severe were it not for the work available to ejidatarios on the private holdings. Both field workers and those employed in the decorticating factory experience reduced fluctuation in income due to the coordination of harvesting activities in the two sectors. Harvesting, one of the more labor intensive activities, occurs typically during three cycles, each six to eight weeks long and, by alternating ejido and pequeña propiedad operations, harvesting and processing remains fairly continuous throughout much of the year.

In spite of the strategy to coordinate activities, however, incomes do fluctuate between the rainy summer months and the period of winter drought. The weekly income averages presented on the table below represent, therefore, estimates obtained during a season of increased activity and increased productivity. The average per capita per year estimation presented below represents a calculation that is probably higher than the actual per capita annual income. The table below (Table 32) indicates clearly the degree to which economic survival of the ejidatarios of San Antonio is dependent on continuing employment

TABLE 32.--Estimated Average Weekly Income.

Occupation	Number of Workers	Average Income Per Worker Per Week (Est.)	Per Cent of Total Community Income
Ejido, Primary (1)	45	\$74.24 (Pesos)	
Ejido, Secondary (2)	16	30.06	
Ejido, Total	61	62.65	45.4%
Pequena, Primary (3)	40	81.53	
Pequena, Secondary (4)	22	23.41	
Pequena, Total	62	60.90	44.8%
Other, ^a Primary	8	85.68	
Other, Secondary	7	35.86	
Other, Total	15	55.26	(9.8%)
Total, All Workers	93	90.61	
Primarily Ejido (1)+(4)	45	85.68	
Primarily Pequena (3)+(2)	40	93.55	
Total/Capita/Week (Est.) ^b	306	27.54	(\$ 2.20 U.S.)
Total/Capita/Year (Est.)	306	1,432.00	(\$114.55 U.S.)

^a"Other" refers to commercial enterprises (store manager, baker, vendor of soft drinks, etc.) and includes, in a few cases, the commercial activities of women (two women, for example, sell pozole--corn meal mixed with water and salt--to workers at the factory as a nourishing refreshment during their work break).

^bAssumes the census data is representative of community income estimates in general.

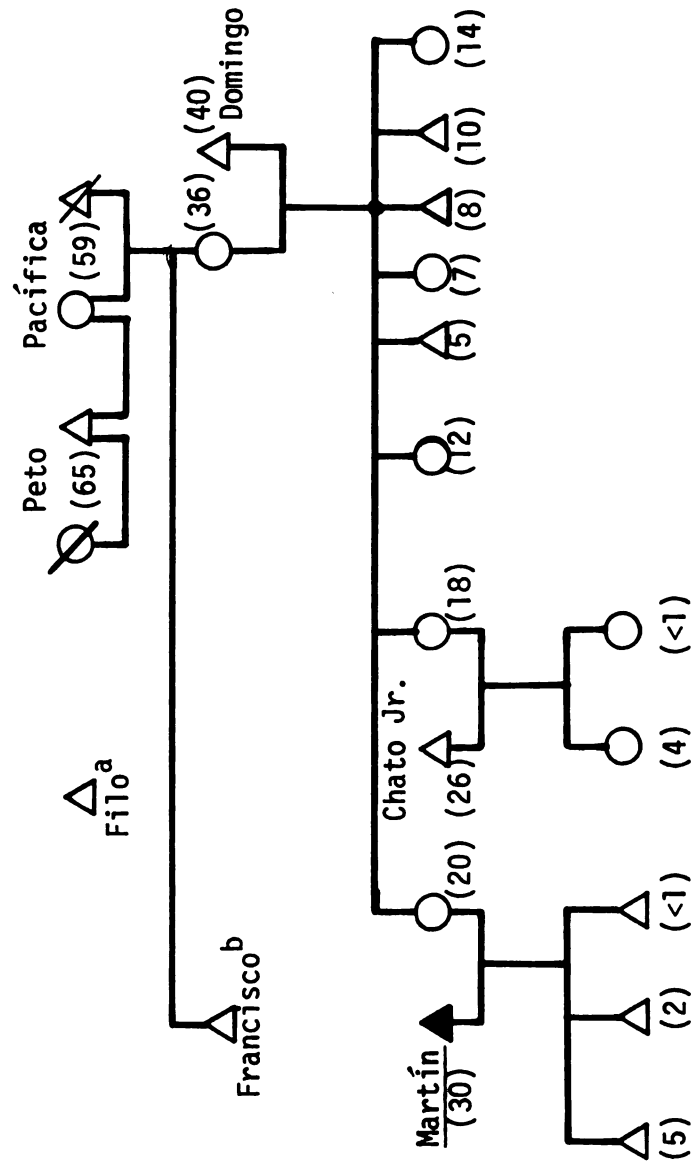
by the pequeño propietario, the owner of the remnant holdings of Hacienda San Antonio.

Martín: Nuclear Family in a Compound Domestic Group (The Outsider's Strategy: Compadrazgo and Uxorilocal Residence)

With the closing of a decorticating factory to the north of Xamach (also owned by Don Manuel, the pequeño propietario of San Antonio), Martín migrated with his mother, sister, and her family, to San Antonio in the late 1950's. In 1965, he married the granddaughter of Peto's second wife and, since his own sister's house was too small, he established residence uxorilocally and for one year shared household expenses with Domingo (Martin's WiFa and Peto's WiDaHu) and his family. At the end of the year, the domestic group changed from an extended family to a compound family phase and Martín continued to reside within the domestic group through the period of fieldwork. In 1966, Martin's wife's sister married Chato Jr. and, after two years residing virilocally, they too took up residence within the compound, matrifocal, domestic group made up of Doña Pacífica (Peto's wife), her daughter (Domingo's wife), the two grand-daughters (married to Martín and Chato Jr.), and their respective spouses and children. At the time of fieldwork, Martin and his nuclear family were members of a compound domestic group comprising a total of nineteen individuals and residing on a house lot (solar) originally owned by Peto. The following diagram (Figure 10) illustrates the relative ages and relationships of the members of the compound domestic group.

The domestic group compound includes a concrete block house (residence of Domingo and his family), an attached refreshment stand

Figure 10.--Martín: Nuclear Family in a Compound Domestic Group.



a. Filo, president of the ejido, maintains his residence apart but takes his meals with the domestic group.

b. Francisco (Martín's WiMoBr) manages the CONASUPP store in San Antonio.

() Numbers refer to age of individual at time of fieldwork.

constructed of concrete, wood and zinc roofing sheets (used also as sleeping quarters for Peto, Doña Pacífica and Peto's WiDaDa who receives food and shelter in return for assistance in preparing food and tending the refreshment stand), and a choza thatched hut which was initially occupied by the two married daughters of Domingo, their spouses and children. Following the birth of Chato Jr.'s youngest child, Martín and his family moved into the block house and continued to reside with his wife's parents for the remaining months of the fieldwork period. Both Martín and Chato Jr. expressed a desire to move into the nuclear/neolocal phase of domestic group organization, but declared that it was simply too expensive to construct their own houses and, in the case of Chato Jr., the family never managed to win one of the occasional raffles held to redistribute new or vacated houses in the community.⁴

Martín was in an especially difficult position since, as an outsider, he was not legally entitled to ejidatario status and, as one consequence, could not enter the periodic raffles which involved ejido houses. In addition, Martín was excluded from working on ejido lands and derived his sole income from work obtained in the decorticating factory of the pequeña propiedad. With his income base limited to only one of the two sectors providing wage payment, Martín described himself (and was so described by others) as one of the poorer members of the community of San Antonio. Given his precarious social and economic status in the community, Martín maximized his family's survival chances by more closely allying himself with affinal kin, community residents, reinforcing and intensifying those alliances by means of the institution of compadrazgo.⁵ The following details the coparent choices which involved ceremonial sponsorship of Martín's three sons.

Compadrazgo and the Outsider's Strategy

Son (5 years of age)

Baptism: Francisco (child's MoMoBr, also Martín's co-worker in the decortivating factory and manager of the CONASUPO store).

HetzmeK: Filo (takes meals within the domestic group, was Martín's co-worker in the decortivating factory at the time of the ceremony and later elected president of the ejido of San Antonio).

Confirmation: Javier (co-worker, close personal friend, and compadre to Peto who had sponsored the baptism of one of Javier's sons and, together with Doña Pacífica, sponsored the confirmation of Javier's daughter).

Son (2 years of age)

Baptism: Domingo (child's MoFa).

HetzmeK: Bernardo (child's FaSiHu, eldest male of Martín's own immediate kin group and representing the only concession to "tradition").

Confirmation: Javier (see above).

Son (4 months of age)

Baptism: Chato Jr. (child's MoSiHu and co-resident in the choza hut at the time of the child's birth).

HetzmeK: Anthropologist (selected at the request of Peto, the child's MoMoMoHu, and described in greater detail in Chapter IV, above).

Confirmation: Not performed during the period of field work.

Martín and his wife clearly demonstrated preferences in the selection of coparents for key members of the domestic group or their close relatives, including the formalization of relations with the co-resident family of Chato Jr. Even in selecting Javier, a close friend and co-worker, Martín was including an individual in his network of ritual kin who had already established similar ties (as noted above) with members of the domestic group by his selection of

Peto and Doña Pacífica as godparents of his own children. Martín's emphasis on his children's matri-kin as sponsors is further brought into perspective when compared with the sponsor-choices of Chato Jr. for his own children. Chato Jr.'s parents served as baptismal sponsors for both his daughters, and his wife's mother (child's MoMo) sponsored both the Hetzmek and confirmation ceremonies for the daughter old enough to have had them.

During the ten week period analyzed (3/20/71-5/28/71), Martín's income from the decorticating factory averaged \$85.50 pesos per week. In addition, his wife (along with other women in the domestic group) shelled squash seeds (pepitas) on consignment for a merchant from Maax. He would bring bags (mochilas)⁶ of seeds to San Antonio, distribute them to cooperating women, and pay \$7.00 pesos per mochila of shelled seeds returned to him. Martín's wife, in this manner, added an average of \$3.90 pesos per week to the family income. The following table (Table 33) presents a general list of household expenses representing a weekly average for the ten week period.

Analysis of expenditures over the ten week period demonstrates Martin's inability to balance income with household expenses. For part of the period under study, the decorticating factory operated at a reduced volume of leaves processed due, in large part, to the prolonged period of drought. Owing to earlier cessation of work and Martín's ineligibility in the ejido, Martín had been unable to significantly reduce the family's mounting indebtedness. During one of the weeks, for example, Martín received \$72 pesos in wages, had to borrow another \$15 pesos from the factory manager (having a total of \$20 pesos deducted

TABLE 33.--Martín: Average Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u>	\$89.70	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses:</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (12 kilograms per week) ^a	\$12.60	
Meat	6.58	
Eggs	4.54	
Other Consumable Items ^b	48.23	
Corn Grinding Charges	<u>1.50</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$73.45	81.9%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry (soap, etc.)	\$ 5.30	
Clothing	2.16	
Medical and Health Related	3.41	
Animal Feed (for young chicks, etc.)	2.63	
Ceremonial (contributions, candles, etc.)	0.58	
Amusement (allowance to children, bingo games, television charges, etc.)	4.44	
Miscellaneous	<u>6.75</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$25.27	28.2%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$98.72	110.1%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$-9.02	-10.1%

^aIncludes amount (estimated but not measured) given to domestic animals.

^bIncludes other staples (black beans, flour, salt, sugar, etc.), prepared foods (bread, panuchos, packaged foods, etc.), condiments, and non-staple items (such as soft drinks, candy, popsicles, etc.).

from his wages during the subsequent four week period), and Martín's wife added another \$7 pesos shelling pepita seeds, for a total income of \$94 pesos for the week. As is common in San Antonio, Martín received his wages on a Saturday and by that evening had spent over 80% of his cash to make payments on outstanding debts (ca. \$10 pesos) and to purchase major staples needed for the coming week. By Monday, Martín had expended 96% of his cash and had begun to charge purchases made in the community. By the end of the week, Martín had charged a total of \$28 pesos in addition to his cash expenditures.

The following week, Martín's income increased to \$102 pesos and by Saturday evening, he and his family had spent a total of 88% of that income towards the partial repayment of outstanding debts (\$48.96) and the purchase of staples (\$40.80 pesos). By Monday, the cash had been spent and only the infusion of another \$7 pesos by Martín's wife enabled the family to make additional cash purchases on Tuesday and Thursday of that week. By the end of the week, the family had charged purchases worth a total of \$38.96 pesos, an amount 36% greater than the family's income for that week. During the subsequent two-week period, Martín's salary again averaged \$72 pesos/week and his total indebtedness continued to increase.

Martín and his wife employed a number of strategies to enhance their survival in the face of mounting indebtedness. Like most families, they had been raising animals (primarily chickens) for later sale in the community but they complained that, unfortunately, their chicks had a lower survival rate than most. They also had contributed towards the purchase of a sow and were given one of the piglets in return by Domingo

and his wife, the primary owners of the sow. During the months of January and February of 1971, Martín's children suffered a series of illnesses and, since Martín's family was not covered by the state ejidatario health insurance, they had to absorb the total costs of medicine and doctor's fees. Toward this end, they promised to sell the piglet (after it had grown more) to a member of the community and received \$40 pesos as advance payment towards the future purchase. In addition, Martín borrowed \$25 pesos from his compadre Filo, and \$27 pesos from Chato Jr. (compadre, brother-in-law, and co-resident with Martín), for a total of \$92 pesos. The medical expenses were so high, however, that the family was unable to purchase food and, in order to survive, relied upon receipt of shares of staple items from both Peto and Domingo. Family units within the compound domestic group are socio-economically relatively autonomous but, in the case of an emergency, the group provides mutual assistance and may, therefore, periodically assume an extended family form of organization.

Martín's case is a difficult one in that illness and seasonally lowered income had severely increased his total indebtedness. He relies to a great extent on the assistance provided by close affinal relatives and compadres and it is doubtful that the family unit would be able to survive were it not for this assistance. It seems probable that in the absence of such assistance, one or more of Martín's children would succumb to disease thereby reducing the size of the family and the expenditures necessary for survival of the remaining members of the family. Martín also receives assistance, in the form of fiado credit, from his compadre (and WiMoBr), Francisco, who manages the CONASUPO

store. Since the store is supported by the state, however, prices are fixed, Francisco's profit margin is small, and there are obvious limits to the degree to which he can absorb Martín's mounting debt.

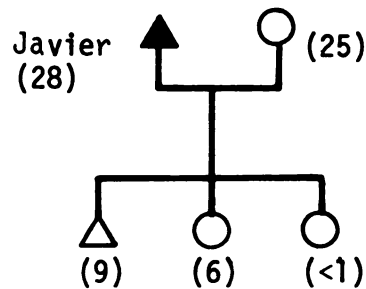
Martín and his family will most probably continue to depend on the wife's matri-kin to assist them in times of greatest financial difficulty. Once his sons begin to reach the ages of ten or twelve, they will be expected to begin contributing to the total household income and it will be this point which should mark a turn for the better in Martín's financial status. Since he is not a member of the ejido, however, it is not yet clear whether or not his sons will, like their father, have to depend solely on the pequeña propiedad as their source of income.

Javier: The Nuclear/Neolocal Phase (The
Untimeliness of Time Payments)

Javier, his spouse, and their three children constitute a nuclear/neolocal domestic group in San Antonio. Javier is a member of the ejido and of his total average income (\$78.40/week), 77% (\$60.40) is derived from work performed on the lands of the ejido and 23% (\$17.70) is gained through occasional work assigned by the administrator of the pequeña propiedad (cutting wood, weeding operations, etc.). The following diagram (Figure 11) and table (Table 34) summarize socio-economic characteristics of Javier's domestic group.

During the ten week period represented above, Javier made regular payments towards the amortization of an electric water pump which was used for family needs and for irrigating a household garden. The well and pump were situated along the line dividing Javier's and a

Figure 11.--Javier.



() Numbers refer to the age of the individual at the time of fieldwork.

neighbor's house lots and, dividing the purchase, Javier made a \$70 peso payment every other month to Sears of Mexico (Mérida store). The well, however, did not have sufficient flow capacity to supply the pump for any length of time and as a result, Javier hired his maternal uncle (for a total of \$40 pesos) to dynamite the well to enlarge the bottom, expose new veins carrying water, and increase the flow rate. The total costs related to the pump purchase and the repair of the well (both listed under "miscellaneous") amounted to \$110 pesos for an average expenditure of \$11 pesos/per week during the ten week period.

The \$70 peso pump payment is, of all the household expenses, the most financially difficult for Javier. Once every two months, Javier's total weekly income must be sent to Mérida. Javier's strategy

TABLE 34.--Javier: Average Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u>	\$78.40	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (15 kilograms)	\$15.75	
Corn Grinding	2.00	
Meat	14.83	
Eggs	---	
Other Consumable Items	<u>44.83</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$77.41	98.7%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry (soap, etc.)	\$ 3.18	
Clothing	0.13	
Medical and Health Related	0.33	
Animal Feed	0.70	
Ceremonial (contributions, candles, etc.)	6.35	
Amusement (allowance, bingo, TV, etc.)	1.86	
Miscellaneous	<u>12.61</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$25.16	32.1%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$102.57	130.8%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$-24.17	-30.8%

to weather this financial burden is to begin, five weeks prior to the payment, to purchase 18 kg. of corn rather than the usual 15 kg. The corn and any other staples he can manage to purchase in excess of needs during the eight week interval are saved to help carry the family through the week the payment falls due. In spite of the careful and frugal allocation of scarce economic resources by Javier and his spouse, the domestic group is not able to balance income against expenses and the indebtedness of the group increased during the period studied. During this same period, for example, Javier had to purchase (for \$48 pesos) a turkey as his contribution to the marriage of his younger brother (averaged and listed under "ceremonial"). Subtracting the expenses associated with the marriage and the well (a total of \$15.80 per week). Javier still spends \$8.37 pesos more than his average weekly income, an amount 10.7% greater than the weekly income.

With the termination of the pump payment Javier will be able to decrease the rate of indebtedness. The pump itself, by facilitating irrigation, will increase household income through the sale in San Antonio and Xamach of items grown in the garden (Javier was growing chile peppers, tomatoes, and had planted eight banana trees, a lime tree, and three orange trees). Through consumption and sale, the garden will either release or generate additional capital for household use. In addition to the garden, domestic animals likewise provided a means to periodically generate cash or to supplant some of the items normally purchased. Javier and his spouse, during the period of the study, possessed a rooster, three hens, and were raising four chicks. Of the total amount of corn purchased per week (15 kg.) Javier estimated

that roughly 4.5 kg. were fed to the various domestic animals. In Javier's case, the animals represented an investment fund which provided continuing returns in the form of eggs; a total of roughly \$5.45 pesos were used to feed the animals (corn and special feed for the chicks) and, while no eggs were purchased, the family consumed an average of twelve eggs per week which were worth a total of \$6.20 (had they been purchased from the community store).

Javier was also able to periodically reduce his total indebtedness by the sale of henequen harvested from a small parcel (7 mecates or 0.28 of an hectare) which he had received from his father. The sale of henequen leaves to the pequeño propietario (at \$15 per thousand leaves) added an estimated \$300 pesos to Javier's annual income. As a boy, Javier had assisted his father in cultivating the 21 mecate family parcel (the origin of these parcels is discussed in Chapter III, above). As he became older, he began to work a particular portion of the parcel and, following his marriage, continued to work that section as his own. Since Javier is the eldest son, the transfer appears to be an example of both primogeniture and anticipatory inheritance, yet field observations and interviews indicate that possession is more related to usufruct than rule. If a son does not assist in the cultivation of a parcel, he will receive no portion of the plot. If an older son manages to assume the major burden, he may simply continue to work that plot as his own, and the "practice" will appear to be one of primogeniture: primogeniture not by "rule" of inheritance, but by rights of usufruct. The following case provides clearer evidence supporting the hypothesized principle of rights of usufruct.

Francisco (Martín's WiMoBr, above, and manager of the CONASUPO store) had maintained usufruct rights, following the death of his father, over an eight mecate parcel of land. As he became more involved with his job as operator of the decorticating machinery and with managing the store, he had less time to devote to the care of his parcel. Seeing the general state of neglect, Francisco's maternal uncle asked if he could "use" the parcel. Largely as a consequence of the multiple ties that existed between them (they had married sisters, Francisco served as godparent to two of his uncle's children and, since they were childless, Francisco and his wife had effectively adopted their god-daughter, the daughter of the uncle), Francisco assented to the request.

Francisco's uncle worked the parcel for several months and then "sold" it (for an undisclosed amount) to his next door neighbor (husband of the uncle's sister and also the coparent of Francisco) to help raise capital for his son's wedding. Francisco described the transaction and declared that he had received nothing for the parcel. When asked how that could happen, Francisco explained that since his uncle had been working the plot, there was nothing that he could do. Francisco's statement, when combined with observations made concerning inheritance patterns, supports the notion that usufruct rights, whether gained through purchase, prestation, or familial membership, become translated into rights of ownership for so long as an individual continues to cultivate actively that plot of land. Cessation of cultivation likewise signifies cessation of ownership and the vulnerability of the plot to transfer. In the case of Javier, the continuing cultivation of a plot within his father's parcel is an example of the principle of

usufruct rather than of a rule of either primogeniture or anticipatory inheritance.

In spite of the apparent fact that Javier grossly overspends his weekly income, the economic state of the domestic unit should improve in the near future. Javier's fund of domestic animals will increase in productivity as the chicks grow and as more animals are added, the garden and henequen parcel will continue to augment the group income and, more importantly, Javier's son will begin to add significantly to the wage earnings of the domestic group. Javier's son, nine years old at the time of the study, already assisted his father in gardening activities and in work related to the cultivation of the parcel. In a few years, the son will begin to work more actively in the henequen fields and, at age sixteen, will be legally entitled to work for wages on the lands of the ejido. If marriage can be delayed until the son reaches twenty or older, Javier and his family will enjoy several years of the additional income provided by two fully working male members of the domestic group. The purchase of the electric pump has severely strained the financial resources of this family but within the frame of domestic group cyclicity, the severity seems only temporary in nature.

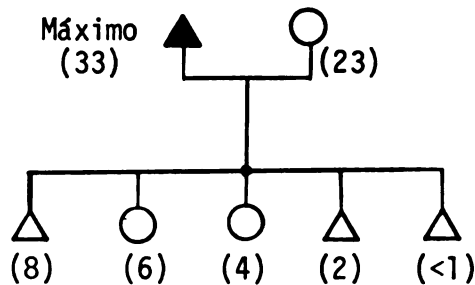
Máximo: The Nuclear/Neolocal Phase of the Domestic Group (The Skill to Augment Income and the Debility of Health)

After his marriage in 1962, Máximo and his wife resided virilocally for a period of approximately six months. Following a dispute between Máximo and his father, he and his wife moved, residing uxorilocally for a period of two years. In 1965, Máximo won a new

cement block house in a raffle and began an autonomous, neolocal phase of domestic group residence. Because of continued friction between him and his father, Máximo chose Filo (his friend, matrilineal parallel cousin and, later, elected president of the ejido) to sponsor the baptisms of Máximo's first two children. After their reconciliation, Máximo's father sponsored the subsequent two children and shortly after the ejido elections, Filo was asked to sponsor the baptism of the fifth of Máximo's children.

Máximo's earnings from work related to the cultivation of henequen is similar to that earned by Javier and Martín. Máximo received an average of \$68.05 pesos per week for work performed on the lands of the ejido and an average of \$11 pesos gained from employment on the holdings of the pequeña propiedad, for a total average income of \$79.05 pesos per week. Máximo differs from the two previous cases in that he is able to significantly augment his income through his skills as a community tailor. Máximo is one of a total of four males and one female who own sewing machines and make clothes (pants, shirts, dresses, felted baseball caps, etc.) on consignment. As a boy, Máximo became apprenticed to a tailor in Xamach, worked under the tutelage of his uncle, David, for another year, and finally was able to purchase his own machine and begin to work on his own. With this skill, Máximo was able to add an average of \$42.99 pesos per week (averaged over the ten week sample period) and increase his total weekly average to \$122.04 pesos. The following diagram (Figure 12) and table (Table 35) outline some of the social and economic characteristics of Máximo's domestic group.

Figure 12.--Máximo.



() Age of individual at the time of fieldwork.

Like other domestic groups in San Antonio, Máximo maintained a household garden and a number of domestic animals. With the aid of a well and an electric pump,⁷ various items were grown for household consumption or for their commercial value: hierba buena (an herb grown for its medicinal value), chile peppers, sixteen orange trees (two varieties), three lime trees, and one each of banana, lemon and mango. In addition, the household maintained one pig, a rooster, four hens, three chicks, two ducks, a cat and a dog, and during the ten week accounting period, two pavitos (cock turkeys, three months old at the time) were purchased for \$25 pesos (averaged under "miscellaneous" expenses). The purchase of the turkeys constitute a household investment which would bring, when the turkeys were fully developed, a total of at least \$160 pesos when sold in the community or in Xamach. In

TABLE 35.--Máximo: Average Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u>	\$122.04	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (22.6 kg.)	\$ 23.90	
Corn Grinding	2.00	
Meat	21.48	
Eggs	2.05	
Other Consumable Items	<u>42.71</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$ 92.14	75.5%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry (soap, etc.)	\$ 4.37	
Clothing	1.00	
Medical and Health Related	9.43	
Animal Feed	3.22	
Ceremonial (contributions, candles, etc.)	1.49	
Amusement (allowance, Bingo, TV, etc.)	6.93	
Miscellaneous	<u>7.05</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$ 33.49	27.4%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$125.63	102.9%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$ -3.59	-2.9%

order to maintain the various animals, Máximo estimated an average of ten kilograms per week of corn were consumed in addition to the special feed for the chicks, representing an average weekly expenditure of \$13.75 pesos. During a five week sample period, the domestic group consumed an average of 14.6 eggs per week of which an average of four were purchased and the rest (worth an estimated \$5.50 pesos per week) were produced within the domestic unit. Projecting the feed costs and utilizing field data concerning the sale of live animals, it would appear that the domestic group expends, on an annual basis, approximately \$715 pesos to maintain animals which, when fully developed, would bring a return of between \$700 and \$750 pesos if sold (depending upon the survival rate of the chicks) and which, in addition, supply a quantity of eggs worth an estimated \$280 pesos per annum.

As the result of a persistent proclaimed "debility" of Máximo's wife, medical and health related expenses are higher for this family than for most of the other domestic groups included in this chapter. His wife had an accute "nervous attack" early in the period of fieldwork and I had been asked to take the woman (who was shaking, in obvious pain, and apparently partially paralyzed) to visit the doctor, "El Socio," in a town 14 km. distant. She had also been taken, during the period of the household accounting, to consult a newly installed doctor in Xamach and had been charged a total of \$20 pesos for the visit and an ampule of tranquilizer which he had injected to calm her nerves. The family also utilized a series of home remedies to ease the woman's problem and regularly purchased aspirin, rubbing alcohol, and oil of balsam (also used for rubbing) for that purpose.

Máximo was, understandably, quite worried about the health of his spouse and stated that she seemed to get worse with the birth of each additional child. Because of this, Máximo explained, he had been trying to abstain from having "relations" with her. When asked about the child born during the period of fieldwork, Máximo declared that he simply "had too much to drink one week-end, and . . . well . . . you know how it is!"

During one of the masses held in the community (12/5/70 asiento to fix the date of Alejandro's son's wedding, described below), the Catholic priest began a rather lengthy discussion of the evils of birth control. Since my wife and myself were present, childless, and foreign, the priest used us as examples of the "sinful ways of people in the United States." The priest then began to talk about his sister who had given birth to many children and who, to the priest, seemed to become happier and more beautiful with each birth. He mentioned, as an aside, that his brother-in-law happened to be a medical doctor practicing in Mexico City. Following the mass, Máximo questioned me about the priest's statements and the fact that we had been married for several years and yet remained childless. Hearing my reply, Máximo said that he wished they had something like birth control pills in Yucatán since, as he expressed it, he was afraid his wife would die if they had any more children.

Prudencio: The Nuclear/Neolocal Phase of the Domestic Group
(Transitory Affluence and the Beginnings of a Family)

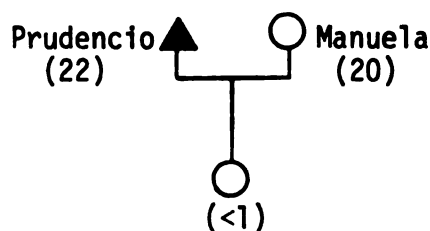
Prudencio and his wife Manuela married in 1966 and, for a period of two years, resided virilocally with Prudencio's mother and

her second husband (a "free union" marriage). During that time, Prudencio turned his salary over to his step-father who managed the purchases and the financial operation of the extended family domestic group. Manuela had given birth to a son during this period but it died of "diarrhea" before it was more than a few months old.

The autonomous, neolocal phase of residence and domestic group composition began after Prudencio had secured a salaried job as muleteer, caretaker of the cattle and mules used to pull the factory bagazo carts loaded with henequen waste, on the pequeña propiedad. With this job, Prudencio and his wife began to enjoy the dual advantages of a steady, non-fluctuating, salaried income of \$130 pesos per month and an assigned house (three rooms, running water, and an indoor bathroom) situated on the private holdings. With the change in residence and the birth of a baby girl in the summer of 1970, however, the domestic group maintained extensive relations with Prudencio's relatives. Manuela often made tortillas together with Prudencio's mother (at the mother's home) and was assisted in householding tasks by Prudencio's sister (16 years of age at the time) thus releasing Manuela to devote more attention to her young daughter. The following diagram (Figure 13) and table (Table 36) characterize the family structure of Prudencio's domestic group and the average weekly allocation of income.

The combination of small family size and above average income allows Prudencio to afford increased per capita expenditures of both food and non-food related items. Because of their first child's death, the family presently takes exceptional care of the daughter as evidenced by the relatively higher amounts spent on clothing (a large share of the

Figure 13.--Prudencio.



purchases were clothes for the little girl) and medical and health related items (again, to the primary benefit of the infant). As an additional "luxury" expense, the family made weekly payments (\$12.50 per week, listed under "miscellaneous") for a radio which was purchased on credit from Casa Paris in Mérida. Prudencio's domestic group differs from the others, as well, in the fact that expenses very nearly approximate family income. Without significantly increasing family indebtedness, the domestic group expends an average of \$6.20 pesos per week to maintain a total of 26 birds: a hen with nine chicks and three small cocks, and a turkey hen with twelve small turkeys. Depending upon the size, sex, and the survival rate (especially with respect to the turkey chicks) these animals constitute a domestic fund potentially worth between \$400 and \$1,000 pesos and a continuous return

TABLE 36.--Prudencio: Average Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u>	\$130.98 ^a	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (10.5 kg.)	\$ 11.72	
Corn Grinding	1.75	
Meat	23.31	
Eggs	1.98	
Other Consumable Items	<u>35.64</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$ 74.40	56.8%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry (Soap, etc.)	\$ 4.37	
Clothing	17.23	
Medical and Health Related	11.40	
Animal Feed	2.17	
Ceremonial (contributions, candles, etc.)	1.90	
Amusement	3.21	
Miscellaneous	<u>16.68</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$ 57.33	43.8%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$131.73	100.6%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$ -0.75	-0.6%

^aManuela declared average winnings of \$0.98 pesos per week from her participation in community bingo games. Losses are included under "Amusement."

on "investment" in the form of eggs which can be utilized for household consumption and, in the case of a surplus, for cash sale in the community.

During the period of fieldwork, the most significant domestic group expense was that associated with the birth of Rubi, the daughter. Prudencio had wanted to take Manuela to the ejidatario hospital (Hospital Veinte de Noviembre) in Mérida for the birth but she had gone into labor so suddenly that they sought the assistance of a Xamach midwife (comadrona) instead, paying a total fee of \$60 pesos for her services. The midwife assisted in the delivery by rubbing warm oil on the mother's abdomen to hurry the birth and by receiving the baby from the mother (who supported herself close to the floor with the aid of a hammock). Following delivery, the midwife usually cuts the umbilical cord (the width of four fingers from the child's body) and disposes of the umbilicus and afterbirth by either burying it under the cooking hearth (stated as the "older" practice by informants), burying it in the corner of the house lot, or, as in the case of Manuela, burning it in the cooking fire. For nine days following the birth, both mother and child are protected from cold and wind by closing all windows and doors of the house. Except for an herb bath administered by the midwife, neither mother nor child bathes during this period and neither may consume other than hot foods or liquids that are at least warm (including any water consumed during the nine day post-partum period). Fearing possible illness or inability to produce milk for the child, the mother is prohibited from bathing herself or washing her hair for an additional forty days. In describing

the "older" practice of burying the umbilicus and afterbirth under the hearth, informants stated that it would typically remain buried for the duration of the forty day period. It would then be exhumed, left to soak in a pot of water for about an hour, and the water then used to wash the mother's hair. According to informants, this would ensure the fact that the mother would not lose her hair.

Prudo and Manuela seemed relieved to have had the child at home and for Manuela to have given birth without complication. Manuela preferred home delivery and complained that the personnel of the hospital gave patients the wrong kinds of foods (cereal mixed with ice water, for example). She also abhorred the reported practice of the hospital staff to dispose of a stillborn child (or infant that died while still in the hospital) without ceremony. Ejidatarios, lacking financial and political resources, are unable to secure the necessary papers to legally transfer a body from Mérida for burial in the community cemetery. Manuela reported a story of a woman who had heard that deceased infants were given to medical students; when her own baby died in her arms while at the hospital, she decided to escape that institution and return to the community. The woman reportedly had snuck out of the hospital with her dead baby in her arms, covered with a blanket, and, pretending the child was merely sleeping, she took the public bus to Xamach, walked the three kilometers to San Antonio, and secured a "proper" burial for the child in the local cemetery. In general, community members fear what they perceive as mistreatment at the hands of hospital personnel, they dislike the impersonal manner with which they are dealt, yet they also view the hospital as potentially

capable of saving their lives and, in the case of severe illness or complications associated with childbirth, hospital assistance will be sought. If the illness is thought to be minor, or if more immediate assistance is required, the doctor "El Socio" (in a town that is closer to the community) will be consulted. Since he will receive patients at all hours and since he allows the patients to pay by installment, he is most frequently preferred by members of San Antonio.

For all of the case families discussed in this chapter, illness or serious injury can impose severe economic hardships on the domestic group. In the case of Martín, for example (see above), family illness had effectively demolished his entire wages for one week, forced him to borrow money and to rely on the generosity of his affinal relatives, co-residents of the compound domestic group, to supply sufficient staples to enable the family to survive. Continuing this theme, the following case details aspects of a nuclear household which suffered income reduction as the result of an accidental injury and the temporary incapacitation of the head of a domestic group.

Jorge: The Nuclear/Post-Extended Family Phase (Filial
Engagement and Socio-Economic Change)

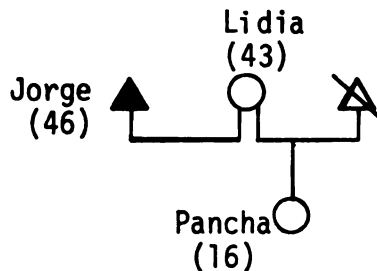
Following the death of her husband, Prudencio's mother, Doña Lidia, entered into a "free union" marriage (unión libre) with Jorge, a middle-aged bachelor of the community. Doña Lidia had given birth to a total of twelve children but only three lived beyond four years of age: Prudencio, a daughter who had married and resided virilocally, and Pancha, sixteen years of age, who continued to reside with her mother and step-father. In order for Prudencio and Manuela to be

married in the church, the priest insisted that Lidia and Jorge marry and the "free union" marriage was officially terminated on the day of Prudencio's wedding.

Jorge had served as president of the ejido (as replacement for a president who was forced to resign, cf. Chapter VI) and, with the elections of 1970, he returned to work in the henequen fiber drying fields of the decorticating factory. His income as ejido president, and his usual wage while employed on the private holdings, averaged approximately \$100 pesos per week. During the ten-week period of detailed household accounting, however, Jorge suffered an injury which reduced his average income for the period by twenty per cent. He received an average of \$12 pesos from the ejido and \$68 pesos from the pequeña propiedad. For the first four weeks of the period analyzed, Jorge received an even \$100 pesos per week. Due to the seasonal decline in production, his income over the subsequent three week period fell to an average of \$82 pesos per week and, with his injury he was unable to work for a period of two weeks and received \$40 pesos per week in medical assistance from the ejido. By the third week following his injury, he began to work again and his average income rose to \$75 pesos (\$35 pesos continuing assistance from the ejido, and \$40 pesos in wages from the pequeña propiedad). As the following table (Table 37) demonstrates, Jorge earned an average of \$80 pesos per week for the ten week period, yet continued spending an amount equivalent to his previous average income of \$100 pesos per week.

Jorge clearly assumed that recovery from his injury and the approaching rainy season would mean that his income would once again

Figure 14.--Jorge.



() Age of the individual at the time of the study.

rise, reaching a probable seasonal maximum \$130 pesos per week. Like others, Jorge raised poultry which would later provide eggs, meat, and additional cash income for the family. At the time of the household census (March, 1971), the domestic group possessed a rooster, four hens, thirty chicks, two turkeys (a cock and a hen), one duck and two cats. Assuming a survival rate of 50% for the chicks, one can estimate a fund of animals potentially worth roughly \$1,000 pesos, on an annual investment (feed and initial purchase costs) of approximately \$600 pesos.⁸

Jorge's unfortunate injury occurred during a visit by the parents of his step-daughter's betrothed. The visit was the second in a series of meetings between the two sets of parents and the purpose was to secure the engagement of the couple and to formalize their intent to marry. As is the custom, the prospective groom's parents

TABLE 37.--Jorge: Average Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u>	\$ 80.00	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (21.7kg.)	\$ 25.45	
Corn Grinding	2.00	
Meat	18.73	
Eggs	1.07	
Other Consumable Items	<u>36.10</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$ 83.35	104.1%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry (Soap, etc.)	\$ 3.35	
Clothing	1.17	
Medical and Health Related	1.55	
Animal Feed	3.22	
Ceremonial	0.13	
Amusement	5.88	
Miscellaneous	<u>4.78</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$ 17.28	21.6%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$100.63	125.8%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$-20.63	-25.8%

visited the house of Jorge and Lidia, bringing with them the following gifts.

Gifts to Jorge and Lidia:

1 case of Coca Cola (25 bottles)	\$15.75 pesos
15 additional bottles of Coca Cola	9.75
7 bottles of Habanero (rum)	84.00
Bread	5.00
Sugar (2 kg.)	4.80
Chocolate (1 lb.)	<u>2.80</u>
Total cost to boy's parents	\$122.10

It was near the end of the meeting, after consuming his fair share of Habanero with coke, that Jorge fell over a chair, bruised his ribs, and became painfully incapacitated for nearly three weeks.

In September of 1970, the young man (novio or intended "fiancé") had visited Lidia and declared his desire to "begin speaking to" (eventually marry) Pancha. Upon the mother's instructions the parents of the novio made their first formal visit two weeks later, bringing two bottles of Habanero rum as gifts. The daughter and the novio were both present at this meeting and were both asked if they were sure they wanted to marry. With their positive response, it was decided that the second visit by the novio's parents would be made the following January, and the date set for the official engagement mass (the asiento) with the wedding to occur eighteen days later.

The novio's parents, since they had to absorb the major expenses involved in the engagement and marriage, decided they needed additional time to accumulate the economic resources necessary to cover costs (raising animals, attempting to save cash, and arranging for any additional loan of animals or cash that might be needed). The second meeting was therefore postponed until May of 1971. Since the second

meeting was to fix the date of the asiento, important relatives and other individuals were present: the respective parents, Pancha's maternal grandparents (the paternal grandparents were deceased), Prudencio (Pancha's brother), his wife, and Francisco and Piña (Francisco's wife) who had been requested by the couple and parents to be the sponsors (godparents) of the wedding ceremony. At that meeting, the couple was once again questioned as to their sincerity and, the parents satisfied, the party began and continued until four in the morning, at which time Jorge had his fateful encounter with the chair. The asiento had been fixed for the month of June but, again due to economic difficulties, was postponed until the end of 1971 (personal communication, San Antonio).

Pancha dressed, like her mother, in the "traditional" mestiza style still common in rural Yucatán. The mestiza typically wears a colorfully embroidered, white huipil dress (with a slip or medio fondo showing, if she dresses for a festival, etc.), a gold chain and medallion around her neck, a finely woven shawl (rebozo) which is usually worn outside of the house, and long hair which is pulled back tightly and tied into a bun. Following the first visit of her novio and his parents, Pancha had been invited to be an attendant at a fifteenth birthday mass (quinceañera) held for one of the girls of the community (and which cost the girl's parents an estimated \$325 pesos for the mass and the party that followed). Since the girl was not a mestiza (in her manner of dressing), Pancha was required to dress in the recognized style of the city, the catrina style of dress, for the mass and celebration. Pancha's fiancé initially opposed the

change, even for the short duration of the quinceañera party. He later decided that he liked the different style and urged Pancha to change permanently. She did so; she cut her hair short, ceased wearing the mestiza rebozo shawl, and donned a dress cut and made to resemble the machine-made dresses of the urban dweller.⁹

The decision was a serious and an irrevocable one. Once a mestiza changes to a catrina, according to all informants, she cannot change back to the traditional style without receiving the scorn and disapproval of fellow community members. If a mother does not decide to change a female child's style of dress, the girl herself may decide to change, usually between the ages of nine and fifteen. If a female wishes to change and encounters parental opposition, she may use the carnival season (a recognized excuse to attend festivals in "costume") to dress in the catrina style and then simply refuse to change back to the mestiza style. In the case of Manuela, Pancha's sister-in-law, she had not only changed her style of dress during carnival, but had a friend of hers cut her hair to the much shorter style of the catrina. With the long hair gone, her change back to the mestiza style was viewed as an impossibility.

Informant views concerning the social and economic significance of the different styles were contradictory. Informants could not agree as to which style was the more costly, but more seemed to feel that the higher quality huipil dresses, rebozo shawls, the festival medio fondo slip, and the gold necklace and earrings, made at least that part of the mestiza clothing more expensive than the catrina style. Several women felt it was easier to nurse a child with the catrina dresses,

which were made to unbutton at the front, but observations did not indicate any especial difficulty in nursing encountered by the very adept mestizas. The style of dress does correlate with class differences in the towns of Yucatán (cf. Thompson, 1970: 112-118), but in San Antonio, women commonly expressed the view that there was essentially no distinction in the kinds of work performed, general status in the community, or in the patterns of interaction between individuals. Catrinas were found residing in Mayan choza huts, and mestizas in cement block houses; the wife of one of the store owners was a mestiza (the private store), and the other a catrina (the CONASUPO store); and within a single domestic group (or individual nuclear family), various women and daughters would be dressed in either of the two styles. The women did concur in the view that a woman who changed to a catrina very late in life, or who attempted to change back to the mestiza style, would be generally regarded as either loca ("deranged") or thought to be putting on airs. Only one young woman in the community (who periodically worked as a servant in Mérida) had adopted a modified kind of "mini-huipil" that is more popular among tourists visiting Yucatán. When not dressed as a catrina, she wore an huipil which was quite tight, a bit short, and while not particularly popular among the women, no hostility or obvious scorn was observed to be levelled against her openly. She did, however, seem to attract the especial attention of Filo, the bachelor president of the ejido of San Antonio.

Pancha acceded to her novio's request and changed her style of dress. Her parents had wanted her to remain a mestiza, but did not vigorously oppose the change or the fiance's right to request the change. Pancha herself expressed some degree of satisfaction with

the difference and seemed not at all regretful at having permanently altered her outward appearance.

Alejandro: An Extended/Compound Domestic Group (Marriage,
Virilocality, and Resource Allocation in a
Changing Domestic Group)

Alejandro's domestic group is comprised of himself, his wife, their eight children, the spouses of the two married sons, and one grandchild. The household is of an extended type since Eduardo, the oldest son who had married just prior to the period of accounting, turned his salary over to his father. Alejandro made the majority of the family purchases, frequently traveling by bicycle to Maax or Xamach on week ends to obtain lower prices on staple items (meat, corn, etc., are cheaper in the towns than in the community). The spouses of Alejandro and Eduardo prepared and cooked the meals together and the family ate together as a single unit.

The household also exhibits characteristics associated with a compound family domestic group; the next oldest son, Pablo, and his family, lived in the household, managed their own accounts and expenditures and, while occasionally using the same cooking fire as the others, nonetheless prepared their meals and ate apart. Pablo and his wife had been married for over a year, had already given birth to their first child and, with that birth, terminated their subordinate membership in the extended family domestic group.

Pablo had attempted to follow the more approved procedure during his courtship, but had been rebuffed by both his own parents and by Leonardo Pech, the father of the girl. Opposition was generally based on the feeling that he was still too young (he was 16 years old at the

time) to assume the financial responsibilities of marriage. In addition, his parents felt that his older brother had the first rights to marry and, consequently, the first rights to financial assistance from the domestic group. Despite the opposition, Pablo and Leonardo's daughter conspired to circumvent the normal pattern of courtship and marriage. The girl managed to go to Xamach "with some friends" during the carnival, met Pablo there secretly, and they spent most of the night together, finally returning to San Antonio in the early hours of the next morning. They presented themselves at the house of Alejandro and, according to informants, since they had already "done it," they were accepted into the household and considered as having formed a free union (unión libre) marriage. Alejandro arranged for a later church wedding, but Leonardo and many of the girl's relatives refused to attend. Of the four cases of elopement reported by informants for the recent period, this was the only case in which a parent did not, within a few months, forget that traditional procedures had been circumvented. Leonardo publicly disowned his daughter and refused ever to admit her to his house (Leonardo's wife visited her daughter regularly, however). Although the event occurred in 1968, by the end of fieldwork in 1971, he still refused to forgive her for running off with Alejandro's son. Pablo and his wife remained a part of the extended family domestic group, contributing to the economic maintenance of the household, until the 1970 marriage of his older brother Eduardo. Alejandro received Pablo's wages, returned a portion for their personal expenses, made the major purchases for the household, and used any extra funds to save or invest in animals towards covering the coming expenses involved in Eduardo's engagement and marriage.

Eduardo had begun "speaking to" Simona, the daughter of Vena Pech (Leonardo's brother), throughout late 1969 and early 1970. Each week, for a period of several months, Simona walked to take sewing lessons in Xamach and it later became clear that Eduardo had been bicycling out to meet and talk with her regularly. Following the formal initiation of the engagement process in March of 1970, they had become more open with regard to their meeting in the community. The engagement proceeded with a second visit by Eduardo's parents in April of 1970, and a third visit in November of that year to fix the date of the wedding. Alejandro desired more time to organize the financial resources to cover the costs of the coming wedding, but Vena insisted the couple marry before the end of the year. The asiento to fix the date of the wedding took place following a mass held on December fifth (at which time the priest delivered his lecture against birth control), and the wedding itself took place on the twenty-eighth of December, 1970. The reasons for Vena's interest in the couple's marrying at the earliest possible date was later obvious: within a few short weeks following the wedding, Simona exhibited visible and unmistakable signs of being quite pregnant.

The following lists detail the costs of the formal visits by Alejandro and his wife (to the household of Pech) to initiate the engagement and fix the date of the wedding between Eduardo and Simona.

First Visit: (March, 1970) Alejandro's gifts to initiate the engagement.

1 kg. of sugar	\$ 1.80 (pesos)
1 lb. of chocolate	2.80
1 loaf (round), sweet bread	5.00
1 bottle, Habanero (rum)	11.00
8 bottles, Coca Cola	<u>4.80</u>
Total costs, first visit	\$25.40

Second Visit: (April, 1970) Formalization of the intent to marry.

1 bottle, white rum (<u>Ron Blanco</u>)	\$11.00 (pesos)
12 bottles, Coca Cola	7.20
French bread (rolls)	3.00
1 kg. of sugar	1.80
1 lb. of chocolate	<u>2.80</u>
Total costs, second visit	\$25.80

Third Visit: (November, 1970) To fix the dates of the asiento and wedding.

1 case of beer	\$25.00 (pesos)
French bread (rolls)	12.00
12 kg. of sugar	28.80 ^a
6 lbs. of chocolate	16.80
1 case of Coca Cola	<u>10.00</u>
Total costs, third visit	\$92.60

Total costs, three visits \$143.80

^aThe price of sugar had increased during the interval from \$1.80 to \$2.40/kg.

Vena Pech had been president of the ejido during the period of control exerted by the state-run Henequeneros and, during this period, Vena had established close relations with the named administrator of the ejido, Arturo A. Of Vena's six children, Arturo and his wife had served as the baptismal sponsors (godparents) of three children (two females and one male) and had sponsored the marriage ceremony of the oldest of Vena's three sons. Vena had maintained relations with Arturo (who operated a trucking company in Mérida at the time of fieldwork) and urged Alejandro to ask Arturo and his wife to sponsor (to be the godparents of) the wedding of Simona and Eduardo.

Arturo, in addition to sponsoring various of Vena Pech's children, was also the compadre of Vena's brother, Leonardo (having sponsored the baptismal ceremonies of two of Leonardo's children). Alejandro, apparently in an attempt to reconcile differences between himself and

Leonardo, had already requested Arturo to serve as wedding godparents for Pablo and Leonardo's daughter. Arturo and his wife had accepted, but even this attempt to establish mutual compadrazgo relations with an influential individual (making Alejandro and Leonardo co-coparents) failed to convince Leonardo to temper his resentment concerning Pablo's elopement with his daughter.

Alejandro and his wife had agreed to make the request of Arturo and they made three trips to Mérida towards this end. Arturo's wife was found to be ill the first trip, which required a second when Arturo and his wife agreed to serve as the padrinos de boda ("godparents of the marriage"). Alejandro and his wife made a third trip to present the sponsors with gifts. Since the parents of the bride-to-be had made the request, and since the wedding date had been advanced, Alejandro had decided to await the reply before expending funds for the gifts to the padrinos. On the third visit, Alejandro presented Arturo with a live turkey hen and a bottle of Habanero rum.

Costs to secure the sponsors of the wedding:

Turkey hen (<u>pava</u>)	\$40.00
1 bottle, Habanero rum	12.00
3 trips to Mérida	<u>24.00</u>
Total costs to obtain padrinos	\$76.00

On December fifth, the priest arrived from the parroquial center to hold the monthly mass and, on this particular date, also to hold the asiento meeting to formalize the date of the wedding. The priest agreed to return on the morning of the twenty-eighth and perform the marriage. A small party followed the asiento to which the parents of Eduardo had invited close relatives and friends of both sets of parents. Refreshments

and sandwiches were served to the invited guests; the following list details the costs involved in the asiento party.

Costs to Alejandro for the asiento of Simona and Eduardo:

25 loaves of sandwich bread (from Xamach)	\$50.00
1 can of chile jalapeño	7.00
1 turkey hen (pava), worth	40.00 ^a
Onions, worth	2.50 ^a
1 chicken, worth	18.00
2 bottles, <u>aguardiente</u> (rum)	22.00
3 cases, Coca Cola	<u>30.00</u>
Total cost of the asiento party	\$169.50

^aItems supplied from domestic group resources rather than actually purchased.

A few days following the asiento, Alejandro, his wife, Simona, Eduardo and Simona's mother travelled to Mérida and were joined by the wife of Arturo (the designated madrina or "godmother") to shop for the wedding clothes. Eduardo paid for Simona's wedding clothes and Alejandro's domestic group absorbed the costs of the groom's clothes. Since Simona dressed in the style of a mestiza, Alejandro's wedding clothes were made to reflect and be compatible with that style. The following lists the costs associated with the clothing of the bride and groom-to-be, the wedding ceremony, and the dinner and party held following the ceremony.

Costs related to the wedding clothes:

Bus trip to Mérida	\$20.00
Food purchased in Mérida (lunch)	15.00
Simona's wedding clothes:	
Complete mestiza outfit (white huipil, slip, veil, with gold necklace or <u>lazo</u> , etc.)	306.00
White shoes	45.00
White earrings and hair ribbon	12.00
Eduardo's wedding clothes:	
White trousers (material, sewing)	75.00
White shirt	40.00
White <u>alpargatas</u> (mestizo sandals)	<u>25.00</u>
Total costs of trip to Mérida	\$538.00

Costs related to the wedding ceremony and mass:

Candles and flowers for the chapel	\$34.00
Confirmation and baptism certificates for Simona and Eduardo	32.00
Birth certificates for the couple	20.00
Health certificates for the couple	20.00
Costs for the presence of the official of the Maax Civil Registry Office	70.00
Priest's travel and cost of the mass	<u>110.00</u>
Costs of the wedding ceremony	\$286.00

Costs related to the wedding dinner (approximately 100 guests):

10 cock turkeys	\$800.00
2 hen turkeys	80.00
7 cases of beer	119.50
9 cases of soft drinks	90.00
2 garafas (5 liters each) of rum	100.00
5 bottles of Habanero rum (purchased as gifts for the padrinos and Simona's parents)	55.00
Transportation costs for refreshments	50.00
50 kg. of corn	52.50
3 kg. of pork	48.00
2 kg. of beef	24.00
1 kg. of lard	12.00
1 kg. of flour	2.00
50 eggs	25.00
3 kg. of soda crackers	4.50
Ice for beer and soft drinks	16.00
Rental, 5 dozen chairs	7.50
Miscellaneous spices, condiments, etc.	<u>70.60</u>
Total costs, reception and dinner	\$1,596.60

Total cost to Alejandro's domestic group:^a

First visit to Simona's parents	\$25.40 (pesos)
Second visit to Simona's parents	25.80
Third visit to Simona's parents	92.60
Visits and gifts to sponsors (Arturo)	76.00
Costs related to asiento engagement	169.50
Costs of wedding clothes and trip	538.00
Costs associated with wedding ceremony	286.00
Wedding reception and dinner	<u>1,596.60</u>
Total costs of marriage ¹⁰	\$2,809.90

^a"Cost" includes the "worth" of animals, etc. raised or grown within the domestic group, as well as actual cash expenditures.

Compared to the total expenditures of the domestic group, the costs borne by the padrinos or sponsors were minor. The padrinos loaned the thirteen gold coins (arras) which are passed by the groom to the bride during the ceremony and purchased the wedding rings (\$40 pesos each) and the cake (\$150 pesos) for a total expenditure of \$230 pesos.

Alejandro's domestic group had begun to plan for the wedding several months in advance. They raised or purchased most of the poultry used as gifts or in the dinner (representing a total value of \$978 pesos) and were able to supply many of the condiments and spices from their own garden. In addition, Alejandro had raised three pigs, selling two outright, slaughtering the third himself for sale in the community, and earning an estimated \$1,500 pesos for the three pigs. Still short of the cash needed to cover the wedding expenses, Alejandro borrowed \$400 pesos from Simona's maternal uncle, who was also compadre--as well as brother-in-law--to Vena Pech (having sponsored Hetzmek ceremonies for three of Simona's brothers and the confirmation and first communion ceremonies for two of the three brothers). During the period of household accounting (3/20-5/28/71), Alejandro sold an additional pig for \$414 pesos (averaged under "income" on Table 38), repayed the remaining \$300 pesos of his debt to Simona's uncle (averaged under "ceremonial" on Table 38), and with the remaining amount, purchased another piglet for \$80 pesos (averaged under "miscellaneous" on Table 38).

The following diagram (Figure 15) and table (Table 38) summarize social and economic characteristics of Alejandro's compound/extended domestic group. The list of income and expenditures, as for the other

TABLE 38.--Alejandro: Average Extended Household Expenses Per Week.

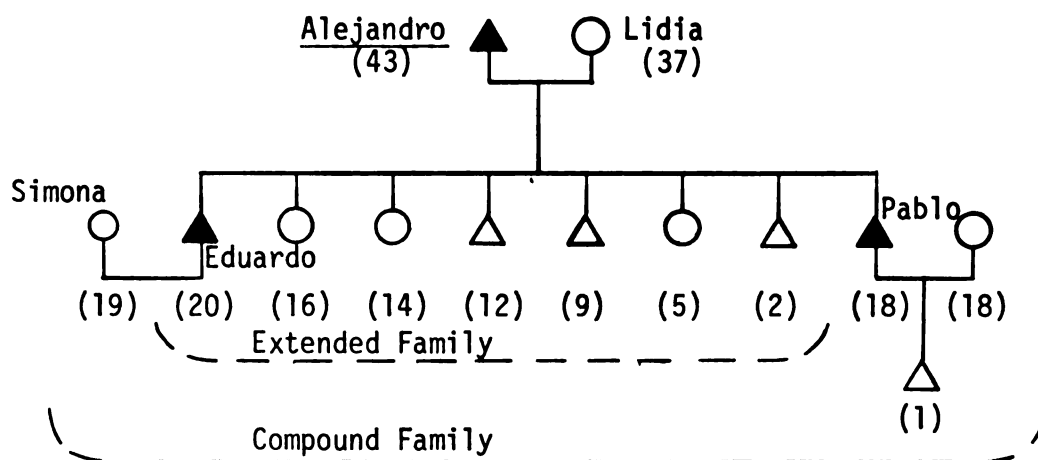
	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income:</u>		
Ejido	\$ 48.75	
Pequeña Propiedad	141.21	
Received from Eduardo	81.25	
Other	<u>71.06^a</u>	
Total Average Weekly Income	\$342.27	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses:</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (43 kg.)	\$ 43.10	
Corn Grinding	2.50	
Meat	44.44	
Eggs	---	
Other Consumable Items	<u>121.43</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$211.47	61.8%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry (Soap, etc.)	\$ 8.45	
Clothing	18.37	
Medical and Health Related	3.72	
Animal Feed	6.27	
Ceremonial	31.62 ^b	
Amusement	3.60	
Miscellaneous	<u>32.65^c</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$104.68	30.6%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$316.15	92.4%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$+26.12	+7.6%

^aIncludes income from the sale of a pig (\$414 pesos) and the sale of deer meat from a successful hunt (\$47.60 pesos), as averaged for the ten week period.

^bIncludes \$300 pesos repaid on money borrowed for Eduardo's marriage to Simona (from her maternal uncle).

^cIncludes the \$80 peso purchase of a piglet and the \$80 pesos/month (\$20/week) payment made towards the purchase, on time, of an electric water pump.

Figure 15.--Alejandro.



cases, represent a weekly average computed on the basis of a ten week period of detailed household accounting.

Alejandro derived his average weekly income of \$342.27 from several different sources. Aside from working on the lands of the ejido (\$48.75 pesos/week) Alejandro was primarily employed as supervisor and inspector (chekador) of the weeding operations (chapeo) on the lands of the pequeña propiedad and was therefore able to assign weeding tasks to himself as well as his sons. Alejandro himself earned an average of \$141.21 pesos/week from the weeding operations (his sons' incomes are detailed on subsequent tables). On weekends and in his "spare time," Alejandro cut wood from the brushland to the north of San Antonio on consignment for the general manager of the

pequeña propiedad, and added an additional average of \$24.90 pesos/week (listed under "other") to his income. Alejandro's income, derived from his own efforts and the assistance of his unmarried sons, averaged a total of \$214.86 pesos/week. He also received Eduardo's salary, keeping an average of \$81.25 for the extended family domestic group, and returning an average of \$27.75 to Eduardo and Simona for their own personal expenses. During the ten week period analyzed, Alejandro sold a pig and the meat of a deer that he had shot, obtaining a total of \$461.60 pesos (\$46.16/week and listed under "other income").

With the total income, Alejandro manages the purchase of staples and other expenses for an extended family comprised to ten individuals. In order to take advantage of the lower prices, Alejandro bicycles to Xamach to make the major purchases (meat is usually lower in price, and corn sells for \$1.00 peso/kg. in the Xamach CONASUPO store rather than the \$1.05 (Francisco's store) to \$1.15 (private store) price in the community). Of all of the case families studied, Alejandro seemed the most industrious and the most frugal and careful in the use of income. Alejandro's was the only domestic group, during the ten week period under consideration, for which income exceeded expenditures.

Pablo, married, with child, and part of the larger compound domestic group, derives his total income from work obtained in the decorticating factory of the pequeña propiedad. When an initial household survey was conducted (October, 1970), Pablo's income averaged \$90 pesos/week. During the ten week period (3/20-5/28/70), his income dropped to an average of \$61.29 pesos/week as a result of the reduction

in factory production associated with the prolonged drought. Pablo, now responsible for the economic maintenance of his own nuclear family unit, received no cash assistance from Alejandro, nor did he receive assigned weeding tasks on the pequeña propiedad from his father. Pablo preferred to make his newly achieved economic independence as complete as possible and looked forward to the day when he and his wife could establish their own neolocal domestic group household.

The following tables (Tables 39 and 40) summarize the expenditure patterns of both Eduardo and Pablo, the two married sons of Alejandro. The former illustrates a modest spending pattern associated with a dependent family within an extended family domestic group, and the latter illustrates an expenditure pattern more similar to those of other nuclear family units but, in this case, of one that is a part of a larger, compound domestic group.

Time and Domestic Group Survival

Following fission of an extended family domestic group, the nucleated stem family may pass through a phase of membership in a compound family or pass directly into a neolocal phase of residence. At this autonomous stage in the development of the domestic group, with the birth of each additional child, even seemingly minor fluctuations in weekly income severely affect the economic characteristics of the household. Of the five nuclear families studied (Javier, Martín, Pablo, Prudencio, and Máximo), three averaged expenditures amounting to between 12% and 31% in excess of their average weekly income (Javier, Pablo, Martín). The remaining two families (Prudencio, Máximo) maintained expenditures as nearly balanced

TABLE 39.--Eduardo: Average Dependent Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u>		
Ejido	\$ 68.95	
Pequeña Propiedad	39.15	
Total Average Income	109.00	
Retained by Alejandro (father)	<u>81.25</u>	
Average returned to Eduardo and Simona	\$ 27.75	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Meat (1 chicken, \$13 peso purchase)	\$ 1.30	
Other (soft drinks, cheese, bread, etc.)	<u>12.13</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$ 13.43	48.4%
Non-Food Expenses		
Medical (one trip to doctor, Xamach)	\$ 2.05	
Ceremonial (chapel donations, etc.)	0.53	
Amusement	0.26	
Miscellaneous (cigarettes, etc.)	<u>1.66</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$ 4.50	16.2%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$ 17.93	64.6%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$ +9.82	+35.4%

TABLE 40.--Pablo: Average Independent Household Expenses Per Week.

	Pesos	% of Ave. Income
<u>Average Weekly Income</u> (pequena propiedad)	\$ 61.29	
<u>Average Weekly Expenses</u>		
Food and Other Consumable Items		
Corn (5.9 kg.)	\$ 6.51	
Corn Grinding	1.75	
Meat	5.07	
Eggs	4.12	
Other Consumable Items	<u>37.67</u>	
Total Food-Related Expenses	\$ 55.12	89.9%
Non-Food Expenses		
Laundry	\$ 1.96	
Clothing	3.00	
Medical and Health Related	1.40	
Animal Feed	---	
Ceremonial	1.60 ^a	
Amusement	1.16	
Miscellaneous	<u>4.71^b</u>	
Total Non-Food Expenses	\$ 13.83	22.6%
Total Average Weekly Expenses	\$ 68.95	112.5%
Average Difference/Week (Income-Expenses)	\$ -7.66	-12.5%

^aIncludes expenses related to a trip to a religious festival in Maax.

^bIncludes \$11 peso repair of a bicycle tire and a \$14 peso bribe demanded by the Maax military representative who had threatened to list Pablo as absent from military drill if not paid. This would have resulted in his induction into the army (discussed further in Chapter VI, below).

against income (weekly deficits averaging less than 3% in excess of income). Both of the latter families are independent, neolocal domestic groups, and both are atypical in that the former (Prudencio) enjoys a non-fluctuating salary as the muleteer of the *pequeña propiedad*, and the latter (Máximo), through his skills as a tailor, is able to increase his income, partially compensating for seasonal declines in available work in the henequen fields.

As the size of a nuclear family increases, per capita income and expenditures for consumable and non-consumable items decrease proportionately. While children do not consume as much as adults, they must, nevertheless, be clothed, cared for in times of illness, and the domestic group must periodically expend capital and household resources to cover ceremonial costs (baptism, *Hetzmek*, confirmation, first communion, etc.). Two of the nuclear domestic groups (Prudencio and Máximo) illustrate both the range of variation in family size and the consequent effects on patterns of expenditures and the differences between "new" and "established" domestic groups. The nuclear families are compared on the following table (Table 41).

As the domestic group continues through time, children reach ages at which they contribute to household maintenance, in householding tasks, if female, or in monetary income, if male. Filial marriage precipitates a change in the composition and per capita income and expenditures of the domestic group. Variable patterns of virilocality and uxorilocality will, depending upon the sex of the child, either add to, or subtract from, domestic group personnel and alter the economic characteristics accordingly. With the practice of virilocality, a male's parents not only gain an additional member

TABLE 41.--Income Allocation/Week/Capita: The Nuclear Family.

Domestic Group	Income ^a (I)		Expenditures ^a (E)			
	Number in Group	Income (Pesos)	Income/ Capita	Consumable Items	Non- Consumable Items	Difference/ Capita (I - E)
<u>Nuclear Family in a Compound</u>						
<u>Domestic Group</u>						
Pablo (Alejandro)	3	\$ 61.29	\$ 20.43	\$ 18.37	\$ 4.61	\$ -2.55
Martin (Peto)	5	89.70	17.94	14.69	5.05	-1.80
Average	4	75.48	18.87	16.07	4.89	-2.09
<u>Nuclear Family, Neolocal, Autonomous Domestic Group</u>						
Prudenciod	3	\$130.98	\$ 43.66	\$ 24.80	\$ 19.11	\$ -0.25
Javier ^e	5	78.40	15.68	15.48	5.03	-4.83
Máximo ^f	7	122.04	17.43	13.16	4.78	-0.51
Average ^b	6	100.20	16.70	14.13	4.89	-2.31
Average ^c	5	110.47	22.09	16.26	7.73	-1.90

^aAveraged for the ten-week period 3/20/71 through 5/28/71.^bAverage of Javier and Máximo only.^cAverage of all three cases.^dWeekly payments made to amortize purchase of radio.^ePayments made to amortize purchase of pump.^fLive animals purchased during ten-week period.

in the domestic group but, more importantly, retain a wage earner. The domestic group, now transformed into an extended family, has a chance to recoup at least the resources expended in the engagement and marriage of the son. Alejandro's domestic group, which incorporates features of both extended and compound family forms of organization, illustrates the strength and viability of the extended family phase of domestic group cyclicity. In addition to working hard himself, Alejandro receives wages from Eduardo and assistance from other unmarried sons residing within the domestic group. Of all of the domestic groups and nuclear families analyzed, Alejandro's extended family unit is the only one for which average income exceeds expenditures (cf. Table 42).

Once children marry and leave the household, the parents again may experience an increase in per capita income unless income is reduced by injury or illness within the nuclear family. Jorge's case (see Table below) represents one example of the post-extended/compound phase of the domestic group. The hypothetical example (Jorge^d, on the table below) demonstrates the point made in the description of his domestic group: in spite of his injury, Jorge continued spending as if his wages had remained at the average level of \$100 pesos/week rather than declined as a result of his incapacitation. Jorge's average deficit (in the hypothetical case) would have amounted to a relatively insignificant \$-0.21 pesos/capita/week, a figure similar to the near-balance achieved by his wife's son, Prudencio (\$-0.25 pesos/capita/week). The subsequent projections (Jorge^e, and Jorge^f, on the table above) assume a continuation of the average per capita expenditures of the household and assume that

TABLE 42.--Income Allocation/Week/Capita: Extended and Post-Extended Families.

Domestic Group	Income ^a (I)		Expenditures ^a (E)			Difference/ Capita (I - E)
	Number in Group	Income (Pesos)	Income/ Capita	Consumable Items	Non- Consumable Items	
<u>Extended Family</u>						
Alejandro ^{g,h}	10	\$342.27	\$ 34.23	\$ 21.15	\$ 10.47	\$ +2.61
(Eduardo) ^{b,g}	(2)	(27.75)	(13.88)	(6.72)	(2.25)	(+4.91)
Average ^c	10	370.02	37.00	22.49	10.92	+3.59
<u>Post-Extended Family</u>						
Jorge	3	80.00	26.67	27.85	5.76	-6.88
Jorge ^d	3	100.00	33.33	27.85	5.76	-0.21
Jorge ^e	2	80.00	40.00	27.85	5.76	+6.39
Jorge ^f	2	100.00	50.00	27.85	5.76	+16.39

^aAveraged for the ten-week period 3/20/71 through 5/28/71.

^bBased on Eduardo's income less his contribution to his father.

^cTotal (combining total income and expenses of both Alejandro and Eduardo) for domestic group.

^dAssuming Jorge had not injured himself and had maintained previous average weekly income.

^eProjected, assuming WiDa resides virilocally after marriage.

^fProjected, as above, and assuming earnings uninterrupted by injury.

^gLive animals purchased during the ten-week period.

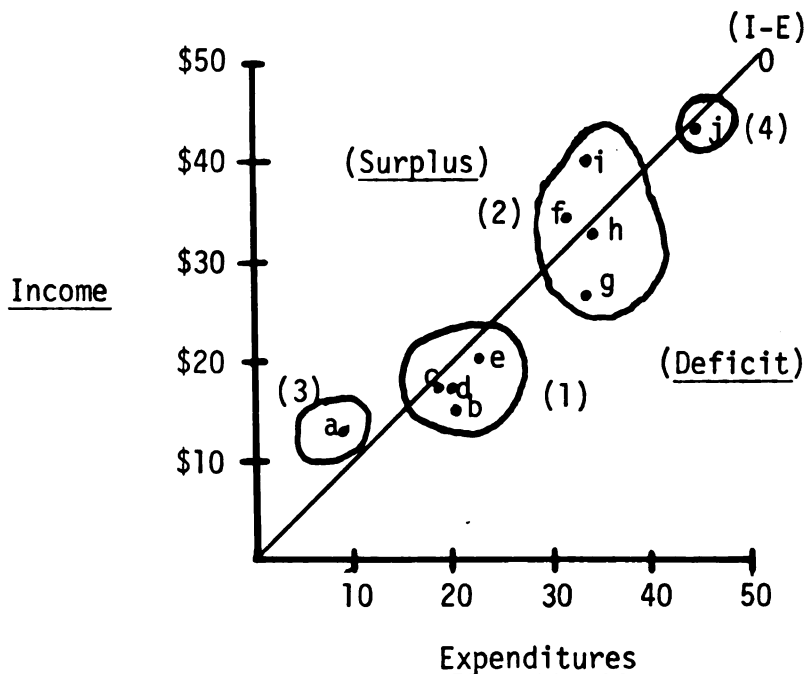
^hRegular payments made to amortize purchase of pump.

Jorge's wife's daughter, Pancha, leaves the household upon marriage (she did, in fact, reside virilocally following her marriage). While the hypothetical calculations (Jorge^d) make the domestic unit most similar to Alejandro's in terms of per capita income, the projected calculations (Jorge^e and Jorge^f) make the domestic group more similar to the economic pattern exhibited by Prudencio's small, neolocal domestic group.

Plotting average weekly per capita income against per capita expenditures, the following graph (Figure 16) illustrates the distribution of characteristic monetary income and resource allocation by domestic group and family type. The graph demonstrates a clustering of (1) nuclear family groups (neolocal/autonomous domestic groups, and nuclear members of compound domestic groups) and (2) extended and post-extended forms of domestic group organization (Alejandro and Jorge, respectively). The two extreme cases are (3) the dependent nuclear family within an extended family domestic group (Eduardo), and (4) the independent nuclear/neolocal domestic group (Prudencio) that had recently separated from an extended/compound group and which benefited from both a small family size and a stable (salaried) income. The diagonal dividing the following graph represents the "zero" point at which average weekly per capita income equals average expenditures. Positions above the diagonal indicate a weekly surplus of unexpended capital and those below the diagonal indicate mounting familial or domestic group indebtedness.

The graph suggests that while no "typical" family or domestic group structure can be identified and represented as characteristic of

Figure 16.--Weekly Per Capita Average: Income Versus Expenditures.
(in pesos)



- a) Eduardo: Dependent nuclear family, member of an extended domestic group (virilocal residence).
- b) Javier: Nuclear/neolocal domestic group.
- c) Máximo: Nuclear/neolocal domestic group.
- d) Martín: Nuclear family in a compound domestic group (uxorilocal residence).
- e) Pablo: Nuclear family in a compound domestic group (virilocal residence).
- f) Alejandro: Extended family domestic group.
- g) Jorge: Nuclear family, post-extended family domestic group.
- h) Jorge: Hypothetical, assuming no income loss due to injury.
- i) Jorge: Projected, assuming actual average income and assuming WiDa leaves domestic group following her marriage (virilocal residence).
- j) Prudencio: Nuclear/neolocal domestic group with stabilized (salaried by the pequeña propiedad) income.

the community, the cyclical nature of the domestic group can be summarized by identifying a few general types. Small nuclear/neolocal families and domestic groups in either the extended or post-extended phases exhibit similarity in per capita economic patterning (cluster (2)-(4) on the graph above). Established nuclear/autonomous (neolocal) domestic groups and independent nuclear family members of compound domestic groups likewise exhibit similarity in per capita income and allocation patterns (cluster (1)-(3) on the graph above).

Of all the identified phases in domestic group cyclicity, the small, nuclear family (whether newly established, or a domestic group entering the post-extended phase) seems the most vulnerable, in spite of apparently favorable per capita evidence of viability. These small groups, with only one member providing the major economic income, are quite vulnerable to the income reducing effects of serious illness or injury. All of the domestic groups, in fact, increase in indebtedness with sudden medical expenses and, as in the case of Javier, with continuous sizable payments demanded for such material items as an electric pump. Ceremonial expenses, while considerable, are expected, are anticipated, and the domestic group can, over time, marshall the resources (including prestations and loans) necessary to cover the associated expenses. In spite of the advancement of the date of Alejandro's son's wedding, for example, the domestic group suffered no obvious economic after-effects during the period of analysis (the final payment on borrowed money was made and a replacement for the expenditure, a piglet, was obtained as well). Martín's family, on the other hand, exhibited the dual problems of sudden and devastating medical expenses and the compounding difficulties of

seasonally reduced incomes. The following table (Table 43) demonstrates that all families, in fact, experience great fluctuation in income from week to week (except for the salaried Prudencio).

Of the various forms of domestic group organization, the extended family seems the most viable and the most resilient against the deleterious effects of income variation and illness. With several producers working for the domestic group, income can be temporarily increased by some to compensate for temporary reductions in the work capabilities of others within the group. Despite this apparent viability, the extended family phase in domestic group cyclicity is perhaps the shortest in duration of the various phases. Information from several informants (primarily those recently married) indicated that transitory nature of the extended family is related to the internal hierarchical ordering of nuclear families within the group. The newly formed stem family, within a short period of time, moves from economic dependence and a subordinate position, to one of economic equality and independence either within the same household (transforming the extended domestic group into a compound one) or by establishing an autonomous (neolocal) household. Relations between the familial groups are not usually severed, the members continue to interact, but the nature of interaction is based in cooperation rather than authoritarianism. One of the older informants in the community, Don Pacífico (b. 1915), talked at length about the difficulties, even in a compound domestic group (recalling his early post-marital period) which developed out of personality differences. Don Pacífico stated that until he and his wife could afford to establish their own neolocal household,

TABLE 43.--Income Fluctuation in San Antonio, 3/20/71-5/28/71.

Domestic Group	Average Income/ Week	Highest Income/ Week (H)	Lowest Income/ Week (L)	Range of Variation (H/L = R)
<u>Nuclear Family in Compound</u>				
<u>Domestic Group</u>				
Pablo (Alejandro)	\$ 61.29	\$ 99.00	\$ 37.70	2.63
Martín (Peto)	89.70	120.00	60.00	2.00
<u>Nuclear/Neolocal Domestic Group</u>				
Prudencio	130.98	135.50	130.00	1.04
Javier	78.40	95.00	47.00	2.02
Máximo	122.04	144.50	78.50	1.84
<u>Extended Family Domestic Group</u>				
Alejandro ^a	296.12	360.10	218.00	1.65
Alejandro ^b	342.27	677.00	218.00	3.11
(Eduardo) ^c	(109.00)	128.00	94.00	1.36
<u>Post-Extended Family</u>				
Jorge	80.00	100.00	40.00	2.50

^aExcluding money received from sale of pig (\$414) and deer (\$47.50) meat, but including money received from son (Ave. \$81.25/wk).

^bIncluding money from sale of meat.

^cMerely illustrates range of Eduardo's family income. All money is received by Alejandro who then returns an average of \$27.75/week to Eduardo (and his wife) for their own personal use.

they had difficulties wherever they lived. He alternated several times between virilocality and uxorilocality, finding friction and disputes developing between himself or his wife, with the respective in-laws, over the allocation of income and, in the case of compound family membership, over the maintenance of separate supplies.

Recalling his own experiences, Don Pacífico decided that the nuclear/neolocal phase was the most desirable:

It's true, this saying that "he who marries should request his own house" (por eso dicen de veras que el que se casa su casa pide)! Because . . . this thing about the house, although it is small or whatever, one is his own master there. In one's own house you can eat beans or, if there are none, then you eat tortillas and that's that. At least you don't have to put up with the disputes and bickering as you do when you live with relatives (padres, "parents," or suegros, "in-laws").

Summary and Conclusions

Analytically, this chapter has examined the socio-economic dimensions of domestic groups in San Antonio and the cyclical nature of domestic group organization. Descriptively, case families were utilized to supplement quantitative materials with ethnographic description not only to indicate variability, but to detail some of the factors relevant to understanding that variability. Similarities between the types of domestic groups are associated with the rapid expenditure of cash received for the purpose of purchasing necessary staple items essential to the weekly survival of the household. As a result, all of the families rely on the availability of credit to make additional purchases through the week and, in the case of some of the families, indebtedness mounts with each passing week. In order periodically to cancel or at least reduce total indebtedness, the families employ various strategies which may be at their disposal.

The most common strategy involves the raising of domestic animals for later sale in the community, and the cultivation of a small house garden either to generate more capital through the sale of the products, or to reduce monetary demands on the household through domestic group consumption of the items raised or grown. Given the nature of the climate and the unavailability of storage facilities or techniques, the periodic slaughter or outright sale of animals (especially of the larger animals, such as pigs), whether to generate cash or to provide meat for a ceremonial occasion, becomes part of a larger redistributive system in which animal protein becomes distributed to and consumed by a number of individuals who are not members of a particular domestic group.

While the domestic groups can plan and absorb the expenses involved in ceremonialism, seasonal decline in income and emergency expenditures can have devastating effects on the family unit, the larger domestic group, and their associated indebtedness. In spite of obviously careful strategies to effectively allocate economic resources between human consumption and the domestic fund of plants and animals, all of the families of San Antonio are vulnerable to difficulties which threaten both physical health and economic survival. Although relative economic autonomy is desirable, social isolation is not. Relations with kin, whether consanguineal, affinal, or fictive, are maintained and, in the case of extreme difficulty, activated. Extensive social networks which at one point in time place an obligation on an individual domestic group (such as Javier, already in financial difficulties, having to contribute a turkey to his brother's wedding), can, at another point, be used to generate additional

resources to be placed at the disposal of the domestic group (as Alejandro's request for a loan from the maternal uncle of his son's betrothed). The social network, combined with reciprocity, enhances the survival chances of the domestic groups in particular and the community of ejidatarios of San Antonio in general.

CHAPTER V--FOOTNOTES

¹While in the process of revising an earlier draft of this chapter, Professor N. Leis of Central Michigan University brought to my attention Jack Goody's work (1971) on The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups. Fortes' introduction to the work (Goody, 1971: 1-3) convinced me that for greater terminological accuracy, household composition and aspects of post-marital residence should be described in terms of "domestic group," "virilocality," and "uxorilocality." While most authors describe Yucatec post-marital residence in terms of "patrilocality" and "matrilocality" (Deshon, 1963: 577, 579; Thompson, 1971: 386, 387; Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1934: 92), use of these terms is misleading when one considers the "bilateral nature of the family" (Villa Rojas, 1969: 266), the high incidence of re-marriage, and the consequent "fluidity of affination" (see Chapter IV, above). In describing household composition, domestic "group" is preferred (rather than domestic "unit") since the term is more consistent with actual variability. A compound domestic group, for example, does not function literally as a "unit" but, rather, as a grouping of related nuclear families, co-residing on a single house lot, cooperating in some activities, but generally maintaining a considerable degree of economic independence.

²I wish to express my appreciation for the very capable assistance provided by my spouse, Barbara V. Kirk, in collecting ethnographic materials and verifying the daily logs maintained by the case families.

³An illustration of the relatively low status of unmarried adults was provided by ceremonial observances during the pre-Lent, "Day of the Dead" (Día de los Finados) mass held in the community cemetery. The priest recited a prayer for each "child" who had died in the community. Lists were provided by members of the community (paying the priest for each name listed) and included, as "children," individuals who had died past the age of puberty, but who had not yet married.

⁴The Agrarian Code of Mexico specifies that new or vacated houses in an ejido community are to be distributed by means of a raffle. By consensus, only members of compound or extended family domestic groups are allowed to enter the raffle in San Antonio. During the period of fieldwork, two houses were distributed by this means.

⁵Compadrazgo is more fully discussed in Chapter IV, above.

⁶Unfortunately, no determination of weight or volume of a mochila was made.

⁷At the time of the household accounting, Máximo had already amortized debts related to the digging of a well (estimated to cost between \$400 and \$600 pesos) and the purchase of an electric water pump (valued at between \$800 and \$1,400 pesos, depending on whether or not Sears also handles the installation).

⁸Estimates are based on probable survival rate, length of time to reach maturity, and the declared value of animals sold during fieldwork.

⁹The corresponding terms, "mestizo" and "catrín," are not normally applied to describing male styles of dress. Except for the three oldest males in the community, men wear clothes patterned after the machine-made pants and shirts of the urban center ("catrin" style). Of the three, only one was bilingual in Mayan and Spanish, and the other two monolingual in Mayan only. The three dressed in the traditional "mestizo" style, wearing short white pants, white cotton shirt, and a cloth (the delantar) suspended over the frontal region of the pants. The men were not referred to as mestizos but, rather, as "Mayeros."

¹⁰As a further indication of the lack of socio-economic distinctiveness between mestizas and catrinas, a catrín wedding was recorded in similar detail in the community of San Antonio. The total recorded costs to the groom's parents, from the initial visits to the girl's parents, through the wedding feast (also with an estimated 100 guests), amounted to \$2,814.35 pesos, an amount virtually equal to the costs for the mestiza wedding of Simona and Eduardo.

CHAPTER VI

SAN ANTONIO AND THE POLITICS OF INTERACTION, ACCOMMODATION, AND ALLIANCE

Introduction

Ejido Elections: The Event

Social Networks and the Politics of Candidacy

Candidacy and the Tactics of Image Management

The Prorogation and Non-Resolution of Conflict

"Justice" and the Tactics of Protection

The Bangrario, the Media, and the Ejidos

San Antonio and the Bangrario: a Loan Request

The Tactics of Confrontation

Image Management and the Politics of Confrontation

San Antonio and the Pequeño Propietario

Politicization in San Antonio: an Informant's View

Summary and Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter examines the structure and process of political action in the ejido community of San Antonio. Existing within the lower social and economic strata of a complex society, San Antonio is restricted and controlled by dominant, extra-community institutions and class sectors of the larger society. Within this context, political behavior on the local level can be described as adaptive only so long as it affects a maintenance of internal order, a maintenance of order in extra-community relations, and more importantly, a maximization of the socio-economic survival of the community and its members. As will be demonstrated below, the members of San Antonio not only attempt to adapt to a restrictive institutional environment, but also to behave in a way that continuously examines the degree to which that institutional environment can itself be exploited or manipulated to achieve the over-riding goal of survival.

Following Adams (1967: 31-46, 1970: 117-123), San Antonio may be viewed as a part of a multiple power domain in which other parties, "individual(s), group(s) or organization(s)" (Adams, 1967: 32), exert greater control over the environment of the members of San Antonio than they can exert over the environment of the other parties. The superordinate parties base their control on the dual nature of San Antonio. As a "community," San Antonio is administratively linked to the state through the municipality. As a federally-endowed "ejido," San Antonio is administratively and economically linked to both private interests and federal institutions. The superordinate parties exercising control over this ejido community are:

- a. The Bangrario, controlling production and income in the ejido,
- b. The Pequeño Propietario, controlling additional family income and decorticating ejido and parcelario leaves,
- c. DAAC, the institution responsible for the internal operation of the ejido, supervising ejido elections, etc.,
- d. The Municipality of Maax, administratively linking San Antonio with the state governmental structure,
- e. S.A.G., which directs the operation of DAAC,
- f. The Banjidal, which is the major source of funds, and major stockholder in, the regional Bangrario, and
- g. Cordemex, which exerts monopolistic control over marketing and the manufacture of products from henequen fiber.

The ejidatarios, while subordinate, are neither totally powerless nor completely unable to exercise at least some degree of influence, if not control, over the other parties--but they are obviously restricted. The limited access to power available to the members of San Antonio is dependent upon their ability to perceive and capitalize upon weaknesses, inconsistencies, or conflicting areas of interest found among the dominant parties operating within the domain. This ability is demonstrated below through the description and analysis of particular cases, events involving conflict, confrontation, the manipulation of impinging institutions, and the tactics of alliance and accommodation.

The first event describes an election of ejido officials which occurred shortly after the initiation of fieldwork in San Antonio. This case illustrates the use and manipulation of external impinging institutions (specifically, DAAC and the municipal government) in the formation of alliances and the achievement of support by the various candidates. Decisions reached by the ejidatarios

during the election meeting demonstrate an internal tolerance of a type of behavior (unauthorized use of ejido funds) which would be defined externally as a criminal and, therefore, punishable offense. The resolution of this problem protected the individual from what the ejidatarios perceive as unjust treatment by external authorities. The event of the election also points to instances in which the resolution of conflict involved the use of, or threatened use of, external authorities; clearly indicating types of behavior which go beyond the limits of tolerance as defined in this ejido community.

A second case describes the occurrence of a confrontation, some months after the ejido elections, between the two leading opposition candidates. The few instances in which force was utilized or threatened in order to achieve redress for perceived individual infractions, the parties usually returned to the more normal formalized patterns of interpersonal relations, hiding their mutual dislike in patterns of reserve and formality in interaction. The event described, however, involved a large section of the community as either observers or active participants and resulted in a factionalization of the community which was disguised only with great difficulty. Discussions between the various participants revealed a general intolerance of parties or groups of allies who actually threaten or employ violence in the resolution of conflict.

A third event concerns observations made on the occasion of a trip to the main office of the Bangrario in Mérida. The trip was undertaken by the officers of the ejido to explore the promised, but not yet approved, repair and modernization of the ejido office building. The patterns of interaction between the officials of San Antonio and

those of the various departments of the Bangrario provide data concerning not only the tactics employed by the ejidatarios to achieve their goals, but the counter-tactics employed by the Bangrario to deny requests perceived as nonessential or non-productive. In a preceeding section, statements by the Bangrario director and editorial remarks in the media are analyzed to elucidate the role of that institution as perceived by the Bangrario officials and as perceived by other sectors of Yucatecan society. Criticized by the media (newspapers) in Mérida and by the ejidatarios in the rural areas, the actions of Bangrario officials assist in altering a loan request into an act of confrontation. In terms of the tactics employed, the ejidatarios of San Antonio, in attempting to achieve their goal, were able to utilize, manipulate, and counterpose the pequeño propietario, officials within the Bangrario itself, and one anthropologist. While a request to repair the ejido building is not literally contributing to socio-economic survival, it can be interpreted as contributing to the survival of a community image of progress and, more specifically, as contributing to the image and credibility of the elected ejido officials.

The final section of this chapter discusses some aspects of the political relations that exist between the ejidatarios and the pequeño propietario. The influence exerted by the owner of the private holdings is pervasive and often quite subtle. Rather than focus on any one revealing event, this discussion utilizes separate incidents, where relevant, to demonstrate some of the key areas of influence and control which are dominated by the heir to Hacienda San Antonio.

Ejido Elections: The Event

Shortly after the initiation of fieldwork in San Antonio, a general assembly of the ejidatarios met (9/28/1970) to elect new ejido officials. This event influenced greatly the orientation of the fieldwork, serving to outline patterned relationships existing between members of the ejido community and their relationship to both the pequeño propietario and the Bangrario.

Articles 21 through 31 of the Agrarian Code (Código, 1970: 12-14) specify three year terms of office for ejidatarios elected to the comisariado ejidal, the governing ejidal commissariate, and for those elected to the consejo de vigilancia, the vigilance or watchdog council of the ejido. A candidate seeking office proposes a slate of individuals (a planilla) to fill the positions of secretary, treasurer, and alternate (three). The winning candidate is at once president of the commissariate and socio-delegado, delegated representative of the ejido in matters concerning the Bangrario. Implicit in the agrarian code is the assumption that two slates of candidates will vie for election to the ejidal commissariate. The slate receiving the majority of the votes will staff the commissariate and the slate representing the minority will control the vigilance council of the ejido. The legislative intent of the code is to safeguard, so far as possible, the social and financial operation of the ejido by balancing major factions existing within a community. Each faction is given some access to power and the balance is legitimized by means of the derivative power vested in both the administrative and vigilance councils. A provision inhibiting the possibility of re-election makes it difficult for any single individual to assume and retain sole control of

the ejido.¹ Ejido elections are directly supervised by an agent of the Department of Agrarian Affairs (DAAC) or, in his absence, by representatives of an agrarian bank (in this case, the Bangrario).

The federal and state officials sent to supervise the elections in San Antonio, through their speeches, provided an ideological framework for the elections which stressed the importance of the ejido as the basis of continuing democratization and economic development in Mexico. The supervising officials also demonstrated the manipulatory tactics employed to force consensus and to reduce the effects of existing community factionalism.

The owner of the pequeña propiedad was not present at the elections but his influence was nevertheless demonstrated in a number of ways. Shortly before the elections, I approached the outgoing ejido officials and requested permission to tape record the meeting. They told me they did not object but in any case would "check out" my request to be sure. Early on the morning of the elections Rodrigo Pech, the recording secretary of the ejido, arrived at my house to inform me that he had "checked out" my request to tape the meetings and that Don Manuel had approved it. I had intended, in my request, that the ejido officials consult the other ejidatarios and the governmental representatives sent to supervise the elections; the only person consulted, as it turned out, was the pequeño propietario. When I was later introduced to the DAAC and State representatives, the tape recorder was pointed out and they were also informed that permission had been granted by Don Manuel. They accepted the explanation without either question or comment.

The officials who were to supervise the ejido elections began arriving at about 9:00 in the morning, although the elections were scheduled to begin at 8:00. First the agents of the Bangrario, lower officials, arrived on foot from Xamach. A few minutes later, a car arrived with the DAAC official, a representative of the state henequen affairs office (Dirección del Henequén), and an official representative of the governor of the State of Yucatán. The DAAC official arrived as the ejido officials were completing an inventory of the ejido office (counting sheets of paper, forms, etc.). During an audit, the DAAC official discovered the basic operating fund of the ejido to be missing two hundred and forty pesos which could not be accounted for by the receipts on hand. The DAAC official's attention thus diverted, the ejido candidates remained near-by, impatiently waiting for their chance to introduce themselves, smile, shake hands, and generally to appear alert and capable of directing the operation of the ejido.

The ejido president, questioned by the suspicious DAAC representative, explained that he had inherited the deficit from the previous ejido administration and that it was not his responsibility. Not satisfied, DAAC pursued the point until it was finally revealed that the previous treasurer had spent the money and the debit had merely been carried forward on the books of the ejido. The former treasurer, Vicente, was standing on the periphery of the group, looking nervous and very concerned about the course of the discussion; he was neither identified nor did he voluntarily expose himself to direct questioning by DAAC.

Several members of the ejido began to explain the fact that Vicente had been quite ill and that his youngest child had a "congenital heart defect." According to the ejidatarios, these health problems suffered by Vicente and other members of his family had made it impossible for him to cover both the medical expenses and still survive on the meager income provided by the ejido. It was further explained that he continued to receive medical assistance from the ejido (forty pesos per week) and was still too ill to augment his income by working for the pequeño propietario. Summarizing, the ejido president asserted that Vicente was simply unable to repay the debt incurred while he had been treasurer of the ejido and that, in his opinion, the debt should be cancelled.

DAAC, accepting what he felt to be the sentiment of the ejidatarios present, began referring to the missing funds as "the debt." He settled the matter by explaining that the problem would not be pursued further if the ejidatarios, in a special meeting, agreed to cancel the "debt" and communicate that agreement in writing to the DAAC office for insertion in the ejido records. With the assurances voiced by the ejidatarios as to the acceptability of the solution, the ex-treasurer appeared much relieved as he turned and walked away from the clustered ejidatarios and governmental representatives.

With the matters of the inventory and the problem of the missing funds settled, all of the participants moved from the office to the shaded area in front of the ejido building. The ejidatarios stood in small clusters, observing the actions of others and talking

among themselves. Standing behind a small table near the wall of the building, DAAC opened the meeting by introducing the various observers from the state and federal institutions and continued with introductory comments on the purpose of the meeting. DAAC stressed that aside from meeting the normal requirements of membership in the ejido, a candidate must be able to read and write, possess a good record of personal conduct, and must not be running for re-election to the commissariat presidency.

DAAC: Que sea ejidatario de éste núcleo; que se recibe todos los derechos; trabaja personalmente en el ejido; y de tener una residencia en el mismo durante seis meses inmediatos anteriores de esta fecha. También leer y escribir; que es de buena conducta; que no fué el último socio-delegado . . .

As the DAAC official continued, so did the campaigning. Each of the three candidates for the office of socio-delegado made his way from one cluster of ejido members to another. Each attempted, by conversing with friends and relatives, to increase his number of supporting allies. From the conversations, it seemed clear that there were two strong candidates neither of whom could win the necessary majority unless he could attract members from the third candidate's group. DAAC continued speaking of the importance of electing the candidate best able to serve the ejido and assume responsibility for the economic operation during the three year term of office.

DAAC: Están libres ustedes para votar a la gente que creen más capacitado y más conocedor del asunto. Si las autoridades que pongan son buenas, si hacen un trabajo bueno y legal, ustedes van a ser los beneficiados. Si ponen una persona que por desgracia hace un trabajo mal, los perjudicados siempre serán ustedes mismos. Ningún de nosotros que estamos aquí hoy está interesado en quien sale específicamente como comisariado ejidal. Nosotros vamos a respetar completamente la voluntad de ustedes como vamos a respetar todo lo del ejido.

EJIDATARIO: Muchas gracias! (Aplause.)

His opening comments completed, DAAC introduced the representative of the governor of Yucatán. The state official began speaking rapidly and likewise impressed the ejidatarios with the importance of electing qualified officials to lead them in their quest for greater productivity and economic progress. Linking the community to the state, he proclaimed the governor's faith in the ejidatarios of Yucatán and the governor's belief that together they will succeed in improving the working conditions of the peasant and his general economic well-being.

STATE: El Señor Gobernador del Estado tiene mucho fé en el pueblo Yucateco, especialmente en los ejidatarios, en los hombres del campo que son los forjadores de la riqueza. Pero para que esta riqueza pueda reproducirse, para que esta riqueza pueda llenar las necesidades de los hogares de ustedes, para que esta riqueza pueda significar la educación de sus hijos, mejor vestido, mejor vivienda, es necesario que los que vayan a representarlos sean personas que sepan a enfrentar sus problemas para plantearlos frente a las autoridades. Que sean personas sobre todo honradas. Porque es la base para el progreso para que ustedes puedan lograr lo que pretenden en beneficio de sus familias.

Following this speech, the DAAC representative was presented with the three planillas (slates of candidates). The planilla names were read and the first ballot cast. "Voting" consisted of the DAAC official counting the number of ejidatarios lined up behind each candidate. Of the three candidates, Filo (37 years of age) received 30 votes, David Pech (41 years of age) received 26, and the third candidate, Marcelino (50 years of age), 23 votes. Since none of the candidates received a majority of the votes cast, the DAAC official nullified the ballot. He then instructed the ejidatarios to caucus and decide if they could unanimously elect one of the three candidates as comisariado ejidal. Marcelino and his supporters were immediately approached by the two major candidates and their allies; Marcelino

clearly held the balance of power which would determine the outcome of the election.

While the discussions were taking place, a member of Filo's group delivered a paper to the DAAC official and asked him to examine it. It was a notarized statement from the Maax municipal president which concerned David Pech, the opposition candidate. As the DAAC representative began to read the report aloud, the groups of ejidatarios ceased talking and pressed closer to hear the particulars of the municipal statement. The note detailed a charge, conviction, and fine levied against David for the offense of striking a woman of the community with a rock. It was obvious to all present that Filo and his supporters were hoping for an outright disqualification of David's candidacy.

David, understandably, became increasingly nervous and uncomfortable as the reading continued; he glanced menacingly in the direction of Filo and his ally. As the details of the act of violence were read, along with the official charges and the resulting fine, Filo's ally, Francisco, moved close to me and began to discuss the case. He maintained that David drank heavily and often, usually becoming generally abusive when drunk and frequently threatening or actually attacking those he felt were against him. Francisco ended by commenting that David and his brothers had "tyrannized" the community long enough.

The DAAC official finished reading the document, asked if David were present and if he could explain the document and charges. David began by stating that the act had taken place "outside of the

ejido," that it was a community affair, had nothing to do with the ejido, and that since he had paid the fine, "todo fué arreglado," everything had been settled. David's statement was spoken in Spanish but the tension produced by this challenge to his candidacy caused him to speak with a pronounced Mayan accent. Words sounded harsher, accent shifted, and his speech assumed a tonal quality which made his nervousness all the more obvious. DAAC listened to David for a few moments and then asked the date of the sentencing. Learning that the fine had been levied in 1960, a decade before the elections, he proceeded to give an impassioned speech proclaiming the fact that a person who had paid his debt to society should not, because of one error, "be forever labelled an assassin or a thief"; an individual who had paid his debt should not be disenfranchised, but should remain as free and in possession of his civil rights as any other citizen. This, he maintained, is a right offered by "the modern way of life" and based in the Constitution of 1917.

DAAC: Ya está! Ya recibió un castigo y es un ciudadano tan libre como cualquiera. Porque, compañeros, todos nosotros estamos dispuestos a cometer un error. Y si por un error que cometamos en nuestra vida todo el tiempo nos van a estar señalando con el índice de asesinos o de ladrones, eso no es correcto. La vida moderna ofrece de acuerdo con las leyes establecidas por la revolución en . . . en nuestra constitución de diez y siete se establece todo género de sanciones pero también se establece cual es el término para que un ciudadano pueda purgar una sentencia y quedar tan libre y soberano como otro cualquiera.

VENA PECH (Brother of David): Muy bien! (Aplause.)

In spite of the DAAC representative's refusal to disqualify David for the act of violence committed a decade before, the reading of the charges still had another desired effect. The majority of the

supporters of the third candidate, including Marcelino himself, moved to the side of Filo. The final "vote" resulted in the election of Filo as socio-delegado and president of the ejido commissariat (with a total of 51 votes) and the election by default of David and his slate to the vigilance council of the ejido (with 28 votes).

The DAAC official declared the termination of the general assembly and ejidatarios began to fire off skyrockets as they moved in the directions of the houses of the various candidates to share in meals and refreshments which had been prepared. The various functionaries were conducted first to the victory celebration of Filo's group and then, in turn, to be entertained at the houses of each of the other two candidates. David, still angry and embarrassed over the public reading of his "crime" remained sullen during our short stay at his house and, after the guests left, he quickly closed the front door and shuttered the windows. Before the DAAC official left the community, he insisted that all the functionaries visit my house to listen to the tape of the entire meeting. I had hoped that the recorder would be forgotten during the meeting; it obviously was not. The DAAC representative was especially pleased with his speech absolving David, and insisted on listening to it two more times before they left.

I returned to the main celebration and saw Filo standing in the midst of his supporters, talking and generally appearing quite pleased with his victory. Filo and his allies had apparently been quite confident of their chances of winning the election since they had prepared the most elaborate of the three meals. Softdrinks were accompanied by tacos filled with cochinito pibil, pork rubbed with

achiote (*Bixa orellana*) and other condiments, wrapped in banana and palm leaves, and steamed to a tender succulence over hot rocks in a dirt-covered pit.

Social Networks and the Politics of Candidacy

In a small, relatively endogamous community such as San Antonio, it is highly probable that a candidate will be related either consanguineally or afinally (or both) to the selected members of his slate and, as well, to the other candidates. Analyses of the social networks linking members of the three slates of candidates show this to be, in fact, the case. More important for the selection of actual running mates are associational and friendship ties as reflected by, primarily, residence and fictive kinship (*compadrazgo*). Not always close kinsmen, neighboring families do tend to associate more with one another and, through frequent interaction, to intensify existing bonds of friendship.

Compadrazgo provides added flexibility to initiate or further intensify ties with close kinsmen, neighbors, or other members of the community. For two of the three candidates for *comisariado ejidal*, slate members had been selected who had established ties with the candidate. That is, the candidate had been asked to serve as ceremonial sponsor for, and godparent to, the child or children of the running mate. In the case of the third candidate, most of the members of the slate shared common coparents (godparents of their children). In no case did a candidate select a running mate who was the godparent of his own child. While reciprocity exists between co-parents who are socio-economic equals, the obligations involved may be asymmetrical

(cf. Ingham, 1970). A co-parent assumes the financial obligation of paying for the mass and the clothing worn by the child. The parent, in turn, may be obligated to return at least some demonstration of respect for and loyalty to the co-parent.

The following diagrams illustrate the preponderance of actual consanguineal and affinal ties of kinship (Part A, of each diagram) which link planilla members and the candidates, and the additional ties of proximal residence² and fictive kinship or compadrazgo bonds (Part B, of each diagram). Planilla I, the first slate, shows the network of ties existing between Filo and his supporters; Planilla II corresponds to David Pech and his slate; and Planilla III represents Marcelino's group of running mates. Kin relations existing between the candidates themselves, where geneologically close, are also indicated on the diagram sets.

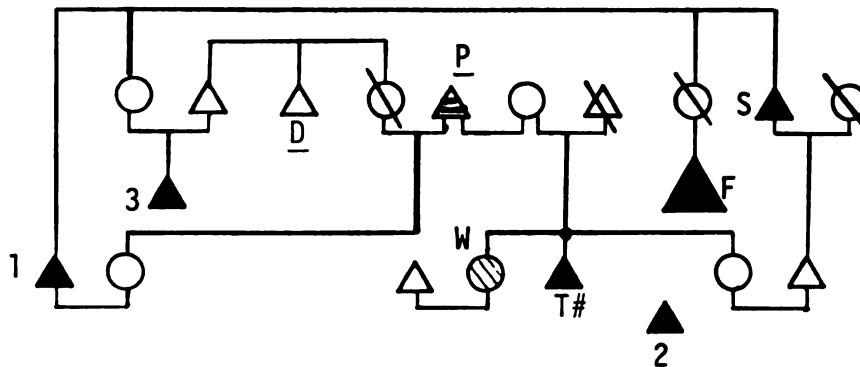
Planilla I. Filo, a bachelor, has been closely allied with the family unit of Don Peto for several years. Peto, former brother-in-law (SiHu) of David, the opposition candidate, remarried shortly following widowerhood. Filo, orphaned at the age of fifteen, takes his meals with the family unit of Peto and is generally treated as a member of the family. Filo does not pay for his meals but, in a spirit of more generalized reciprocity, he does periodically purchase corn and other staples which he leaves with the family. Not responding to specific demands, Filo determines when he will buy the staples and the quantity he will leave with the family.

Filo selected Francisco, the step-son of Peto, as Treasurer (T#) of his planilla. He based that selection on bonds of friendship, mutual respect (as observed in their frequent instances of interaction),

Figure 17.--Planilla I: Comisariado Ejidal.

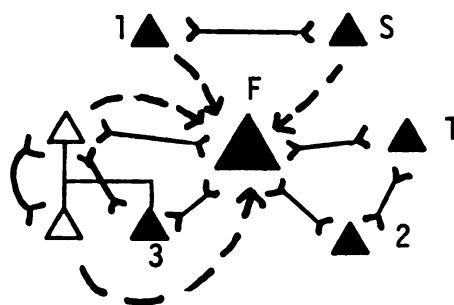
F. President (Filo) (37)^a
 S. Secretary (52)
 T. Treasurer (38)
 1. First Alternate (58)
 2. Second Alternate (42)
 3. Third Alternate (30)

D. David Pech, Opposition Candidate.
 W. Woman struck by David in 1960.
 #. Treasurer presented DAAC official with municipal record of attack on his sister, W.
 P. Filo (a bachelor) eats with Peto's residence group.



Part A

a. Age of individual



Part B

SYMBOLS USED

- Proximal Residence (no more than one intervening house).
 - - - -> Compadrazgo Ties (Parent→Coparent/Godparent).

and reinforced by the proximity of residence and the kinship ties existing between Francisco and Filo's "adopted" family. Since neither Filo nor his treasurer have children, there had been no opportunity to further intensify the bonds of friendship by adding those of compadrazgo.

Filo selected his two maternal uncles (MoBr) as running mates (S. and 1., on the diagram). Both of these individuals had, in the past, selected Filo to sponsor their children for Hetzmek ceremonies and, in the case of the first alternate (1.), to sponsor one of his children for a First Communion ceremony. The uncle named as first alternate had also married the daughter of Peto who was related to David (David's SiDa). Filo chose as his second alternate (2.) an individual who was not originally from the community but who had nevertheless become a member of the ejido several years before. He had married into a San Antonio family, becoming both neighbor and friend of Filo and Francisco.

Rounding out the planilla or slate of candidates, Filo selected the escribante (appointed, recording secretary) of the ejido as the third alternate (3.). Rodrigo, the escribante, was the unmarried BrSo of the opposition candidate (David), and was Filo's MoSiSo. Filo is coparent to both the father and the brother of Rodrigo, with Máximo, the brother, an especially close friend of Filo's. Filo had sponsored one of the younger brothers of Rodrigo and Máximo for the Hetzmek and had acted as sponsor for the Baptism of two of Máximo's children. As pointed out in the earlier chapter on compadrazgo, Máximo would probably have been included on the planilla except for the fact that

he desired an appointive, salaried position as work inspector more. Only the president of an elected planilla receives a salary as authorized by the Bangrario.

The links existing between Filo and his running mates emphasized a rather diffuse mixture of variables such as kinship, residence, ritual ties, and friendship. Francisco, of all the members of the planilla, proved an especially important ally and supporter of Filo's candidacy. Francisco ran the governmentally-sponsored CONASUP0 store and, in addition, was the comisariado municipal, a representative position (similar to that of constable) appointed by the president of the municipality of Maax. Using his position as comisariado municipal, Francisco had obtained the municipal record concerning the fine levied against David for striking a woman of the community (Francisco's sister) with a rock. Francisco had given the notarized report to the DAAC official and was, therefore, the key participant in the attempt to disqualify and discredit David. This action was undertaken in spite of the fact that he and David were related affinally (married to sisters as shown on the following diagram) and in spite of the fact that the wife of Francisco had sponsored the daughter of David for a Hetzmek ceremony. The two sisters were co-parents (comadres) but David and Francisco acknowledged no particular bond of compadrazgo as actually linking the two of them.

Francisco proved to be an important ally to Filo in a number of ways. He had long been the salaried employee of the pequeño propietario, operating the decorticating factory's motors and responsible for their maintenance as factory machinist. The owner obviously valued Francisco as a conscientious and dependable worker

and, as a result, Francisco was assumed by many to be one of the more influential links between the members of the community and the pequeño propietario. In 1967, the owner had paid for the installation of electric lines from Xamach to the decorticating factory; he offered to financially assist in the installation of lights in San Antonio but only if the community agreed to make Francisco responsible for handling the repayment of the loan.³ Although the size of San Antonio was less than the minimum entitling it to a CONASUPO outlet, Francisco had expressed the need for a source of lower-priced staples to the pequeño propietario and with Don Manuel's influence in Mérida, the outlet was nevertheless authorized. Francisco thus established as an influential member of the community, as one who had demonstrated his ability to manage funds, his selection as treasurer added further weight to Filo's chances of victory. Francisco, although working steadily for the owner, continued to perform minor weeding operations in the ejido to maintain his eligibility as an ejidatario but, judging from the fact that his ejido income did not increase following elections, he had no individual financial interest in Filo's winning. Francisco did express his own personal belief that David would be a poor choice to head the ejido.⁴

Planilla II. David Pech's choice of running mates exhibited less reliance on immediate kinship, and more emphasis placed on the factors of proximal residence and compadrazgo. The individuals chosen as secretary (David's SiSo) and treasurer (David's SiDaDaHu) were not only related to David but, more importantly, both had requested David to serve as baptismal sponsor of their children. Illustrative of one tactic directed against Filo's support group, both were also related

Figure 18.--Planilla II: Consejo de Vigilancia.

D. President (David Pech) (41)^a

S. Secretary (39)

T. Treasurer (25)

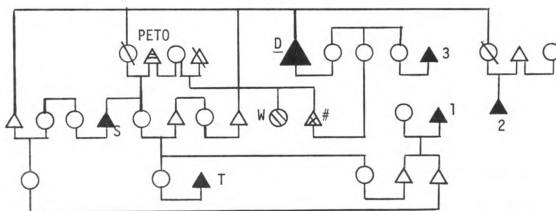
1. First Alternate (50)

2. Second Alternate (27)

3. Third Alternate (55)

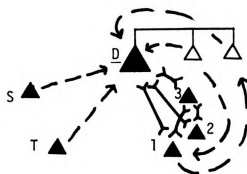
W. Woman struck by David in 1960.

#. Brother of W. who presented DAAC official with municipal record of attack (Francisco).



Part A

a. Age of individual.



Part B

to Peto and Filo; the secretary was Peto's son, and the treasurer had married Peto's DaDa (who was, at once, Filo's MoBrDa).

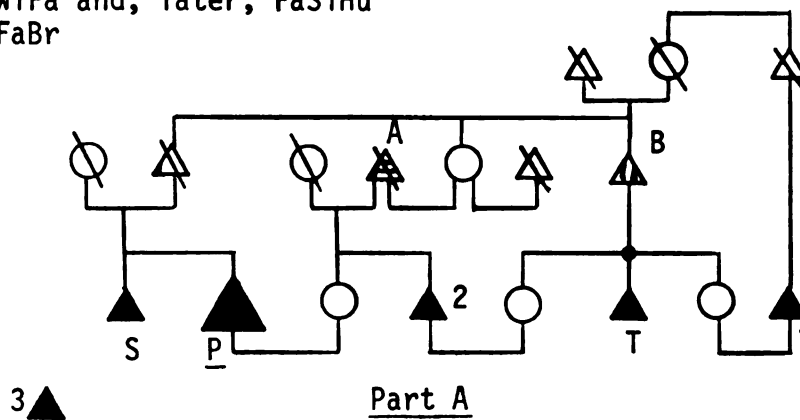
All three of the alternates reside in the immediate vicinity of David. David was observed to interact more with his sister's son, the second alternate, and shared less intensive ties of friendship with the third alternate (David's WiSiHu) and the first alternate. The first alternate, not a close relative of David's, shared ties of compadrazgo with two of David's four brothers, the only two who had also requested David to sponsor their own children. The third alternate shared affinal ties not only with David but with Francisco as well (all three had married sisters). The third alternate also had Francisco as a co-parent, making him one of the parties to David's attempt to split the alliance group of Filo.

It would seem that David's strategy had been to include an eclectic slate of running mates which would undermine the alliance bases of the other candidates. Attempting spatial representation, David (who lives on the Xamach side of town) selected a secretary who lived on the edge of the community plaza, and a treasurer who lived on the side of town closest to Maax. As noted above, these individuals also shared close ties of kinship with Filo, the major opposition candidate. David's strategy was only partly successful and, in fact, one of David's brothers and at least two of his nephews (BrSo) voted for Filo.

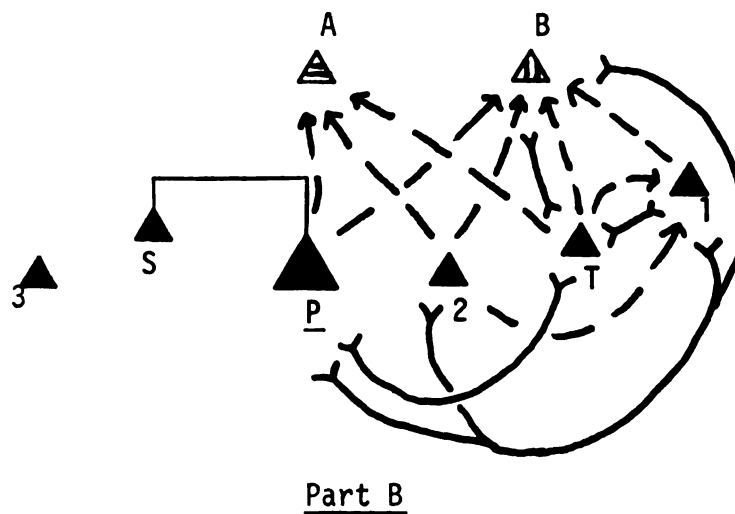
Planilla III. The third candidate, Marcelino, received fewer votes than the other two. He had relied more on kin relations within a fairly closed family network and this, rather obviously, reduced

Figure 19.--Planilla III: Third Candidate.

- P. President (Marcelino) (50)^a
 S. Secretary (37)
 T. Treasurer (43)
 1. First Alternate (47)
 2. Second Alternate (43)
 3. Third Alternate (53)
 A. P's WiFa and, later, FaSiHu
 B. P's FaBr



a. Age of individual.



his chances to win the election. Marcelino selected his brother as secretary, a cousin (FaBrSo) as treasurer, the spouse of a cousin (FaBrDaHu, who was also FaMoBrSo to Marcelino) as first alternate, and his brother-in-law (WiBr, who was also Marcelino's FaSiHuSo at the time) as the second alternate. All of the above, except for Marcelino's brother, reside within a close section of the community, thus sharing neighborhood ties as well as those of kinship.

Fictive kin ties do not directly link Marcelino with the others but, following an older practise (described in the previous chapter), several of the running mates (Marcelino, his treasurer, and first two alternates) share two common ascending relatives (actual or surrogate) as their co-parents: Marcelino's father's brother (B, indicated on the diagram) and another individual (A) who is, at once, his uncle (FaSiHu) and father-in-law (WiFa).⁵ Marcelino explained that he had been orphaned at an early age and that he and his brother had been raised by their paternal uncle (B) and were very close to their aunt (FaSi) and her husband (A). Marcelino stated that he, his brother, and the children of his uncle (B) were almost as close as true brothers and sisters. In the context of this closeness and affectation of "sibling" ties, the treasurer becomes a "sibling" and the first and second alternates become the spouses of affected "siblings." These "sibling" ties are reinforced, again, and are complemented by bonds of fictive kinship (compadrazgo) and vecindad or proximity of residence.

The remaining member of Marcelino's slate, the third alternate, was the single example of an attempt to extend the alliance

network and cross-cut other family and neighborhood ties in the community. The third alternate, holding the lowest position on the slate, was an individual who had been president of the ejido (1955-1958), who was related to Filo (Filo's MoSiHu), and who was also related to Filo's treasurer (Francisco's FaSiSo). These kin ties were not observed, however, to have been reinforced by ties of close friendship, and the inclusion of this member on Marcelino's slate seemed to have little effect on the community voting pattern.

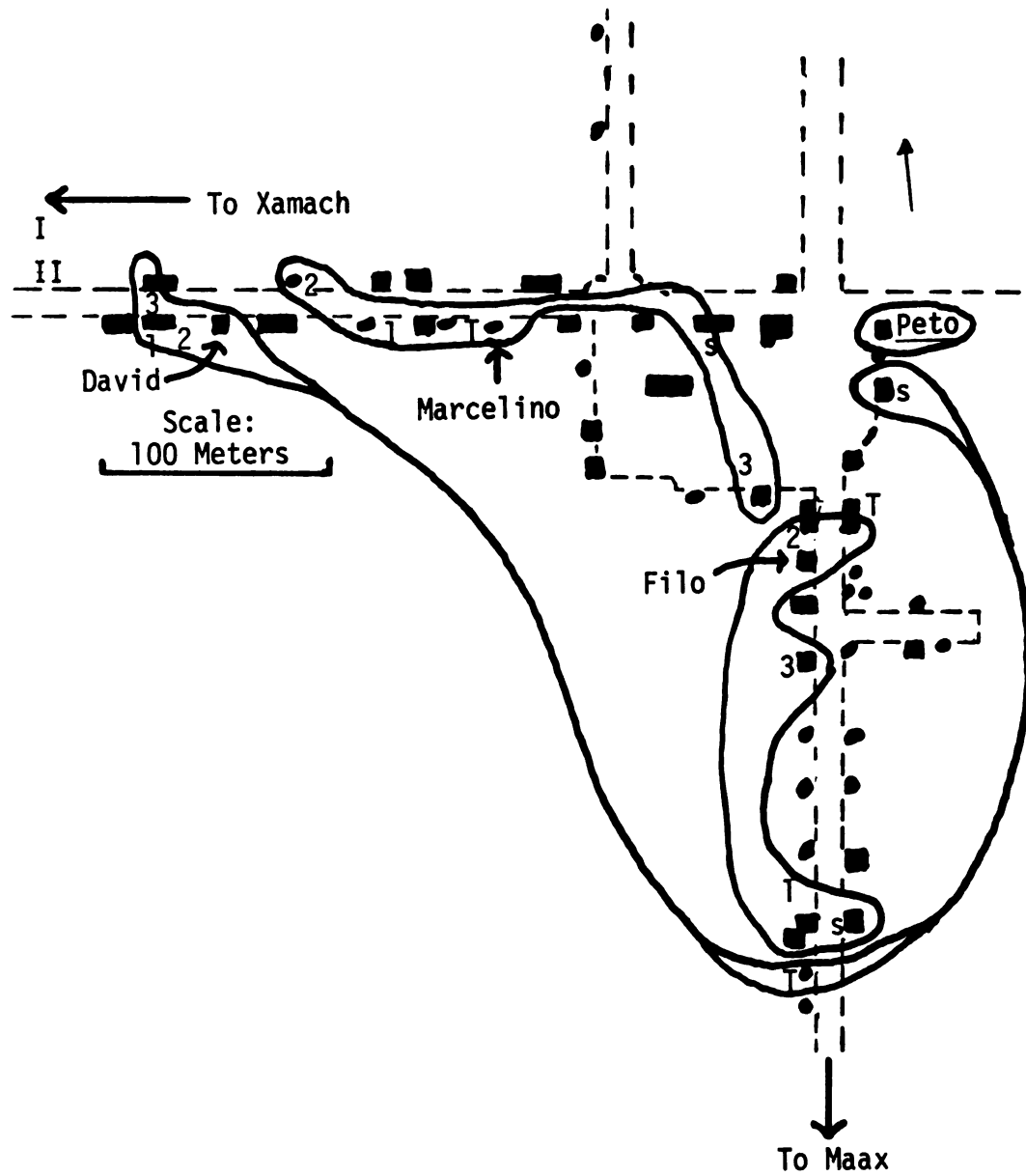
The following map (Figure 20) illustrates the spatial distribution of members of the various slates. David's attempt to gain support from the southern edge of the community was effectively blocked by Filo's inclusion of his two uncles. With the capitulation of Marcelino, Filo had support from the majority of the central portion of the community.

Candidacy and the Tactics of Image Management

The two major candidates were more successfully able to select running mates who were not only friends, relatives, compadres, and/or neighbors, but also individuals who held multiple ties with members of the opposition. Rather than exercising reliance on some "automatic" principle of alliance (such as kinship) between easily identified groups, the multiplicity of existing ties allowed greater stress to be placed on friendship or personal estimations of the individual candidates as a guide for voting.

The number of supporters in Filo's alliance group increased significantly with the forced concession of the weaker third candidate.

Figure 20.--Candidacy and the Use of Space.



Filo and Francisco (treasurer and comisariado municipal) had conspired to disqualify the major challenger, David Pech. The public reading of the official record concerning David's violent attack against Francisco's sister served to remind the ejidatarios of David's occasional⁶ tendency to verbally abuse and physically assault other members of the community.

Following the elections, while at Filo's victory celebration, Peto, Francisco, and Maximo (Filo's compadre and MoSiSo, and David's BrSo) were quite explicit about the image of David's violent nature. They maintained that David and his brothers long tried to control the ejido through the use or threatened use of coercive force and that their "tyranny" over the ejidatarios was finally coming to an end. David, never winning the position of comisariado ejidal, had previously served two terms as president of the consejo de vigilancia (1958-1961, 1964-1967). David's older brother, Vena, had won the position of comisariado three times in the past (1944-1947, 1947-1950, 1961-1964) and had served an additional three terms as head of the consejo (1953-1955, 1955-1958, 1967-1970). Once Vena's younger brother was able to run for office, they clearly began to run for office during alternate terms, attempting but never achieving the successive control of the ejido that they so obviously desired.

In an apparent attempt to smooth over the difficulties existing between his brother and the brother of the woman attacked, Vena Pech had included Francisco as secretary of his victorious slate in 1961. Francisco had accepted the position but no lasting link or bond of friendship had resulted. Francisco voiced a dislike for both brothers,

characterizing them both as individuals who tended to abuse others as a result of their frequent drinking on week-ends. Francisco proclaimed with some pleasure that the Pech brothers (five in all) were aging members of the community and that, as such, they no longer had the physical agility or the stamina to successfully coerce members into supporting their candidacies.

Filo and Francisco actively began their campaign against David several days prior to the election; denouncing David and the "tyrannical" practices of the Pech brothers in general. They especially emphasized to their close friends and kinsmen the need to resist coercive threats as employed by David and his allies. No examples of the use of coercion were observed immediately prior to the elections and, while having some apparent basis in fact, the image projected by Filo's group of the opposition was given a great deal of emphasis during the campaign. The reading of the charges before the meeting of ejidatarios served to underscore the pre-election conversations and campaigning and to convince or remind the ejidatarios that David's violent image was not merely an impression, but a documented fact. To achieve their goal of victory, Filo and Francisco manipulated the extra-community resources of the municipal center and the DAAC representative. The president of the municipality of Maax provided the notarized document of the decade-old charges and report of the disposition of the case, and the DAAC official was utilized to embarrass publicly and discredit, if not disqualify, David as a viable candidate.

As discussed above, Marcelino's candidacy did not constitute a serious threat to the other candidates except insofar as it prevented either from gaining the clear majority needed to validate the election. With Marcelino's declaration of support for Filo, David's loss was sealed. The close network of kinship ties which connected Marcelino with the majority of his allies resulted in a total of twenty three of his group supporting Filo, and only two of the group moving to support David.

By all superficial appearances, David had accepted his defeat rather well. By the time he and Filo had assumed their respective offices, they seemed to have achieved at least some measure of accommodation. Observations made of the two working in the ejido office revealed little evidence of other than mildly strained amicability between them. They seemed to function cooperatively together and to have subordinated personal animosity to the general goal of administering the ejido. On one occasion, however, six months after the ejido elections, Filo found himself in a direct and public confrontation with both David and his brother Vena Pech.

The Prorogation and Non-Resolution of Conflict

Vena Pech's son, who had taken a job with a gasoline station in the southern part of the state, returned to visit his parents on Sunday, March 15, 1971. Celebrating his return after several weeks of absence, Vena and Vena Jr. began to drink quite heavily and by evening, Vena Jr. had become ill. Vena, worried about his son's severe abdominal pains, and the inability to relieve the pains with

locally available medicines (the son had been given, over the course of a few hours, cooking oil, oil of balsam, an herb tea, and Alka Seltzer). Wanting to take his son to see a doctor, Vena approached Filo to ask for financial assistance to get his son to the ejidatario hospital in Mérida.

The major problem, since our own vehicle was in Mérida for repairs, concerned transportation. Vena wanted Filo to hire a vehicle from the nearby town of Xamach and to pay for the trip from ejido funds. Filo explained that Vena would have to pay for the transportation and apply to the Bangrario for medical reimbursement. Since Vena Jr. had not been listed as working in the ejido for several weeks, Vena feared the Bangrario would not authorize reimbursement and therefore wanted Filo to handle the payment and application to the Bangrario. Filo agreed to assist in the payment, from his own salary, but refused to do more than attempt reimbursement, holding Vena financially responsible if his efforts should prove unsuccessful. Vena interpreted Filo as denying him rights to medical assistance and in the middle of the town plaza, late in the evening, Vena began to insult Filo verbally.

Vena accused Filo of hating the Pech family and threatened to hold Filo personally responsible for the death of his eldest son. Filo reiterated his offer to assist in payment but explained that he could not absorb completely the cost of the transportation. Filo estimated it would cost fifty pesos, nearly half of his week's salary, just to get Vena Jr. to a doctor in a town fourteen kilometers distant. Filo suggested the closer doctor, fearing that Vena Jr. would not be

admitted to the hospital in Mérida (a distance of thirty kilometers from San Antonio). Filo also knew that the closer doctor, called "el socio" by the community members, gave credit and Vena Jr. would be treated even though his father did not have enough money at the moment.

At this point, David appeared in the plaza, listened to his brother for a few minutes and then joined in the verbal attack on Filo. Filo declared again that he would "loan" the money to take Vena Jr. to the closer doctor and asked David to bicycle to Xamach to search for a vehicle. David left and Vena continued, now shouting at Filo, and finally threatening to beat Filo up if he did not help his son. It was clear that Vena knew the family would have to pay the costs of "el socio" and could not attempt free treatment in Mérida unless they were willing to gamble on not recovering the expenses involved. Filo maintained there were no ejido funds on hand, but that he would assist in payment "from his own pocket."

David, instead of going to Xamach, returned after a short time and began once again to verbally assault Filo (David had also been "celebrating" that Sunday evening). David accused Filo of only providing assistance to those who had voted for him in the elections, denying assistance to all others including, especially, the members of the Pech family. David, quite agitated by this time, threatened to call a general assembly of the ejidatarios the next day to remove Filo from office. Filo replied that he was ready to respond to David's charges and that he would indeed welcome an assembly meeting and the chance to "finally clear some things up" (left purposefully vague).

David became quite excited at that point and, deciding to settle the "problem" that very night, proceeded to remove his shirt.

Filo looked at David and stated that he would not fight David unless struck first. He declared that as "the authority" in town, he would then take the matter to the municipal president and adjudication and resolution. Filo had been appointed comisariado municipal by the newly-elected president of the municipality of Maax and therefore had both economic access to power (as president of the ejido), and a power base in the municipality as local civil authority. Referring to the latter office, David accused Filo of seeking the appointment to control the community and called Filo a coward for hiding behind his legal threats. With that, Filo told David to go ahead and hit him if he really wanted a fight, adding, "you better make it a good one since it will be both the first and last punch you will throw!" David, still shirtless, continued to insult Filo but never actually launched the threatened first punch.

At this point a woman, Doña Tela, who had been standing with other observers on the periphery of the main participants, decided to enter the argument. Tela, originally from Maax, had lived with an ejidatario (common-law spouses) for several years. They had one child of their own and Tela had another son (25 years of age at the time) by a previous husband. Tela had long demanded that her older son be given work in the ejido in spite of the fact that by birth he was not entitled to ejidatario status. Being an outsider, originally a town dweller, she was both an aggressive and vocal individual, attending even the otherwise all-male ejido meetings to complain

about the exclusion of her son from the ejido. The following excerpts from field notes describe her involvement in the argument and the subsequent events related to the confrontation.

Doña Tela approached and began shouting obscenities at David and Vena, calling them "hijos de puta" (bastards) and accusing them of continuing with their usual Sunday-night "pendejadas." She told them they had their nerve trying to pry money out of the ejido when Vena Jr. had his own health insurance with the company employing him. Tela stated that the ejido had never helped her and that she had never accepted a penny from the ejido; Vena and David were, furthermore, "sin vergüenzas" (shameless) to ask for so much from the ejido when they themselves always had money to buy liquor.

David made a threatening move towards Tela, saying that he wouldn't take any shit from her. Tela replied that she was not afraid of David and that he was just the type to try and beat up women since that was all he was good at doing (obvious reminder of the attack on Francisco's sister). David made another threatening move and Tela shouted that if he tried anything, he would get a rock in the head.

Tela finally started to move away, still muttering. She said something about David, Vena, and the Pech family in general, which I missed, but which set the girls walking behind her to screaming and giggling with disbelief.

José Ek (neighbor to Filo and Francisco) approached David, somewhat uncertain of his movements since he had also been drinking. David, brushing him aside, accused José of being on Filo's side simply because the ejido had assisted paying for the new thatching on his son's house. José, denying that he could be bought, said that as far as he was concerned, they could burn the house down and he would still be on Filo's side. David told him to go ahead and burn his house down, and kept pushing him. José reached into his pocket, pulled out a box of matches, and began moving towards his house. Simón and Popó (son and son-in-law) grabbed José, took away his matches, and tried to subdue him. José broke away and went running into his house with Simón and Popó close behind. The crowd that had gathered in the plaza began moving towards José's house to see if he really would burn it. Vena began moving towards his son's house and David left the plaza to head home himself. Filo was left standing alone under a street light. He just stood there for a few minutes, shifting from one foot to another, looking very alone and very depressed about the whole sequence of events. The street light seemed like a spotlight on him.

Tela, moving towards her own house, shouted one last insult; stating something about the fact that drunks had no right to expect assistance from the ejido just because they couldn't hold their liquor. I had been standing next to Francisco and

he turned to me and said: "Well, Carlitos, you're seeing this town for what it is, and you have seen how we've been tyrannized by this family (Pech)."

David and Vena had both sought allies to assist them and, returning to the plaza, a short and sporadic battle ensued between the Pech group and, José and his relatives who had also returned to the plaza. The latter group was especially incensed at David's goading José into attempting to commit arson. One individual would swing or kick at a member of the opposition and then quickly run back to his group of supporters. When it was suddenly rumored that Simón had a knife hidden under his shirt, the women of the community entered the affair and began, together with their children, to drag off their respective spouses, brothers, and/or fathers. The various participants continued to shout threats and obscenities at the opponents yet only weakly resisted the efforts of the females to separate them and end the conflict.

Surprisingly, the plaza emptied itself quickly, leaving Vena, Filo, Francisco, and myself to return to the problem of Vena Jr.'s illness. During the confrontation in the plaza someone had bicycled to Xamach and the ice delivery truck arrived to take Vena Jr. to see "el socio." We helped Vena Jr. into the cab of the truck and I rode in back with Vena, Filo, and Vena's nephew (BrSo), Máximo, who was also Filo's friend and compadre (Filo was baptismal godparent to two of Máximo's children). For the duration of the trip, Máximo scolded his tired and much subdued uncle for creating such a scene and fight in the town plaza. Vena protested without much enthusiasm but in the main, listened to his nephew. Once we reached the town, Máximo

disappeared down the street as we waited for the doctor to open his door. "El socio" proceeded to examine Vena Jr. and chastised him for drinking too much as he gave him an injection of what he described as a combination of vitamins and antibiotics.⁷

The treatment completed, we had to wait several minutes until Máximo finally returned with a bottle of aguardiente (a cheap, but powerful liquor made from cane sugar). The town was closed and quiet for the evening, but Máximo obviously had a friend. On the way back to San Antonio, the bottle was passed among us (only Filo refused to drink) as Máximo gave an increasingly impassioned speech to convince Vena that he should apologize for insulting and abusing Filo.

Máximo stressed the need for all ejidatarios of the community to work together to solve their common problems and chastised his uncle for endangering that basis for cooperation. Vena agreed with Máximo that the combined health and financial problems experienced that night were not peculiar to the Pech family but were, in fact, problems experienced by all the members of the community. Vena listened to his nephew, took modest drinks from the bottle, and finally apologized profusely to a still-angry Filo. Vena declared he had been wrong in accusing Filo of misconduct and then blamed his actions on David. He referred to his brother as a trouble-maker and as the one who had actually pushed him into trying to pick a fight with Filo and several other members of the community.

The next day, Monday, Filo began to drink heavily with a few of his close friends. He finally went to the house of David in the afternoon and began shouting for David to come out into the street

and settle their "problem." David claimed that he was sick (nursing a hangover, perhaps), and refused to come out of his house. He told Filo that he was embarrassed about his actions of the previous evening (and that the anthropologist had seen the whole affair) and apologized for his behavior. Filo told David that if he were insulted again, he would proceed to beat David soundly and then lodge a formal complaint with the municipal president. David appealed to Filo to forget the whole thing and declared that he was giving up liquor forever. Filo finally returned to his own house and, understandably, retired quite early that evening.

The ejidatarios of San Antonio are not mystically committed to pacifism, but are pragmatically accustomed to the exercise of reserve in normal interaction. The above example of the use of coercive force to attempt to resolve a conflict was exceptional; interpersonal relations between individuals who are not obviously close friends is normally formal and at least superficially polite. Following the event in the plaza, people discussed the actions of the participants, condemning the Pech brothers and José Ek and his family for actually coming to blows. Within a few days, all of the participants had returned to the reserved pattern of interaction, seemingly mindless of the threats, insults, and blows that had been exchanged such a short time before. Uncontrolled hostility and continual or constant recourse to the employment of physical force are potentially destructive of the survival chances of the members of a small community such as San Antonio.

Public opinion and individual distaste for the injurious and disruptive effects of physical assault reduce both the frequency and severity of outbreaks of a violent nature. During the ten month period of fieldwork in the community, only three instances of actual physical contact were observed. All three cases involved brief exchanges of blows, all three cases occurred after one or both parties had ingested alcohol, and in all three cases, the participants were almost immediately separated by friends and immediate relatives and conducted to their respective houses.⁸

Alcohol is not itself the cause of physical violence but is, rather, used as a vehicle for the reduction of tension which builds up between people whose personalities conflict, who feel they have been treated unfairly by others, or who are simply frustrated by the struggle to survive on meager incomes. The initiation of violent acts or drinking itself is neither approved nor excused, but it is tolerated: so long as a resulting incident is contained and the injuries temporary in nature. The limits of that tolerance in San Antonio were best illustrated by the case of David striking Francisco's sister. David wanting to rectify a grievance involving her husband, had not intended to injure her. People in the community agreed that it was an "accident" but rather than excusing David's act, it made the act even more intolerable in the eyes of others. Likewise, the event which had taken place in the plaza approached the limits of intolerance; it had escalated nearly out of control at the time, and threatened to escalate further the following day. Filo had indicated his unwillingness to tolerate David's actions and threatened to report

them to the municipal authorities for civil action, to report them to the DAAC authorities to affect David's removal from office in the ejido, and to retaliate physically should David persist in his anti-social behavior. Since Filo had greater access to extra-community power bases (as comisariado of the ejido and municipality), and since Filo was younger and stouter than David, the latter capitulated rather meekly to Filo's demands. David's embarrassment was real and he remained secluded in his house for several days following the event.

"Justice" and the Tactics of Protection

The case of Don Vicente further demonstrated that only as a last resort would individuals involve extra-community authorities to resolve a community conflict or problem. The ejidatarios actually perceive the notions of "justice," as defined by institutions of the larger society (fine, incarceration, etc.), to be unjust in that they are viewed as economically and socially destructive to the family unit. The revelation of the missing ejido funds served to bring the local concepts of tolerance and intolerance of social behavior into greater focus. In this case, the individual was not threatened with extra-community actions, as in the case of David, but was actually protected by the other members of the community by their redefinition of the missing money to the status of a "loan."

During his term as treasurer of the ejido (1964-1967), Vicente had utilized two hundred and forty pesos of ejido funds to cover medical expenses incurred by himself and his family. At the time of fieldwork, Vicente continued to suffer ill health and his youngest

daughter (b. 1960) had already suffered brain damage related to what was described as a "congenital heart disorder." The daughter appeared to be mentally retarded and the family had to care for her constantly, frequently taking her to Mérida for treatment of her disorder. Vicente could not, from his ejido income, cover the costs of travel and medicine which were, to him and his family, necessary to keep the daughter alive.

Vicente was a respected elder member of San Antonio (47 years old at the time of the study) and was acknowledged as the community poet. Vicente frequently wrote the verses to the corridos and rancheras⁹ sung by groups of community youths during the Saint's Day celebration of the community. Vicente had also served as ejido president (1953-1955) and it was during the latter part of his administration (1955) that the ejido planted one of its higher density henequen fields (80 plants per mecate). (DAAC Archives, Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera).

Following the suggestion of the DAAC official, the ejidatarios held a special meeting to deal with the problem of the ejido deficit. Without voiced opposition, the "loan" was cancelled and a letter was sent to DAAC for inclusion in the ejido files. The letter included the statement that "since compañero Vicente continues to experience poor health and cannot return the money borrowed, they (the ejidatarios) have therefore agreed to regard the aforementioned debt as completely cancelled." (DAAC Archives, 10/20/1970) Informant interviews concerning the subject of the debt revealed a general consensus of opinion: Vicente suffered from a severe economic

affliction which could befall any one of them, i.e. recurrent and prolonged illnesses within the immediate family unit. While not condoning the uncontrolled individual use of ejido funds, the informants agreed that, given Vicente's problems and his position in the ejido at the time, the temptation was understandable and his behavior tolerable.

During the discussion of the missing funds at the elections meeting, I heard comments alluding to accusations of an actual (emically defined) embezzlement of ejido funds. Julio, elected president of the ejido in 1967, had been accused of siphoning off approximately \$6,000 pesos from the ejido payroll during the course of his first six months in office. Julio had denied the accusation (and continued to deny it when interviewed) but was nevertheless forced to resign as comisariado ejidal. A group of ejidatarios (which included David, Filo and Francisco) threatened to call a general assembly and request the presence of a DAAC official to hear the charges. Julio, thus threatened by legal action which would most probably result in his imprisonment, accepted the ultimatum and resigned as president of the ejido.

Julio refused to discuss the details of the incident except to reaffirm his innocence of the charges. Filo and Francisco, discussing the charges, expressed the suspicion that Julio had actually received only a small portion of the money and that the rest probably was divided between the field representative of the Bangrario and the president of the vigilance council (Vena Pech). When asked if any of the money had been recovered, they stated that Julio had paid back

approximately six hundred pesos (which he had borrowed from Vena) but that he had most likely spent the rest buying liquor for friends in nearby towns. They stated that many ejidatarios wanted to charge Julio publicly with the theft but that they finally decided to give him the chance to resign. Julio was portrayed as a weak individual and as one who was probably talked into the embezzlement by "those" (by implication either Vena or the Bangrario official) who could have assisted in the manipulation of the work records and the disguise of inflated ejido salary statements. According to the informants, the main goal was to stop the drain on ejido funds by removing the president from office.

The accusers felt that Julio should be punished, but not his family. If extra-community authorities were notified of the accusations and imprisonment resulted from the charges, Julio's family would have found itself in severe economic difficulties. Julio, his wife, and their six children occupied a small house in the solar of his father-in-law and the burden of supporting seven individuals in Julio's absence would have befallen the wife's father. In this case, the selection of civil revenge over local settlement would have endangered the survival of eleven individuals, at the least. In the general opinion of other members of the ejido, this would have been an unjust solution to a problem of injustice. On June 28, 1968, the Department of Agrarian Affairs received a short letter advising them that Julio had resigned because of "personal difficulties" and that his first alternate had assumed the position of president (DAAC Archives).

In 1970, Julio was observed to be on the periphery of social and economic interaction in San Antonio. He was given a normal work-load in the ejido but was totally excluded from working on the pequeña propiedad. Don Manuel, the owner, knew of the accusations and wanted to eject Julio from the community. He finally acceded to the request of Julio's father-in-law (who was also sacristan or caretaker of the community chapel) and the other ejidatarios to let him continue to support his family and live in the community. Agreeing not to create further hardship, Don Manuel insisted that Julio was the sole responsibility of the ejido and that he could expect neither assistance nor work from the pequeña propiedad.

The Bangrario, The Media, and the Henequen Ejidos

Prefatory to describing interaction between the Bangrario and San Antonio, it is necessary to examine briefly perceived images concerning the role of that institution in Yucatán. The major newspaper of the State, the Diario de Yucatán, periodically accuses the Bangrario of maladministration of the economy of the henequen zone, fraudulent activities, and secrecy in withholding information from the press and the public in general. The apparent policy response of the Bangrario (as determined by its director) is to "batten down," to try and protect itself from the attacks by not chancing misquotes or use of materials out of context by the media.

While the Bangrario does exert a great deal of control over the henequen ejidos and, in effect, the economy of Yucatán, it is not totally immune to counter-efforts of control and influence on the part

of the media, the politicians, and the ejidatarios. Typically, as complaints from the various sectors increase in accusations of "irregularities," and as the ejidatarios begin to demonstrate more actively¹⁰ against the Bangrario, the government finally takes action-- usually replacing the director of the Bank.¹¹ In 1970, the newly-elected President of Mexico saw to it that a new director, Faustino Tinajero Miramontes, was named to head the Bangrario. Reporting the inauguration of Tinajero as director, the *Diario de Yucatán* quoted Tinajero as stating:

Since we (of the Bangrario) are only human, we are capable of committing many errors, but we will never make them in bad faith. I offer to be your friend, in the Bank there will be no mysteries, and I ask you to point out my mistakes as friends. We must work together, because Yucatán's problem is not that of any one group: it is everyone's problem, and no one person can resolve it alone (*Diario de Yucatán*, 12/12/1970; my translation).

In an editorial footnote to the report of Tinajero's inaugural address, the *Diario de Yucatan* launched the first of a continuing series of critiques concerning the operation of the Bangrario in Yucatán:

(1) The DIARIO (de Yucatán), which has recorded concrete facts, such as the 18 million (peso) fraude and other irregularities which have been brought to the attention of the public through these columns, reaffirms again that its pages are open to all good Yucatecans who, for the benefit of this State, are willing to accept this plausible invitation of the new director of the Banco Agrario (to point out errors committed) (*Diario de Yucatán*, 12/12/1970, my translation).

The *Diario* mention of the "18 million" pesos refers to an earlier accusation that officials of the Banjidal (1955-1962) and the Bangrario (1962-1963) had conspired to defraude ejidatarios of that amount of money through the manipulation and private sale of ejido fiber (cf. Mario Menendez Rodríguez, 1964). A federal investigation of this accusation, if undertaken, was never reported in the media and the

only result of the charges was to affect a replacement of the then director of the Bangrario (1963). Regardless of its basis in fact (or lack thereof), the effect of publishing reminders of the accusation has served to contribute to the state of mutual distrust, suspicion, and hostility between the general public (via the media), the Bangrario, and the ejidatarios of the henequen zone of Yucatán.

Shortly after taking office, Tinajero announced that he would begin a program to rid the ejidos of the "aviadores" and "voladores," freeloaders, who were robbing the true ejidatarios of their wages. By the beginning of March, Filo and David had heard rumors that Tinajero meant to terminate the payment of salaries to the officials of the ejidos, making them work the fields for their subsistence in addition to managing the ejido. I accompanied the two of them to the Bangrario office in Mérida (3/4/71) and by chance, we were able to get into a meeting that took place between Tinajero, the Liga de Comunidades Agrarias secretary (Yucatecan branch of the C.N.C., or National Confederation of Peasants) and a group of nearly one hundred ejidatarios who had also come to investigate the various rumored changes in the pattern of payment. Tinajero entered the room and began to explain his policy to the assembled ejidatarios.

Tinajero stated that he . . . knew there were a lot of "voladores" in the ejidos, people who were listed to receive money and who were either not entitled to it, or who didn't even exist. He held up his hand and declared that everyone knew "these workers": "José" (thumb), "Juan" (index finger), "Pedro," etc. He was indicating the suspicion that many ejido officials place non-existent names on the work lists and then, pretending they are individuals who neither read nor write, "sign" their names with their finger-prints, with the official in charge using all ten of his fingers and collecting the ten salaries himself. Filo, in an aside to me, explained that he knew this had occurred in

one of the town ejidos near San Antonio and that the officers of the ejido split the extra money to keep them all quiet.

Tinajero then mentioned the ejido of Izamal and the fact that the officers of the ejido had robbed an estimated one million pesos. He stated that they listed, and collected for, "sick people who were not sick, widows who were married, bar owners, bakers, and even prostitutes were collecting money and keeping it from the true peasants, the true ejidatarios. . . ." Tinajero maintained that he did not want to put ejidatarios in jail, that was not the aim or goal of the Bangrario policies. The goal was to rid the ejidos of the bandits, of the people who were taking money from the peasants; to get rid of the people who were not legitimate ejidatarios and release Bangrario funds only for payment of actual work performed by true ejidatarios.

Summarizing, Tinajero said that no-one could appear on the work lists unless he or she was an accredited ejidatario (as determined by DAAC). Several ejidatarios asked about their sons who helped them in their work but who were not yet old enough for ejidatario status or who were unable to be assigned "dotation units" due to the unavailability of land. Tinajero replied that they could not be included on the lists, but the work would be listed as if the father had completed it.

Tinajero attempted to explain that the family unit would earn the same amount of money during the week, so long as the work was actually performed. In explaining this point, he tried to give an example of an average head of household and said "let's take, for example, a head of household, let's call him José Sánchez. . . ." At this point, several ejidatarios gasped audibly and began mumbling to each other. Tinajero did not understand their amusement over his use of "Sánchez" (Tinajero apparently has read Oscar Lewis). There simply would have been no such response had he said "Pech," "Ek," "Canché," "Cutz," or any of a number of more common Mayan surnames. The ejidatarios were amused by the obvious illustration of the fact that Tinajero was an outsider, a "Mexican" rather than a "Yucatecan." . . .

One ejidatario made a point which brought no response from Tinajero. He stated that people in Mexico (Mexico City) would see only the figures concerning workers and income, and decide that the ejidatarios of Yucatán were earning decent salaries when, in actuality, one name might represent two or more workers (and their families) in total. It was an excellent point which is probably the reason that Tinajero let it drop without comment (Field notes, 3/4/71).

On March 5, 1971, the Diario de Yucatán published an article previously published in a Mexico City newspaper (Excelsior) concerning Tinajero's plans to stop paying salaries to "2,400 freeloaders" in the

henequen zone. Obviously perturbed that the news item was published first outside of Yucatán, the Diario added the following editorial footnote:

It is lamentable that news which originated in Mérida and which is of interest to Yucatecans, is brought to our attention by way of Mexico (City), notwithstanding that, with respect to this newspaper, our reporters have repeatedly visited the Bank to request information, without success in the majority of those cases, because they are told that the head is absent, or in a meeting, or that there just is not any news; and, as well, in spite of the fact that on two occasions Director Tinajero had offered to advise the DIARIO of items of interest. . . .

Desiring, nevertheless, to expand the news coverage of the "purge" of 2,400 of the 30,000 aviadores (freeloaders) incruited in the lists of the Bank, and to confirm that (news) with data which will dispose of any lingering doubt of its authenticity, we freely offer our columns to Ing. Tinajero so that he can inform us all of the names of the 2,400 of 30,000 aviadores, the salaries they had received, the length of time they had been collecting those amounts, and (the names of) the officials who are to blame for this enormous irregularity (Diario de Yucatán, 3/5/1971).

Tinajero was frequently frustrated by ejidatario and public (via the media) opposition to his programs and policies. As well as policing the ejido payrolls, Tinajero planned to restructure the internal operation of the Bangrario and, in April, 1971, fired several Yucatecan employees from that institution and replaced them with individuals who were brought in from other parts of Mexico. Granting an interview to a reporter of Avance (one of the main competitors of the Diario de Yucatán), Tinajero commented on the new employees, stating:

. . . "these people have come to work, they are properly trained and prepared to teach the Yucatecan peasant whatever is necessary to successfully cultivate the land," adding that this assertion in no way signifies that the native peasant does not know how to work, but that the truth is that he does not want to work (Avance, 4/11/1971).

The director of the Bangrario perceives the task of that institution as a struggle against ejidatarios who are able but unwilling to exploit their lands correctly and who too often elect officials to positions in which they can perpetrate practices of graft and corruption rather than honestly direct the efficient operation of those ejidos or groups of ejido members (grupos solidarios). Tinajero held a rather stereotypic view of the peasant as basically lazy and dishonest, a view not uncommon among state officials and other members of the middle and upper classes in Mérida. The stereotype influences policies and the patterns of interaction between the urban capital and the rural peasant and ejidatario of Yucatán.

San Antonio and the Bangrario: a Loan Request

The mutual context of distrust and basic differences in perspectives were particularly well illustrated by a visit made to the Bangrario office by officials of the ejido of San Antonio. The goal of the visit was to secure a loan to repair the ejido office building (casa ejidal). The loan had been promised but not yet approved by the Bangrario.

Tinajero, shortly after assuming the directorship of the Bangrario, had made a tour of the henequen zone. Accompanied by the owner, Don Manuel, San Antonio had been included on the director's itinerary. While in San Antonio, the ejidatarios talked with Tinajero for a period of time and showed him the decayed condition of the ejido office building: walls in danger of collapsing, a roof that leaked profusely during rainstorms, doors no longer lockable, etc. Agreeing

on the need for repairs, Tinajero had instructed Filo to submit a written request along with a cost estimate. Tinajero promised to approve the loan upon receipt of the written request.

Filo submitted a request and cost estimate on February 24, 1971, and, not receiving any response, the ejido officials decided to follow up their request with a visit to the main office of the Bangrario in Mérida on April 7, 1971. The following excerpts from field notes describe that visit and the resulting confrontation between officials of the Bangrario and the ejido of San Antonio.

Wednesday, 4/7/71. I went into Mérida with Filo and David to consult with Bangrario officials about the reconstruction of the casa ejidal. We entered the bank, passing the military guards posted at the door, and approached Felix Torres (sub-director of the Bangrario). He told us that we had to see Chano (head of the credit division of the bank) about the loan request.

We were taken to the door of Chano's small office and told to wait. After about twenty minutes, he motioned for us to enter and asked why we wanted to see him. Since I had met Chano on several other occasions, he acknowledged my presence and then turned to address the ejidatarios.

As Filo and David began to explain the reason for their visit, Chano continued to read and sign the papers before him and seemed to pay no attention to what was being said. He finally looked up, stated that he had received no word of their request and that he really did not know what they were talking about. Calling to his secretary, he requested the file on San Antonio. We waited as he continued to shuffle through his papers until the file was finally brought. He began to examine the file and stated that he could find nothing regarding the request. David replied that they had personally brought in on February twenty-fourth and reminded Chano that the idea was originally suggested by Tinajero himself. Chano ordered his secretary to search for the request and we waited another ten or fifteen minutes before it was finally located.

Chano examined the request and an attached memo and muttered an oath ("puta madre") when he saw the estimate of \$30,000 pesos. He read the details of the proposal and said that the whole thing was wrong, that it was very bad, and that almost the whole amount was to be spent for materials, with practically nothing actually reaching the pockets of the ejidatarios.

Chano stated flatly that there were no funds in the bank for this kind of a project. He stated that the bank was committed to placing money in the hands of the ejidatarios, for work actually

completed by them, and that the San Antonio project would merely send Bangrario money to the commercial establishments of Mérida rather than to the ejidatarios.

David and Filo (mainly David) tried to explain to Chano that the idea was Tinajero's and that they were merely following through on a promise that he had personally made to them. Chano turned this around, commenting that Tinajero would surely not have made such a promise if he had known how much it would cost. Implying that Filo and David were irresponsible in making the request ("puta madre, están chingando!"), Chano added: "only a short time ago an hacienda was sold for \$120,000 pesos, casa principal and everything, and you want to waste \$30,000 pesos to repair a house in which no-one lives."

Chano then asked how much the ejido owed to the Bangrario. Filo replied that they were not sure since the bank had not sent statements to the ejido for two years, adding that this was another complaint they wished to lodge with Chano. Chano sent for his secretary again and again we waited while she searched for the most recent account statement. Finally, with the statement in hand, Chano began a loud tirade against the two officials of San Antonio.

Chano: What is this: You owe over \$400,000 pesos and you're asking for \$30,000 more? How do you think you're going to pay for this? We don't have money to throw away. I don't understand how a society (sociedad ejidal) like San Antonio, and it's a good society, can owe so much and not be able to pay it off. We have other societies that are making profits on their work.

David: But they don't owe any money.

Chano: Of course, but you have a good group; how is it that you owe so much?

Both David and Filo explained that the ejido had undertaken large planting projects during the period of the Banjidal and that they were not able to realize a return from the fields for several years. They continued talking for a while and Chano had once again begun to read and sign the papers before him. The two ejidatarios stopped talking and, after a few minutes, Chano looked up and said that he was opposed to the whole project, that no family was in danger of dying if the project were not completed, and that it would make more sense to initiate a project which would have some more direct and beneficial result for the ejidatarios themselves. Chano reiterated his disbelief, in spite of Filo and David's assurances to the contrary, that Tinajero would ever have approved such a project (Fieldnotes, 4/8/71).

Chano finally took us to see the sub-director again and, after being informed that Tinajero was out of town, he sent us to see the head of the accounting department for an explanation of the debt. As

it turned out, the accountant stated that the ejido owed only \$19,000 pesos to the Bangrario and that, were it not for the outstanding debt of over \$400,000 pesos owed from the period of the Banjidal, the ejido would be considered to be in good financial shape. While waiting for one final interview with the sub-director, Filo asked Chano if the bank would approve loans to purchase pumps for vegetable gardening. Chano said he would approve of that kind of a proposal and told them that they were finally thinking of projects which would yield something of value, something profitable for the ejidatarios.

We were all called into the sub-director's office once again and were informed that a decision had been made to send a Bangrario engineer to evaluate the project, inspect the building, and make his own estimate of the cost and the feasibility of the project.

After the whole affair was over, we were standing in the lobby of the Bangrario and Filo looked at David and myself, kind of smiled and said: "son tercos, pero también les vamos a mostrar que somos tercos tambien!" (they're pretty stubborn, but we'll show them that we can be just as stubborn!). Whistling through his teeth, Filo then added: "se puso bueno, no?" (things got pretty good there, huh?), which I thought was the understatement of the year!

Filo and David continued talking about the possibility of at least getting some water pumps from the Bangrario. Filo felt that Chano had as much as approved that kind of a loan although David did not seem quite as positive. Filo managed to look on the bright side of things and said that if the casa ejidal project were turned down, he would personally try to talk to Tinajero and to tell him that he did not like his "engaño" (deceit in not fulfilling a promise that he had personally made) (Field notes, 4/8/71).

Image Management and the Politics of Confrontation

Filo and David, officials of the ejido of San Antonio, had long complained about the poor condition of the ejido office building. The ejido had derived, until a few years ago, a small income from rent on the half of the building used as a store (leased to concessionaires). Since the roof had begun to leak severely, the last

concessionaire had abandoned the store and the community, leaving only a small store operated from his house by a member of the community. By the time of Tinajero's visit to San Antonio in February of 1971, the state of disrepair of the casa ejidal had become a superficial symbol of the state of decline and general abandonment of the ejido as felt by the ejidatarios themselves.

Tinajero was shown the sunlit interior of the building (sun rays passed easily through the sizeable holes in the roof), the way in which children could pass through holes in the adobe on either side of the door jams, the water marks on the ejido storage cabinet, and the exterior overhang of the roof which had been knocked into a precarious position (after a few beers at a local baseball game, the truck driver returning the visiting team to their own town had misjudged his turning radius, breaking one of the roof posts). Filo had declared that the casa ejidal would have to be abandoned if it were to continue to structurally degenerate.

Tinajero, apparently thinking the ejidatarios could complete the work from locally available materials, agreed to assist with credit from the Bangrario to repair the structure. The owner of the pequeña propiedad, who was also a building contractor in Mérida, provided the estimate of \$30,000 to the ejido for the repair and modernization (lowering the high roof line) of the ejido structure. The private owner had agreed with Filo and David (following the encounter with Tinajero) to arrange for the purchase and transportation of materials to the site, and to provide the stone masons and carpenters to perform the work. The ejido officials submitted the estimate and tried twice to follow up the request. They were usually frustrated by the absences

of Tinajero and Chano from the Mérida office of the Bangrario. The trip of April 7, 1971, represented the third attempt to pursue the promised repair loan.

The owner of the pequeña propiedad, using his own political influence in Mérida, had originally brought Tinajero to San Antonio to demonstrate the efficiency of his decorticating operation and to allow Tinajero to examine the horticultural experiment initiated by Don Manuel which successfully explored the possibilities of vegetable gardening using henequen waste (bagazo) as both "soil" and fertilizer. Don Manuel, as he had done with other visiting officials, took Tinajero through the ejido community, pointing to the houses which he had assisted in repairing, and emphasizing the fact that he co-existed well with the ejidatarios of San Antonio.

The ejidatarios, following Don Manuel, Tinajero and the small group of Bangrario officials, asked them to stop at the casa ejidal where they began to voice their difficulties with the Bangrario. Beginning with the problem of reduced work loads and continuing with the problems of lack of profits and the Cordemex practice of "castigating" or declassifying fiber, they finally pointed to the casa ejidal around them and declared that they didn't even have a decent place to store their papers or to conduct meetings.

Tinajero, somewhat worn from his travels and the difficulties in following the arguments of several ejidatarios talking at once, agreed the casa ejidal needed repairs and, at that point, promised the assistance. The promise was made publicly and the ejido officers

would have been faulted by the other ejidatarios if the project were not actually undertaken.

To achieve their goal, the ejido officers co-manipulated a number of resources, deriving enough power in the process to ensure their success. The most important resource at their disposal was the word of the new director of the Bangrario, a promise stated before a group of ejidatarios and before a rather prominent member of Yucatecan society, Don Manuel. By inviting an anthropologist to accompany them to the Bangrario, the ejidatarios utilized another, albeit rather uncertain, potential source of power. The movement from one office to another in the Bangrario resulted in a series of conversations and confrontations between the ejidatarios and various employees of the bank, and always with a foreign observer present. The Bangrario officials were aware of my study of the ejido of acasillados, and remembered that I had visited the bank many times in the generally fruitless attempt to obtain information concerning the operation of that institution. In the visit with the ejidatarios, they were no longer able to deal with me directly (or bureaucratically ignore me), but were forced to deal with a group of ejidatarios who had simply brought along "their anthropologist" (a phrase used by Filo more than once).

During the main confrontation, Chano (head of the credit office) communicated a number of things verbally and non-verbally to Filo and David. Verbally, Chano was rather explicit about his view of the project and continuously questioned the veracity of the ejidatario claim of Tinajero's promise. By his own actions and

gestures, Chano non-verbally communicated contempt for individuals who were occupying his valuable time. Each time the ejidatarios spoke, he would turn his attention to other matters, seemingly oblivious to what was being said. He would shuffle and sign papers, talk to an aid, motion for a waiting bank official to enter his office and all the while, the ejidatarios would continue talking, explaining with great repetition both the problem and the promise. They continued talking, frequently forcing Chano to speak rather loudly to associates who entered the office. Once the ejidatarios finished, Chano would typically wait a few minutes and then repeat his own view of the frivolity of the project and his incredulence at their assertion of Tinajero's approval and promise. Chano demonstrated his displeasure by speaking loudly, rapidly, and emphatically; the ejidatarios demonstrated deference to Chano by the tone of voice and demonstrated persistence by the words they voiced.

Chano attempted to rid himself of the group by stressing the massiveness of the outstanding debt and the non-productive nature of the project. When Chano gave an example of their requesting water pumps as a more plausible and reasonable project goal, Filo turned it back in the form of a question. With Chano's positive response, the ejidatarios effectively told him they accepted his offer, pursued it for a few minutes, and then once again returned to the word and promise of Tinajero. Chano, judging from the expression on his face, realized that instead of giving an "example," he was close to having given his "word" to the ejidatarios actually to approve such a loan

request. The ejidatarios had attempted to capitalize on the situation by turning the "example" into an "offer."

Chano's use of the head accountant to convince the ejidatarios of the financial impracticality of their proposal had backfired. Filo and David returned to point out to Chano that the ejido only owed \$19,000 pesos to the Bangrario and, changing their tactics, stressed the fact that the Banjidal debt of over \$400,000 pesos was a "mystery" to them as well as to the head accountant.

The ejidatarios of San Antonio were successful in achieving at least the limited goal. In the fall of 1971, the casa ejidal was repaired and the community proceeded to organize an inaugural festival to coincide with the normal round of celebrations and ritual observances of the Christmas season (San Antonio, personal communication). The total ejido indebtedness increased, but the usual pattern of work authorization and of payment (anticipos) for weekly work performed, remained uninterrupted. The paper debt, massive and long-lived, remained on the periphery of the major concerns of the ejidatarios. They continued to concern themselves with the more immediate goal of survival; the survival of their physical and social lives and the survival of a desired positive image of their community which could at least superficially be projected to themselves and to the residents of surrounding towns.

Chano had viewed the ejidatarios as basically "irrational" in their desire for a project which would increase an already large debt. They were "irrational" for seeking a loan which would have no immediate effect insofar as either reducing the total indebtedness

or increasing the income or general living conditions of the ejidatarios and their families. The ejidatarios, on the other hand, viewed the debt itself as irrational; they conceived of the repayment and consequent cancellation of the debt as an unrealistic and impossible notion. Filo and David did see, however, a possibility to obtain visible evidence demonstrating their abilities and competence to the rest of the ejidatarios, and they pursued it.

San Antonio and the Pequeño Propietario

As indicated in this and earlier chapters, the influence of the pequeño propietario is at once diffuse and pervasive. It is, in fact, almost impossible to discuss an aspect of life in San Antonio that is not influenced or affected in some way by Don Manuel and the existence of the remnant holdings of Hacienda San Antonio.

The major source of Don Manuel's power and influence is, unquestionably, economic. Of the total estimated income directly associated with the exploitation of henequen, 50.3% (averaging \$62.65 pesos/worker/week) is derived from the ejido, and 49.7% (averaging \$60.90 pesos/worker/week) from the pequeño propietario.¹² Clearly, were the owner to decide to hire labor from Xamach rather than San Antonio, the impact on the latter would be devastating. Total community income would be nearly cut in half.

Don Manuel's major goal is to increase, where possible, the profits from his decorticating factory, or to ensure at least the maintenance of those profits. Some of Don Manuel's major strategies have already been outlined and described in other sections of this

and other chapters. Briefly, he takes advantage of every opportunity to demonstrate the efficiency of his plant to government officials. With both Cordemex and the Bangrario operating and expanding their own regional decorticators, the goal here is to convince each that there is no need for additional decorticators in that particular region. His factory is capable of processing ejido leaves and of producing quality fiber. Since his own holdings are limited by law, a large portion of his own income is derived from the processing of these leaves of several ejidos (Xamach included) in the area and competition from a governmental decorticator would severely reduce the effectiveness of his own operation.

Don Manuel also presents an image of himself as progressive and generous with regard to the exploitation of the henequen zone and his relationship with the workers of San Antonio. He has himself experimented with or facilitated experimentation with the possibilities of the productive utilization of bagazo, the waste product from the decortication of henequen. Aside from his experimentation with vegetable gardening based on bagazo (engaged in with the assistance of the governmental agencies connected with the Mexican Secretary of Agriculture, S.A.G.), he also had shipped, prior to 1970, concentrated bagazo for laboratory experiments conducted by various Mexican and U.S. universities.

As one example of the accommodation existing between the private and ejido sectors, Don Manuel had assisted in the electrification of the community. His assistance had taken the form of loaning money to the ejido community to pay for the installation of poles and street

lights. Manuel was repaid by the community yet, when officials visit, he tells them he was responsible for bringing electricity to the community. He allows the officials to assume that he actually paid the costs out of his own pocket. Ejidatarios, when present, simply look at each other; they do not contradict the owner nor do they provide additional information. The ejidatarios, in a sense, allow the owner to capitalize on his aid to the community by building his own image in the eyes of visitors. The community had received electricity and, while the owner did not charge them interest on the loan, he was nevertheless able to gain an additional return in the form of prestige.

The owner does keep control over the community in other ways. It was mentioned above that Don Manuel wanted to eject Julio from the community following his removal from office as ejido president. The ejidatarios in general and Julio's relatives in particular (some of whom were regarded as good workers by Don Manuel) talked him out of that course of action. Don Manuel did, however, refuse to provide any employment for Julio and as a result, Julio's income dropped significantly. Another ejidatario, Rayo, had been accused by Don Manuel's foreman of stealing fruit from the owner's trees. Manuel fired Rayo and instructed the ejido officials not to increase his work load. Rayo was forced to seek employment in Xamach (he gained the use of a small house plot and began to cultivate chile and other items for sale in Mérida). Rayo's choza house had been in a general state of collapse and Don Manuel refused to offer assistance to the ejido if any of the money were used to repair Rayo's house. Since

Rayo was originally from outside the community and, although married, had no children, very little support was generated in the community to assist him in his cause. Rayo had several compadres in the community (he was the godparent of at least six children) but he was still effectively removed as a resident. On one other occasion (which occurred at the end of fieldwork) a woman had been accused of committing adultery by her aging husband. Don Manuel had his foreman contact the municipal president, telling him that the owner would not tolerate "those kinds of people" in "his" community. The municipal president, in deciding how to resolve the formal complaint lodged by the husband, finally ordered the couple either to pay a considerable fine to the municipality, or to leave the community. The wife and her lover left the next day.

The owner exerts a fair measure of control over the community and exercises that control through patterns of interaction that are reminiscent of the paternalism of the hacienda period. The ejidatarios have accommodated themselves to this pattern out of necessity. They would find it difficult to survive economically without the employment that he provides. They also prefer to have someone with authority outside of the community who they can at least approach on a face-to-face basis to explain their problems and request assistance or advice. As one example, an ejidatario was observed trying to approach Don Manuel on the occasion of one of his frequent visits to the factory. After about fifteen minutes, Don Manuel recognized the worker and told him to speak (using the "tu" or familiar form of address). The worker (using the formal "usted" form) explained that his son had to

attend military drill in Maax on week-ends to satisfy the requirement for military service. Continuing, he explained that the officer in charge had demanded payment of bribery to keep him from reporting the son absent. In spite of the son's presence, reported absences would have resulted in his son's induction into the army. Don Manuel asked for the name of the drill instructor, writing it down before he returned to Mérida. The drill instructor was replaced shortly thereafter and the ejidatario's son was able to fulfill his legal obligation without the necessity to pay bribe money (mordidas) or, more appropriately, blackmail.

A few members of the community criticize Don Manuel's control over the community and the persistence of paternalism in patterned interaction. The large number of workers who are employed by him and especially the workers who receive assistance from him (Don Manuel also will provide no-interest loans to some--those workers he feels are particularly conscientious) typically voice few words of criticism.

Politicization in San Antonio: An Informant's View

A few of the older members of the community of San Antonio seem to be made uncomfortable by the changes that have taken place in this plantation ejido. Such individuals equate politicization with "chaos" and assume a very passive role of non-participation in much of the political and social life of San Antonio. Don Leonardo Pech, past president of the ejido and brother to Vena and David, was one of the more conservative ejidatarios.

Don Leonardo Pech (b. 1909) was elected the first president, following land reform, of the Comisariado Ejidal in San Antonio. Following his term office, he served for a few months as the recording secretary of the ejido¹³ and, after resigning from that position, he never again sought an official position within the ejido administrative structure. He had decided that he "preferred to work in peace" as a simple ejidatario rather than continue as a target of complaints and disputes of the other members of the ejido; he preferred "tranquilidad" to "relajos" (vicious disputes).

Leonardo's preference for "tranquilidad" is reflected in his relative social isolation within the community of San Antonio. He is one member of the community who rarely ventures away from his house to visit or simply converse with others. Usually in the morning or in the early evening, clusters of men will gather into groups of friends or neighbors to discuss the events of the community and nearby towns. Frequently those individuals who receive newspapers from Mérida will, while in these groups, relate events or loan the papers to others for their own perusal. Don Leonardo is rarely seen participating in these conversations. On a balmy evening, he may be seen sitting on a chair, usually alone or beside his wife, in front of his house. He is among the few individuals in the community who receive newspapers yet, rather than utilize this basis for continuing social interaction with others, he merely passes it to his older son when finished.

Recalling the period of control exerted by Henequeneros, Don Leonardo stated that the manager (encargado) sent to the community

handled the scheduling of all work in the ejido, maintained the account books, and disbursed the weekly salary allotments to the workers. According to Don Leonardo, the elected officials of the ejido did nothing more than sign papers as instructed by the encargado. The ejidatarios were not solely directed to work on community lands but were merely considered to be part of a regional labor pool within the state-run "Gran Ejido."

Don Leonardo, in recalling the past, revealed his own conservative view of the increasing politicization of the ejidatarios of San Antonio. In his remembrances of the period of Henequeneros control, he explained his view, by comparison, of the contemporary ejidatarios of San Antonio:

Había más tranquilidad, más orden, más respeto de antes, durante el tiempo en que empezó el ejido. Ahora todos quieren mandar en el ejido. Hoy más sabe leer, menos sabe obedecer. Ahora todos están a tanto y hoy saben más de leer y escribir. De antes, venían encargados y menos sabían leer y escribir y a los encargados, uno los tenían que obedecer.

There used to be, during the period when the ejido was just beginning, more tranquility, more order, and more respect. Now everyone wants to run the ejido. Today, the more one understands how to read, the less one understands how to be obedient. Now, everyone knows everything and they all know how to read and write. Before, when the encargados came, people knew less about reading and writing and one was obligated to obey them.

Don Leonardo preferred the tranquility and peace of paternalism to what he viewed as the confusing chaos of change. In Leonardo's estimation, education is responsible for the lack of order, automatic obedience and tranquility that is characteristic of present-day San Antonio.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has described aspects of the structure and process of interaction, accommodation, and alliance existing between the ejidatarios of San Antonio and the major extra-community institutions of the private landholder, the municipal government, and the Banco Agrario de Yucatán. In all of the cases presented, emphasis has been placed on the tactical actions of the ejidatarios and the ways in which they manipulate the multiple power domain to enhance their own chances for survival. Each of these sectors is dealt with differently by the ejidatarios.

Within the community, members characterize, discuss and interact with each other as individuals with variable attributes and perceived flaws. As demonstrated by the analysis of the politics of candidacy, individuals are more importantly perceived as loci within a closely interwoven web of social ties. Those social ties include extensive consanguineal and affinal bonds of kinship which are reinforced or complemented through the mechanism of fictive kinship (compadrazgo) and augmented by feelings of friendship and ties of neighborhood association. Individual feelings of animosity are normally subordinated by the multiplicity of ties linking individuals. In spite of sporadic outbreaks of attempts to resolve conflict or to seek redress through the use of coercive force, the extensive network of social bonds reduces the frequency, duration, and severity of acts of violence in this community.

The public confrontation between Filo and David and the cases of misuse of ejido funds illustrate some of the limits existing for

types of behavior which are defined as tolerable or intolerable. If the behavior is defined as intolerable (David's violence and Julio's alleged embezzlement) the various participants will attempt to affect a local solution to the perceived problem. If that fails, the transgressor will be threatened with exposure to the sanctions of extra-community institutions (such as the municipal court). As a last resort, or if the act itself is perceived as especially intolerable (such as the case of David's striking a woman with a rock), the extra-community agency will be called upon to impose punishment on the individual.

If the act is perceived as undesirable but understandable (approaching rationality) and tolerable, the ejidatarios, chiefly those closely bound to the individual, will attempt to protect the individual and his family from the economically destructive possibility of fine or imprisonment at the hands of "outsiders." In the case of Vicente, his misuse of funds was redefined, by consensus, as a "loan" and a resolution enacted locally (the "cancellation of the debt") to protect an individual who had been beset with unfortunate illnesses within his family unit. In the case of Julio, extra-community exposure was threatened, but not employed. Julio resigned as ejido president, his own power base and influence in the community evaporated, yet he, his family, and his wife's family were protected from economic hardship.

Within the community, the need to affect cooperation and accommodation in interpersonal relations is viewed as necessary to maximize the survival chances of the family and, by extension through

the social network of multiple ties, to the community in general. Extra-community institutions are manipulated, appeased or avoided, insofar as possible, to likewise contribute to the goals of survival.

The Bangrario is viewed with hostility and resentment. The ejidatarios attempt to utilize tactics of controlled confrontation to achieve their goals. The ejidatarios, in their actions, attempt to explore the limits of confrontation, trying to ascertain the limits beyond which confrontation may precipitate acts of retaliation. In the case of the loan request, they knew that the "word" of the director of the Bangrario constituted a powerful weapon at their disposal. The director, in his statements to ejidatarios and to the press, stressed honesty, truth, and straightforwardness in relations with ejidatarios and Yucatecans in general. Tinajero, a newly appointed director still working out major bank policies and restructuring the operation of the bank, had no honorable means to escape the promise he had made to the ejidatarios in the presence of Don Manuel, a known and politically influential member of Yucatecan society.

With regard to Don Manuel, the ejidatarios have tacitly accepted a paternalistic form of accommodation as imposed by the owner of the pequeña propiedad. Efforts to improve ejido production are mutually beneficial; the owner increases his income from the decortication of henequen leaves, and the ejidatarios benefit from any additional work authorized by the Bangrario. Most importantly, the ejidatarios gain materially from the income derived from the private holdings and from the assistance provided by the owner in the form of individual loans or in the form of assistance for the

community good. Perhaps the greatest community benefit, outside of the wages received, was the installation of electric street lights and the electrification of the houses of San Antonio. In a large sense, accommodation between the private and ejidal sectors has resulted in a kind of productive alliance which is beneficial to both of those sectors. In spite of the fact that the ejidatarios continue patterns of interaction that are reminiscent of the period of hacienda paternalism, those patterns only superficially disguise the ejidatarios' adaptations to the changes that have occurred in the impinging institutional context of this ejido community.

CHAPTER VI--FOOTNOTES

¹Re-election is possible only if an individual receives the unanimous support of the members of the ejido. In San Antonio, re-election has only occurred twice since its formation. The first occurred recently after land reform and the term spanned the period 1944 to 1950. The second occasion occurred following fieldwork when the candidate elected in 1970 was unanimously re-elected to a second term in 1973 (San Antonio personal communication).

²As indicated on the diagrams, I am defining "proximal residence" as referring to individuals who are neighbors, with no more than one house lot or solar intervening between their respective houses. This definition is purposefully conservative since the community itself is quite small in size.

³By agreement, a surcharge was added on to the sale price of soft drinks in the community until the interest-free loan was repaid to the pequeño propietario, a process which took a little more than two years.

⁴I suspect that Francisco was one of the key individuals who persuaded Filo to run for president of the ejido. This suspicion was never absolutely confirmed through informant interviews. Except for David, candidates did not announce either their intentions or their running mates until shortly before the election, possibly attempting to reduce the chance that a competitor will be able to undermine their own support base in the community.

⁵"A" (indicated on the diagram for Planilla III.) had actually married Marcelino's aunt (in 1930) before Marcelino married "A's" daughter by his first marriage (1942). (Records of the Civil Registry Office, Municipality of Maax.)

⁶During the ten month period of fieldwork, David was observed to be argumentative on only three occasions. Only two of those resulted in physical contact between David and other individuals and both of those were relatively short in duration and neither resulted in more than temporary minor bruises for the parties involved.

⁷I reminded Vena to tell the doctor that the family had already given Vena Jr. oil of balsam, cooking oil, herb tea, and Alka Seltzer, but the doctor seemed generally unimpressed. I had the distinct, but unproved, impression that "el socio" was administering a placebo more than actually beneficial medicine to the patient.

⁸One of those cases concerned an individual who had been drinking and conversing with friends in his house. The individual left the group and the others continued conversing, thinking he had merely gone out to relieve himself. Hearing shouts, his wife and two daughters went running out of the house, bringing back the individual a few minutes later. He had gone to the house of the only person in the community who had no ties of either actual or fictive kinship with any member of the community (he had been hired by the pequeño propietario and lived in a small house owned by Don Manuel on the edge of the plaza); he hit him once, allowed himself to be separated, and was brought back to the house muttering something about an insult he had heard that the other man's wife had said to his daughter. Others reported that they simply "had not liked each other." The possible cause of friction was not ascertained in this case. The two worked in different areas of the pequeña propiedad and did not normally come into contact with each other. It is possible that the individual felt the other was an interloper in the community, establishing himself without having rights either by birth (kinship), marriage (his entire family had come originally from Motul), or fictive kinship, to community membership.

⁹Vicente's poems were always topical and always interesting. In 1973, he wrote a ranchera (SISAL AGONIZANTE) and a corrido (LA CARESTIA DEL COMERCIO). The first dealt with the decline of the importance of henequen, the abandonment of the ejidatarios by various institutions, and the many unfilled promises of agrarian reform in Yucatán. The second, comprised of sixteen verses, describes in great detail the problems of inflation, of increasing prices, and of the reduction in quantity and quality of items sold. In one verse of the latter, Vicente explains that

La crisis en que sufrimos
nos dicen todo es mundial
segun los mismos hermanos
ya todo es Comercial.

(Personal communication from Don Vicente, 1973).

¹⁰Goodman (1970: 143-171) provides a detailed description of of a peasant demonstration and riot which occurred in Mérida during the summer of 1966. Victor Cervera Pacheco, an ambitious member of the Yucatecan middle class of Mérida and founder of the "Association of Ejido Credit Societies," was jailed along with several ejidatarios as leaders of the protest against the Bangrario. Cervera Pacheco's university background provided the basis for an estimated 4,000 university students and ejidatarios (Goodman, 1970: 147) marching on the penitentiary to demand their release. They were released and, by demand on the part of the ejidatarios, Cervera Pacheco was named General Secretary of the Liga de Comunidades Agrarias (Yucatecan branch of the C.N.C. or National Confederation of Peasants) in a 1967 uncontested election. When Luis Echeverría Álvarez (then the P.R.I. candidate for President) visited Yucatán in 1970, Cervera Pacheco

accompanied him on visits to the rural areas, much to the chagrin of the established politicians of Mérida (personal communication, Salvador Rodríguez). Two significant results obtained from this relationship: Cervera Pacheco was nominated the official P.R.I. candidate and won the election for Mayor of Mérida in November of 1970 and, by early December, 1970, Rudolfo Kuhne Gutierrez was replaced as Director of the Bangrario by Faustino Tinajero Miramontes. Kuhne Gutierrez himself had been appointed to the position in 1968, in large part the result of the 1966 riots and subsequent unopposed election of Cervera to head the Liga.

¹¹From its conception in 1962 until 1971, at least five different individuals had been appointed to serve as director of the Bangrario. Faustino Tinajero was himself replaced as director in 1973. The following attempts to reconstruct the sequence of events as extracted from articles in the Diario de Yucatán (dates refer to the date of publication in the Diario):

- 6/8/72 State Deputy Gaspar Xiu Cachon criticizes Tinajero's incompetence.
- 6/20/72 Tinajero declares the Bangrario is ninety percent corrupt.
- 10/12/72 Tinajero accuses leaders in two ejidos of massive fraude.
- 10/31/72 As a result of a demonstration by ejidatarios against low salaries in Izamal, the local agent of the Bangrario shot one of the ejido leaders and was himself beaten to death by the ejidatarios.
- 11/2/72 Thirteen ejidatarios of Izamal charged by the police with complicity in the death of the Bangrario agent.
- 11/8/72 Eleven ejidatarios sentenced to jail, nine appeal their case.
- 11/8/72 Tinajero announces he will be replaced as Bangrario director.
- 11/9/72 Tinajero announces the regional office had been changed from Izamal to Tekanto.
- 11/11/72 Eleazar Santiago Cruz assumed the position of director (on 11/10/72), Tinajero leaves Yucatán to assume a position with the National Ejido Credit Bank (Banjidal) in Mexico City.

¹²A more extensive analysis of estimated and actual worker incomes is presented in Chapter IV, above.

¹³Don Leonardo had been taught to read and write and to perform basic mathematical operations by a local school teacher who offered night classes to interested adults. Don Leonardo could not recall for sure, but it was probably during the period of Governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto (1918, 1922-1923) who had stressed improving education in the rural areas and especially emphasized programs to teach Spanish to Maya speakers.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

San Antonio: a Henequen Plantation Ejido

Adaptation to a Restrictive Environment

San Antonio, Land Reform, and Collectivization

San Antonio: a Henequen Plantation Ejido

Contemporary San Antonio continues to exist as the lowest productive appendage of the monocrop export economy of the State of Yucatán, Mexico. For nearly a century, this community of Yucatec Mayans has labored to supply the raw materials, the henequen leaves, which are processed into fiber and associated manufactured products (twine, cordage, woven floor and wall coverings, etc.). This productive relationship to the manufacturing industry and to the world market has remained unchanged since the latter part of the nineteenth century although the jural and ideological status of the community of San Antonio in the social and political economy of the state and the nation has changed considerably during the decades following the Mexican Revolution.

San Antonio has changed from a community of hacienda plantation peons, acasillados, to a legally autonomous ejido land reform community of workers who collectively exploit expropriated lands formerly belonging to Hacienda San Antonio. No longer tied to the land and the landowner by means of indebted servitude, the ejidatarios presently are indebted to the bureaucratic federal institution of the Banco Agrario de Yucatán. The Cárdenas reform of 1938 transformed San Antonio into an ejido bounded by other ejidos and the residual holdings, the pequeñas propiedades, of the landed elite of Yucatán. The essentially ascribed status of the ejidatario has effectively tied him to the community and the community holdings. To leave San Antonio is to leave the cultivation of henequen to others; since ejidatarios lose their rights through prolonged absence from the community, and since an ejidatario is usually not entitled to join

as a member of another ejido, to change venue is to change occupation. Land reform effectively reversed the mobility and socio-economic benefits gained as a result of the earlier labor reforms of 1917-1920.

From the latter part of the nineteenth century until 1920, the community of San Antonio developed together with the expanding henequen industry. Following the Caste War of the middle 1800's, Hacienda San Antonio began a period of intensified capital investment and expanded in terms of both lands under cultivation and the captive worker population required by that expansion. The development of a decorticating machine and a demand for baler twine in the United States provided the means and the market to enable the Hacienda to make the shift from subsistence-oriented, labor-extensive, cattle ranching and milpa agriculture to the labor-intensive, cyclical cultivation of henequen for a growing world market.

During this period, the people of San Antonio constituted a population of workers who were recruited by force and retained by means of a system of debt-peonage symbolized typically through the mechanism of the tienda de raya or "company store." Residents were required to work several free hours per week (Fagina labor) for the right to continue to live in the community and to be allotted work in the fields and credit in the company store. The hacienda owner and his administrators acted as the main links between the resident workers and the larger society. Movement was restricted and the social and economic relations between the community and the nearby towns were sharply curtailed and closely regulated. Under the paternalistic

hacienda system, the owner was traditionally obligated to make sure that "his" people were adequately fed, housed, clothed, and that they engaged in "proper" behavior (as determined by the hacendado). Local deviance from defined norms of acceptable behavior were dealt with locally and the transgressors either publicly whipped or incarcerated in the hacienda. The casco, the core of the hacienda, provided the focus for economic, social, political, and religious life in the community. The decortivating factory, the owner's residence, the small jail, and the community chapel, were all concentrated within the central core area of the walled casco of the hacienda.

In spite of the informal obligations of the hacendado to care for the welfare of the resident population, demographic data indicate the community of San Antonio, until 1920, was in a state of extreme stress. High birth and infant mortality rates, and high rates of early adult mortality indicate that the population was extremely susceptible to the deleterious effects of frequent epidemics. Due to early adult mortality, remarriage was frequent and accounted for the largest relative proportion of total marriages during the first few decades of this century. Community endogamy, preferred by the hacienda owner as one means to maintain control over the population, was repeated for instances of remarriage and thus further extended affinal ties linking family groups in this acasillado community. During this period of expansion, high morality rates in San Antonio and elsewhere in the henequen zone necessitated the continuing recruitment of workers by the landowners and the state itself.

The post-revolutionary period of 1917 to 1925 witnessed the enactment and, more importantly, the apparent implementation of labor reform legislation in Yucatán. The landowners were prohibited from demanding *fagina* labor, were made legally responsible for the care of sick or injured workers, were prohibited from considering women and young children as part of the active field labor pool, and were obligated to pay a minimum wage to workers for tasks performed and extra wages to those who worked on Sundays. In addition, the owners were required to contribute regularly to an unemployment fund for the benefit of the hacienda workers. With these legislative acts, the workers were largely freed from the previous condition of indebted servitude. Limits were placed on the extent of permissible indebtedness and the forced inheritance of debts to retain the sons of workers on the haciendas was abolished along with the patterned operation of the company store.

Implementation of labor reform legislation began to affect San Antonio by 1920. Mortality rates dropped significantly, an indication that the innovations in health care and epidemic control introduced in Yucatán during this period were actually reaching the rural areas. The decline in infant and early adult mortality rates also suggest improvements in the areas of both nutrition and worker safety. The population of San Antonio continued to decline but whereas that decline had been attributed to severe epidemics prior to 1920, further decreases in the total population, until 1930, and the associated increase in the population of Maax, reflect the new potential for geographic mobility.

It was during this same period that agrarian reform was first implemented in the henequen zone. This early reform, however, was designed to protect private landholdings and the economic viability of those holdings. Both the community of resident workers and the lands already under cultivation in San Antonio were exempted from the effects of this early reform. Uncultivated lands were expropriated from the Hacienda and redistributed as *restitución* (return of previously documented communal lands to the eligible town dwellers) or as *dotación* (outright grants of communal lands) to the residents of Maax and Xamach qualified for *ejidatario* status. Total holdings of Hacienda San Antonio were reduced, but production and the resident labor pool were essentially unaffected by the land reform legislation.

In 1937, Cárdenas arrived in Mérida to announce a massive agrarian reform program which was designed to redistribute both the land and the profitable decorticating factories to qualified rural workers. The reform was designed to break the power base of the landholding elite of Yucatán and to provide the workers with access to necessary resources (land) and the means of production (the decorticators) to strengthen their position within the semi-industrialized, export-oriented, market economy of the region, the state, and, ultimately, the nation.

Under the provisions of Cárdenas' land reform legislation, the workers of San Antonio were finally eligible themselves to receive status and lands as a legally recognized ejido land reform community. The reform program, further redistributing expropriated lands to the reformed ejidos of Maax and Xamach, left a much-reduced area to be

considered the residual holdings of the private "small landowner" or *pequeño propietario*. The protected small-holding, the *pequeña propiedad*, included lands, the *casco*, and the decorticating factory. During the initial post-reform period, those *ejidatarios*, such as the members of the *ejido* of San Antonio, not receiving expropriated decorticators, were entitled to usufruct rights to utilize the factories to process *ejido* leaves.

Cárdenas' reform was swift and effective in accomplishing land redistribution in the henequen zone but unevenness in productive status and distribution of those lands created economic difficulties. San Antonio, for example, received lands which either required further investment or which were ending the productive life-cycle of the henequen plantings. As long as the distribution remains disproportionate between lands being planted and cultivated, lands that are in production, and lands ending the productive cycle, the *ejido* of San Antonio will continue to experience great fluctuations, over a period of decades, between "boom" and "bust," between prolonged periods of investment with reduced returns from the land, and periods during which the majority of *ejido* lands are not in production. The unevenness and income fluctuation has caused financial problems for the *ejido* during the more than three decades since reform, and will continue to create difficulties unless a careful plan for redistribution of the exploitative pattern of land-use is designed and implemented.

Convincing Cárdenas that he had a plan to resolve the problem of productive inequities, the Governor of Yucatán replaced federal

control over the ejidos, administered through the Banjidal (Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal), with the state-run Henequeneros de Yucatán. The expropriated lands of the henequen zone were popularly redefined as the "Gran Ejido," and the worker population administered by the state agency as one common, collectivized labor pool. With the 1940 election of Avila Camacho as President of Mexico, the federal government de-emphasized rural development and the agrarian policies of Cárdenas in favor of giving greater attention to the urban areas and continuing industrialization (Cf. Eckstein, 1970: 283-284). With these changes in federal policy and the lessening of official concern with agrarian reform and the ejido program, the State government of Yucatán was able to convert the "Gran Ejido" into what has been termed the "Gran Hacienda," the conversion of the ejido sector of the henequen zone into a single, state-administered, henequen plantation.

An administrator, appointed by Henequeneros, controlled the operations of the ejido of San Antonio. The ejidatarios performed tasks not only on designated ejido lands, but on lands of other ejidos in the general vicinity. The administrator controlled the assignment of tasks, the coordination of activities within the general region, and the disbursement of wages to the ejidatarios. The reconstruction of community compadrazgo (ritual coparenthood) selection patterns for this and other periods reflects the relative importance of the administrator. The vertical, inter-class choices (for baptism, particularly) indicate a marked decrease in ties established with the owner of the residual estate, and an increasing emphasis on selection of the work

administrator and the concessionaire operating what had previously been the company store.

The 1955 reassertion of control by the federal government resulted in the dissolution of Henequeneros and the division of ejidos, again, into separate economic, landholding entities. The ejidos were administered and given access to credit by the federal Banjidal. During the period of control exerted by the Banjidal (1955-1962), the ejidatarios of San Antonio were once again assigned work tasks limited to the lands of the particular ejido rather than the region in general. It is clear, however, that this change meant a return to the economic exploitation of lands in proportionately inequitable stages of development and productivity. It is also clear, from the various documents analyzed, that the inequitable distribution of lands in production, and the quality of henequen plantings, were further aggravated and reduced in terms of potential productivity during the latter phase of the period of administration under Henequeneros. For the duration of the Banjidal, planting operations were undertaken, weeding operations continued for those lands under cultivation, and, since less than half of the total holdings of the ejido were actually in production, San Antonio became a client heavily indebted to that federal institution.

As newly planted fields came into production, control over the ejido shifted from the Banjidal to the subsidiary institution of the regional Bangrario. The debt incurred in the planting and maintenance of the fields was carried by the Bangrario as a fiduciario debt and although the productivity of the ejido increased, so did the debt;

by 1969, the accumulated interest on the debt had nearly doubled the extent of indebtedness. It is this massive debt and the accumulated interest, totalling nearly one-half million pesos, which prevents San Antonio from officially being classed as a self-sufficient ejido. So long as the debt exists, the ejidatarios of San Antonio will continue to receive what they now view as wages for work performed, as wages for work allocated and limited by the institution of the Bangrario.

On the surface, recent changes in federal policies should allow for a rather optimistic prediction of the immediate economic future of San Antonio. In 1969, the Bangrario ceased charging interest against the fiduciario accounts and, in 1972, subsequent to the period of fieldwork, the Bangrario announced a plan to cancel interest charges equal to the amount of the principle paid by ejidos and to return dividends to the ejidos amounting to 25% of the "profits" remaining after deducting avío charges and interest (the actual annual costs of production of the ejido fiber). Unfortunately for the ejidatarios of San Antonio, these changes occur at a time when those fields planted near the end of the Henequeneros period, and those planted during the period of the Banjidal, are once again in the terminal phases of their productive cycle. San Antonio has already passed its productive peak and once again the uneven distribution of plantings will carry the ejido into a period of reduced productivity. If future replanting is authorized by the Bangrario, San Antonio will most likely enter into a new phase of mounting indebtedness. The debt and credit reforms instituted by the Bangrario come at a time

when the ejido has already passed through a period of "boom," without significantly retiring the accumulated debt, and at a time when the ejido is once again moving into a "bust" period. Once again, San Antonio is heading towards a prolonged period of investment in planting and maintenance with greatly reduced potential for productive returns adequate to cover the costs of developmental investment.

Adaptation to a Restrictive Environment

As detailed in the chapters above, the members of San Antonio are restricted in the amount of work available on the lands of both the ejido and the pequeña propiedad. The ejido itself is restricted by the general unavailability of lands for the further expansion of production and is restricted by the Bangrario which, for the duration of indebtedness, acts to inhibit individual or group initiative in altering or diversifying the patterns of production and the exploitation of community lands. For the individual ejidatario, the environment is not only restricted, but is actually shrinking in terms of that individual's share of the income derived from the exploitation of private and ejido lands. Population growth during the post-agrarian reform period has increased the number of qualified ejidatarios and has, as a consequence, reduced the amount of exploitable land available per ejidatario. Rather than resulting in invidious, individualized competition between ejidatarios for larger shares of available work, community pressure and the response of elected local ejido officials has resulted in a flexible maintenance of a system of work distribution that is relatively egalitarian and

that takes into account the needs of the various families and domestic groups that make up this ejido community.

Work assignments are decided locally, within the limits set weekly by the Bangrario (with regard to the ejido), and the assignments are adjusted to achieve a balance of incomes between those working on the private holdings and those employed by the ejido. For most, tasks are performed in both sectors and the dual participation allows each worker to retain rights as an ejidatario (by continuing to meet the occupational requirement as stated in the agrarian code) and to complement ejido income through work performed for the pequeño propietario.

In order to minimize income fluctuation on a week-to-week basis, cyclical operations and the associated demand for labor between the two sectors are cooperatively organized and logically intermixed. Insofar as possible, the harvesting operations are alternated between the two sectors in such a way as to maximize continuous operation of the field laborers and the workers in the decorticating factory of the remnant holdings of Hacienda San Antonio. In spite of this cooperation, however, incomes do fluctuate in sync with the annual cycle of wet and dry seasons in this northern ecozone of Yucatán.

At the level of the domestic group, families and groups of families residing together employ a variety of strategies to minimize the effects of income fluctuation and to meet the subsistence and ceremonial obligations of the household. All rely on the availability of fiado credit to partially compensate for income fluctuation. Most families are able to offset cash expenditures through the maintenance

of domestic animals, the additional cultivation of household gardens, and, in the case of some of the households, through supplementary and periodic income derived from small, private parcels planted in henequen. Household animals, especially, represent an economic reserve which can be converted to cash as necessitated by anticipated ceremonial expenses, by the obligation to reduce or totally repay accumulated fiado debts, or by emergency expense demands associated with unanticipated illness. While the first two can be incorporated into the financial planning of the domestic group or the family unit, and borne without great difficulty, the latter class of expenditure poses particularly severe problems. The sudden and unanticipated occurrence of illness may require immediate conversion of the group's economic reserve into cash, force the group into further indebtedness, and make the group's financial recovery an especially prolonged process.

With regard to the different categories of extraordinary expenses, the domestic group or the individual family unit may activate and utilize a variety of ties established with other members of the community. Economic assistance may be sought from, or offered by consanguineal kin of either spouse and, in addition, the ritual kin ties of compadrazgo may be utilized to augment the resource potential of the family or domestic group. If the family head is a qualified member of the ejido, or if his affinal and compadrazgo ties are extensive enough within the network of ejidatario families, he may receive additional assistance from this sector of the community. Work loads may be adjusted to allocate additional work to the individual himself or to close relatives to be worked in his favor.

Although the ejido of San Antonio is organized as a collective, the community nevertheless does not exhibit idyllic cooperativeness in interpersonal relations. Individuals disagree, become involved in interpersonal or interfamilial disputes, or may coalesce into temporarily defined factions. The factionalization of this ejido is, as yet, situational and has not resulted in a continuing state of divisiveness within the community. Disputes occasionally escalate into potentially or actually violent conflicts and acts of confrontation, but the concensual force of the community typically moves the participants to some form of mutual accommodation if not actual resolution of the conflict. The majority of disputes are resolved at the local level but, when viewed as necessary by the participants, or when especially serious social infractions are involved, members of the community will threaten or actually employ municipal or other outside authorities to resolve the problem. The patterned resolution of local disputes reinforces the view of the members of this community as individual loci within a social network of actual and ritual kin which, by extension, encompasses the community itself.

During the decades since land reform, the community has changed, if not always manifested at the behavioral level, in terms of the rational bases for interaction with exogenous institutions. Whereas absolute individual obedience to extra-community symbols of authority had been the main criterion for survival during the hacienda period, community cooperation and mutual support are now emphasized as most significant for the continuing survival of the members of this ejido. As previously described cases indicate, the members of

the community continue to demonstrate, superficially, the "proper" ways of interacting with both the pequeño propietario and the agents and representatives of the Bangrario. Patterns of interaction seem reminiscent of the deference, respect, and obedience characteristic of the paternalistic hacienda period, yet there are differences. Analyses of the substance and directions of interaction indicate that the ejidatarios and the elected officials of San Antonio attempt to employ calculated strategies to obtain at least limited goals, and they utilize tactics which involve controlled levels of confrontation, appeasement, and manipulation. To the outsider, the efforts seem insignificant in terms of their ability to effect beneficial social and economic changes in the community. To the people of San Antonio, even the relatively minor successes or setbacks in their attempts to increase income and security, are of great importance with respect to their image of themselves, their community, and their future.

San Antonio, Land Reform, and Collectivization

A major problem, frequently alluded to by the ejidatarios themselves, concerns the contradictions between reform ideology and the reality of restrictive federal productive control. In their own assessment of the reality, ejidatarios view themselves as, effectively, wage laborers governed by a faceless, relatively unapproachable, bureaucratic institution. Public statements by officials and politicians serve as constant reminders of the ideological position that the ejidatarios are the major participants in a continuing and dynamic agrarian reform program. This program, according to ideological

rhetoric, promises the ejidatario economic independence and an improvement in basic living conditions if he recognizes his potential and obligations as one who holds the future of himself, his family, and the state itself, in his own productive hands. The contradiction exists in the gulf between a dynamic ideology of progress and development and the reality of restrictive and stagnating institutional control as mediated through the federal agencies of CORDEMEX and the Bangrario.

As mentioned repeatedly, the massive ejido debt provides the legitimate basis for absolute control as exercised by the Bangrario. Since the ejido officials are denied access to earlier financial records, records pertinent to understanding the accumulation of that debt, the ejidatarios are suspicious of the debt's veracity. In the absence of information detailing the debt, the ejidatarios are suspicious that it is, in large part, a fictionalized debt used by the Bangrario to both retain absolute control over ejido production and to rationalize the total absorption by that institution of all profits derived from the sale of ejido fiber.

The Bangrario is charged by the federal government with the dual responsibilities of providing the credit and capital required by the cyclical nature of henequen cultivation and is charged with increasing the productive efficiency and the economic self-sufficiency of the henequen zone in general. The Bangrario, however, is an institution that operates under a state of seige. The ejidatarios, the political organization of the workers (the Liga de Comunidades Agrarias, a branch of the official party's National Compesino

Confederation--C.N.C.), the state politicians, and the press (notably, the *Diario de Yucatán*), all criticize the secrecy maintained by the Bangrario with respect to its financial operations. In addition, the press and public discussion both perpetuate and publicize charges of mismanagement and outright accusations of fraud alleged to have been perpetrated by present and previous personnel of both the federal institutions of the Bangrario and the Banjidal. The Bangrario response is to maintain or increase the atmosphere of secrecy and to lodge periodic counter-claims that the economic difficulties of that institution and the general henequen zone are due to the high incidence of fraud in the ejidos and to the ejidatario's general proclivity towards laziness and demonstrably inadequate work habits in the absence of strict supervision. The seige, from the point of view of the personnel of the Bangrario, is comprised of public attacks on the institution and effective productive sabotage on the part of the ejidatarios of the henequen zone of Yucatán.

The ejidatarios of San Antonio recognize and admit to lowered productivity of ejido lands as compared to either private parcels or the lands of the pequeño propietario, although all three sectors are worked by members of the same ejido labor pool. Superficially, collectivization of work efforts seems responsible for this productive inefficiency. As noted in an earlier chapter, the ejidatarios see no reason to perform more conscientiously when the work effort thus expended will involve correcting the inadequate practices of others. The quantitatively and qualitatively superior yields derived from the private ejidatario parcels provides a more accurate illustration

of the ejidatario's ability to work effectively when economic returns are, in fact, proportionate to the amount of productive effort invested.

The greater productivity exhibited on lands pertaining to the pequeña propiedad both support and contradict the notion that collectivization itself accounts for inefficiency in the ejidal sector. It supports the notion in that critics of agrarian reform point to the productive discrepancies as proof that the ejidatarios work effectively only when strictly controlled and supervised within the context of privately-owned, profit-oriented, enterprises such as the henequen haciendas (cf. Chardon, 1963: 192-193). The contradiction derives from the fact that work operations and the distribution of work assignments on both the lands of the ejido and those of the pequeña propiedad, are essentially the same. Work operations, for both sectors, are effectively pooled or collectivized. The individual, however, is affected differently in each of the two sectors. As an ejidatario, reform ideology and the specifications of the agrarian code indicate to the individual that he is allotted work as part of his birthright and due as a qualified member of the ejido. On the private holdings, the individual understands that continued employment depends on the quality and effectiveness of his work efforts. The even higher productivity exhibited on the small, individual henequen plots, however, belies the facile conclusion that threat and coercion are prime factors which account for differential productive efficiency observed between the ejido and the pequeña propiedad.

Charles Erasmus, critical of collectivization and the legal inalienability of expropriated or redistributed lands, favors parcelization of communal lands and the granting of outright title to plots to the ejidatarios or recipient-laborers. If maximum limits on landholdings are retained, in Erasmus' view (1969: 17-18), these actions would stimulate more rapid socio-economic development and the creation of a dynamic, albeit restricted, middle class. The "most able farmers" (1969: 17) would buy out the rest, thus maintaining the majority of the ejido population as simple wage laborers. Erasmus considers collectivization as resulting primarily in increased vulnerability to the stagnating paternalism of excessive governmental control. His solution to the "problem" is to promote a capitalistic model based on an assumed acceptance of the dynamism and superiority attributed to individual, competitive, free-enterprise.

With regard to the henequen zone in general, and San Antonio in particular, it is most likely that the parcelization and commoditization of land would result in an even sharper socio-economic differentiation of the population. It would also remove the disguise from the "disguised unemployment" (otherwise known, euphemistically, as "underemployment") of an estimated 30,000 ejidatarios, and their families, in the henequen zone of Yucatán (P.R.I., n.d.). In the absence of massive federal investment to encourage industrialization in the urban centers and the intensive development and redistribution of the populace to the less densely inhabited southern parts of the state, these actions would likely create more difficulties (politically and economically) for the state and federal governments and for the

ejidatarios themselves. Given the declared surfeit of proletarians in the henequen zone, "free competition" between those workers would most likely result in a general depression of wages paid for particular types of tasks performed.

Within the context of a small, relatively endogamous community of people who essentially share common bonds of actual and ritual kinship, who interact daily on a face-to-face basis, and who are more socio-economically homogeneous than differentiated, the ejidatarios of San Antonio have thus far demonstrated an ability to effectively place the collective survival of the community above the potentially disruptive interests of any single individual or particular group. The extraordinarily high yields evidenced on the individualized, meticulously cultivated and tended, parcel and house gardens need not be interpreted as indicating a general failure of collectivization. The ejidatarios of San Antonio are basically pragmatists, not "traditionalists." Individualized productivity is not high because of some mystical attachment to the land, nor is it the result of some traditionally Mayan reverence for working the soil. The productive differential occurs because the individual, the family, and, by extension through obligation, reciprocity, and outright sale, the community in general, all gain from these labors and all gain in direct proportion to the effectiveness of the labors of individuals. Economic return from the lands of the ejido, on the other hand, is dependent upon the whim (or plan) of the Bangrario and is only grossly related to productive efforts. The total disregard of a work assignment, for example, unless prearranged by ejido officials for the

purpose of temporarily increasing or supplementing the income of one suffering from extraordinary expenses related to illness, etc., would probably result in the non-payment of wages, the reassignment of the task and, if continued, the eventual disenfranchisement of the ejidatario.

Observations and documents provide evidence supporting the conclusion that collectivization is a successful form of organization in San Antonio. The data indicate that productive effectiveness increased during periods when the contradictions between reality and reform ideology were actually or apparently reduced. Field plant density (expressed in plants per mecate, an indication of relative productive care in planting and maintenance) was low for fields planted during the latter part of the period of control exerted by Henequeneros de Yucatán. Plant density increased significantly during the period immediately following the dissolution of Henequeneros and the assumption of control, midst much public proclamation by officials of the promised fruitful future of the newly "liberated" ejidatarios, by the federal Banjidal. Field plant density declined for fields planted during the subsequent Banjidal and Bangrario periods and rose once again during the brief period in which the ejido functioned as an autónomo group, operating independent of the Bangrario and in association with the owner of the pequeña propiedad of San Antonio. With the decline in the market value of henequen fiber and the apparent inability of the ejido to rapidly repay portions of the debt, the Bangrario once again assumed control of the ejido.

Productivity (actual or potential) increased in San Antonio during periods in which the ejidatarios at least believed themselves to be relatively freed from total control as exerted by extra-community institutions. While productivity itself seems directly related to images of relative autonomy and as perceived by the ejidatarios, absolute autonomy itself is a fiction. Given the fact that the ejido is economically tied, through the monocrop cultivation of henequen, to the federal manufacturing complex of CORDEMEX and the world market economy, it is rather obvious that the ejido can never achieve anything but an "image" of economic and productive autonomy. Throughout its history, San Antonio (and the henequen zone in general) has ultimately been controlled and manipulated by a succession of local entrepreneurs, multi-national corporations (chiefly, International Harvester Co.), international consortiums, and, more recently, institutions of the state and federal governments. Prior to the assumption of nearly total control over the production of fiber and the manufacture and marketing of finished products by the federal government, Yucatán suffered from a conspicuous inability to influence the stability or competitiveness of either production or the market price of henequen sold for export. Given the present economic and political orientation of the governmental structures of Yucatan and Mexico, it seems clear that some form of centralized coordination of productive efforts is required to dampen economic fluctuations in the industry and to maintain the viability of the henequen zone and the thousands of families that depend on this product as their sole means to survival.

It would seem that if the government undertook program changes which would provide some semblance of productive autonomy, if institutions such as the Bangrario provided a partial return of profits over and above the normal salary allotments expended to cover the actual local costs of production, then there should be an associated increase in general productive effectiveness. Expressed in the form of alternatives, the government should either attempt to decrease the contradictions between reform ideology and the reality of control, or should terminate the stagnating facade of revolutionary reform in the henequen zone of Yucatán. Dissolution of the facade would permit ejidatarios the opportunity to organize worker syndicates, part of the organizational reality of proletarian status enjoyed by other workers in Yucatán and, more specifically, by the employees and workers in the Bangrario and the manufacturing complex of CORDEMEX. The ejidatarios of San Antonio are laborers assigned, by birth, to a particularly localized sector of the total manufacturing structure of the monocrop, export economy of Yucatán. In spite of the fact that the ejido structure, as presently administered, has a divisive and immobilizing effect on the ejidatarios of the henequen zone, evidence indicates that they have been able to exert collective pressure to change the policies of the governing institutions. As noted earlier, the Bangrario has, since the period of fieldwork, altered some of the basic "rules" governing the patterned interaction between the ejidal sector and that federal credit and administrative institution. The ejidos in general, and San Antonio in particular, should be receiving year-end dividends proportionate to the relative

productivity of the ejido. With fields presently entering the early stages of productive decline and termination of the life-cycle of the plantings, this change in the economic administration of the ejido should be reflected in the quality and density of fields replanted in henequen, if such replanting is actually authorized by the Bangrario.

It is almost a standard procedure, in anthropological works, to suggest that further research is necessary to understand questions and issues invariably raised by research and analysis of field data. This work will not deviate from that traditional practice. Changes have occurred, as outlined above, since the period of fieldwork. The governmental institution of the Bangrario has modified the patterned interaction between that agency and the ejido sector. The ejidatarios will adapt, as they have in the past, in ways that demonstrate the attempt to explore and utilize as completely as possible, the economic potential afforded by those changes. They will continue to utilize the owner of the remnant holdings as a source of extra-community power and influence and will maintain the economic, social, and political relations with the pequeño propietario for as long as they continue to be beneficial to the community itself.

The ejidatarios of San Antonio, however, will not be ameliorated by the changes in Bangrario policy. They will continue to explore, insofar as possible from their position of relative powerlessness, and to pressure for even greater change and economic improvement of their basic condition. Given the continuing increases in the population of ejidatarios dependent on the cultivation of

henequen for their survival, it seems that the government will eventually be forced to restructure the organization of production in the henequen zone, perhaps resurrecting something like the "Gran Ejido" envisioned by Canto Echeverría and initially sanctioned by President Lázaro Cárdenas. This time, however, the ejidatarios will not passively submit to work on a "Gran Hacienda," but will work as undisguised proletarian laborers attempting to effect improvements in their social, economic, and political position in the regional, state, and national socio-economic hierarchy. As noted by Don Leonardo, the first president of the ejido of San Antonio, the tranquility, order, and blind demonstration of obedience and deferential respect characteristic of the early days of the ejido, have disappeared. Everyone wants a voice in the operation of the ejido and, in Leonardo's view, everyone suffers from the infection of politicization.

The people of San Antonio demonstrate tremendous flexibility in their ability to change and adapt to conditions which obviously affect their lives and their ability to survive as individuals and as members of the larger community. In the midst of complaints resulting from their own analyses of their disadvantageous social, political, and economic position in Yucatec society, the ejidatarios of San Antonio are nevertheless still able to communicate a feeling of optimism and a subtle sense of humor with respect to themselves and their situation. In the words of Filo, following a meeting with the Bangrario officials in which he and David were chastized, insulted, and reminded graphically of their low status and political unimportance, "se puso bueno, no?" "It got pretty good in there, didn't it?"

GLOSSARY

Acasillados.--The resident worker population of an hacienda.

Ahijado -a.--Godchild (godson/goddaughter).

Ampliación.--The enlargement of ejido holdings as provided for by agrarian reform.

Anticipo.--Wage payment for work performed advanced by the Bangrario against returns from the sale of fiber.

Arroba.--A Spanish weight of twenty-five pounds.

Avío.--Short term loans associated with the annual productive cycle.

Bagazo.--Waste leaf pulp produced as a byproduct of the decortication process.

Casa Principal.--The main house or residence of the hacienda owner.

Casco.--The central core (buildings, etc.) of the hacienda.

Catrín/Catrina.--A person who emphasizes a Spanish heritage (socially and/or biologically).

Cenote.--A natural limestone sink or well.

Chapeo.--Weeding operations in either the henequen fields or the milpa field.

Chekador.--Work inspector.

Compadrazgo.--Ritual coparenthood for which the parents of a child select coparents, ritual sponsors of the children.

Comadre.--Co-mother, a relationship established through compadrazgo.

Comadróna.--Midwife.

Compadre.--Co-father, a relationship established through compadrazgo.

Cultivo.--A field that has been recently planted but which has not yet begun to be fully productive.

Decadencia.--A field which is in the final stages of the productive life-cycle of the henequen plant.

Desfibradora.--A decorticating factory which separates fiber from the henequen leaf.

Dotación.--An outright grant of ejido lands to workers as part of the Mexican agrarian reform program.

Ejidatario.--A legally entitled member of an ejido.

Ejido.--An area of land granted under agrarian reform to a worker group, which is given in usufruct and which may be exploited collectively or individually.

Empleados.--Workers earning a salary.

Encargado.--The general manager of an enterprise.

Encomienda.--Land and populations granted in trust by the Spanish Crown to a conquistador who may then enjoy tribute rights.

Encomendados.--Populations granted in trust to a Spanish conquistador which must meet specified demands for the payment of tribute.

Encomendero.--The holder of an encomienda trust.

Explotación.--Henequen fields that are in full production.

Fagina.--Labor tribute demanded by an hacendado in return for the right of the worker to engage in other tasks for compensation.

Fiado.--A form of credit not unlike that of the familiar "charge-account."

Fiduciario.--An outstanding debt held in trust by an institution for future repayment.

Hacendado.--The owner of an hacienda.

Hacienda.--A large, family-owned, landholding which typically included not only land but human populations (acasillados) as part of the total holdings.

Hectare.--A unit of land measuring 2.417 acres.

Henequen.--A fibrous, cactus-like member of the agave family (*A. fourcroydes*).

Hetzmek.--A Mayan role baptismal ceremony of pre-Colombian origins which involves ritual sponsorship of the initiate.

Jornaleros.--Workers paid according to the amount of work performed.

Kilogram.--A unit of weight equal to 2.2046 pounds.

Lahpach.--A henequen field which is no longer in production and which has been effectively abandoned.

Madrina.--Godmother.

Mecate.--A unit of land measuring twenty meters by twenty meters, twenty-five mecates to the hectare.

Mestizo -a.--An individual identified as possessing, socially, both catrín and Indian heritages.

Milpa.--The corn field.

Milperos.--Individuals who continue to engage in the cultivation of corn.

Noria.--A major well, usually implying the use of animal power or a windmill to draw large volumes of water.

Paca.--A bale of raw henequen fiber.

Padrino.--Godfather.

Parcela.--An individually owned or possessed small plot of land.

Parcelario.--The owner or possessor of a parcela.

Patrón.--The "boss" or, typically, owner of an enterprise.

Peón.--Laborer or common rural worker.

Pequeña Propiedad.--A "small landholding" unit as defined by the agrarian code of Mexico.

Pequeño Propietario.--The owner of a pequeña propiedad.

Planilla.--A slate of candidates.

Raspar.--The process of decortication or the separation of fiber from leaves of the henequen plant.

Refaccionario.--A long term loan usually associated with the purchase of machinery or for agricultural operations related to development beyond the normal annual productive cycle.

Restitución.--The expropriation and return of documented communal lands originally pertaining to a town.

Socio-Delegado.--An ejido member named (or elected) to represent the interests of the ejido in dealings with the Federal credit institutions of the Banjidal or Bangrario.

Solar.--An individual house lot.

Tienda de Raya.--The "company store" of an hacienda, often used as one means to retain workers in a condition of indebted servitude.

Tonkos y Pakché.--Refers to the manual separation of fiber from the henequen leaf prior to the invention of the decorticating machine.

Unión Libre.--A "free union" consensual marriage.

X-Lahpach.--See Lahpach.

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