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CACIQUISMO IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY MEXICAN EJIDO-GRANT COMMUNITIES

by

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CACIQUISMO IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY MEXICAN EJIDO-GRA NT COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Caciquismo, or political bossism, is a type of autocratic political organization which has been prevalent in rural agrarian Mexico for over 400 years.\(^2\) It has been especially noted in communities which have had corporate landholding, i.e., where title to the agricultural, pasture, and woodlands has been held by the community and usufruct rights to these lands have been granted to community members. Caciquismo exists in this type of community when one individual, with the help of a small group of followers, controls the economic, political, and sometimes even the social activity of the members of that community. He gains and maintains control through various means - patronage, coercion, coöperation, violence, etc. Tracts have been written explaining why communities with this form of land tenure arrangement have been prey to autocratic, or cacique rule in previous centuries (e.g., Gibson 1964; Silva Herzog 1959; Tannenbaum 1929). It is not so clear, however, why many post-Revolution (post-1917) communities in which the majority of land is under ejido grant\(^3\) are still under cacique rule, for many parts of the 1917 Constitution and subsequent laws purposefully built a democratic form into the government of these communities.

It is my contention that caciquismo has continued to exist in twentieth-century Mexican ejido communities which are by law organized according to democratic principles largely because of two factors. First, while many parts of the 1917 Constitution and subsequent agrarian laws were written to insure democratic organization of the ejido community, some of the laws could be interpreted or subverted to allow for auto-
ocratic organization, or caciquismo, of the ejido. Second, certain implications of the Post-Revolution Mexican political structure, which is characterized by the one-party system, further increase the possibility that caciquismo will continue in ejido communities.

I plan to demonstrate the first point by carefully inspecting the laws and examining case studies of ejido communities which are or recently have been controlled by caciques. These case studies were reported by other anthropologists who worked in all parts of Mexico from the 1930's to the early 1970's. Analysis of the laws reveals where and how certain sections can be misinterpreted or subverted so that individuals can achieve and maintain autocratic rule. Examination of case studies points out how actual individuals managed to do so. I will consider the second point by analyzing the implications of modern political structure on ejido community political organization and by presenting case studies of caciques in ejido communities. While the former analysis indicates the logical implications of the national political structure for the ejido community, the latter is intended to illustrate that some of these implications have been explicitly used by individuals in such communities.

Analysis of the legal system has been based on the laws themselves while analysis of the political structure is my own rethinking of that structure, thinking which has been influenced by some anthropologists, political scientists, and economists (e.g., Simpson 1937; Padgett 1966; Hansen 1971). Actual case studies of caciques are used to demonstrate both points because they best illustrate the implications of the laws and national political structure for the ejido political structure. While a more powerful argument could be made if I contrasted ejido communities with caciques to ejido communities without caciques, I can rarely be sure that reports of cacique-less communities actually meant that the ejido
was free of caciquismo. The literature often ignores (or fails to clearly spell out) the political structure when describing the government organization of the community or area studied.

It will be noted that the case studies are based on life histories of one or several individuals living in ejido communities (over the 50-year period since the end of the Revolution). These life histories are meant to demonstrate that the logic in this analysis is more than my own creation but is acted upon by individuals in ejido communities. Such studies also give this analysis its basic orientation, i.e., both the political and legal structures are analyzed from the point of view of the individual seeking to play the cacique rule in an ejido community. By using this point of view, one can see that the national political structure and some laws make it easy for some individuals to achieve the cacique status.

The roles which help one achieve cacique status may be categorized into three types. These are: (a) broker between the local administrative unit and higher levels of politico-government organization, (b) patron to the majority of people within the local unit, and (c) leader of a power group. Anyone performing all three roles for the community at one time in a corporate landholding community controls the politics, economy, and government of that community and is the cacique of the community.

Before proceeding, it should be noted that in some of the anthropological literature on caciquismo, authors will state that there is more than one cacique in an administrative unit at one time because the people under investigation refer to more than one individual as 'cacique' (Lewis 1951; Siverts 1965). I believe that this is confusing the folk usage with an analytical term. In a true cacicazgo, there may be
several strong leaders in an administrative unit, but only one is the cacique. If there is no one leader, then chances are that the several leaders are competing for that status. This distinction is not mine but can be found in much of the literature (Dunwell 1965; Foster 1948; Cancian 1965).

In sum, in order to understand how caciquismo has continued to exist in many ejido communities in twentieth-century Mexico despite laws and a Constitution which have sought to establish a democratic political structure there, I plan to examine caciquismo as the process of status attainment, maintenance, and loss. Examination of the laws concerning the operation of the ejido community and the national political structure coupled with case studies of caciques in the anthropological literature indicates that these laws and the national political structure make it possible for one individual to pass through this process, thus caciquismo continues to exist up to the 1970's.

I. Implications of the National Agrarian Reform Laws for the Achievement of Cacique Status

One of the most significant results of the Mexican Revolution was the agrarian reform legislation begun in a Presidential decree of January 6, 1915, codified in Article 27 of the 1917 Constitution, and modified by law thereafter. The purpose of much of this reform legislation was to return land to the communities which had been corporate landholding communities before the Díaz regime ("restitution") or to grant land to communities seeking to become corporate landholding units ("dotation").

Prior to the Revolution and especially during the Díaz regime, the agrarian land tenure structure was divided in three parts. The first was the hacienda, or large landholding owned by one family and worked by
peones living either on hacienda grounds or in a nearby town. Peones were often granted a houseplot and milpa plot for subsistence farming in return for low wages and long-standing debts (McBride 1923). The second part was the rancho, or small landholding owned and farmed by a family with perhaps some (often seasonal) outside help (Whetten 1948). The third was the 'free village,' or corporate landholding community in which title to the pasture, wood and farmland was in the name of the village and use of all the land was open to community members. While pasture and woodland were open to all, farmland was usually parcelled out to members of the community. Such parcels could not be sold by the individuals working them but by a joint decision of all community members.

Through new legislation which subverted the purpose of the 1856 Constitution of Juárez (which tried to return land to the peasants), Díaz hastened the reduction of the amount of land held by free villages and ranchos and thereby increased the size and number of haciendas in many parts of Mexico (Whetten 1948). The purpose of the post-Revolution agrarian reform program was to reverse the trend of the Díaz period and return farmland to the free villages and villages absorbed by the haciendas. Restitution was instituted in such a way as to establish local democratic government of these lands and to prevent their usurpation from the community at a later date. This was the overt reasoning behind Article 27 of the Constitution.

While the reasoning was sound, several of the laws could be used to help block the establishment of democracy in many ejidos. In brief, the legal format (established in the Constitution and subsequent laws as will be seen later) for receiving a land grant and later economic benefits as well as for organizing the majority of adult male members of a community into an ejido leaves room for, if not encourages, one individual to take
on the three roles essential to achieving cacique status, i.e., the roles of broker, leader of a power group, and patron.

The first role, that of broker between an ejido community and the National Agrarian Reform organization consists of mediating between these levels of agrarian organization. Status associated with playing this role places the individual at the top of the local-level political hierarchy and intermediary between that level and the next highest level of political organization. The political broker gains favors for himself, his followers, and his ejido from the higher levels of the political and government organizations in his role as client to his superiors. Here the client guarantees political (voting and physical) support to his political superiors in return for patronage, or physical and economic support for himself and for political and economic benefits for the ejido he represents. To be a client means that one is able to understand and function well enough within these political circles in order to know what one's superiors want and to gain the favors one seeks.

The Constitution stipulates that the federal government is the sole owner of national land and has the power to grant land to incorporated communities whose members depend upon subsistence farming for their livelihood. Any 'population nucleus' may petition the government for the land grant, thus taking the initiative for land reform. The land grant is made not to each petitioner but to the petitioning body which is organized into an Assembly of ejidatarios led by an agrarian committee. This committee is responsible to the National Agrarian Commission (Tannenbaum 1929: 236).

The process of getting a land grant by either 'restitution' or 'dotation' may be summarized as follows: All or some members of a community petition the Local Agrarian Committee for a land grant. This
committee consists of individuals appointed by the Governor of a state to oversee land grants within the entire state. If this board approves, the petition is sent to the National Agrarian Commission in Mexico City which also reviews the petition. If the commission approves, it will recommend to the President of Mexico that he grant the petition. Only by Presidential decree can a community receive a land grant. This may take years, as a community seeking 'restitution' or 'dotation' may fight long legal battles with the surrounding haciendas or communities. For example, in Cozumel, Quintana Roo, some inhabitants petitioned for a land grant in 1928; the Presidential decree was dated 1945. The time may be lessened by a provisional grant from the Governor, as it was in Cozumel.

Why is a broker necessary in securing a land grant and subsequent economic benefits to the ejido as a whole? As the initiative for such a grant must come from the community (by petition), someone among the community members (or someone at least one of them can count on for help) must know how to write the petition and how to interpret the laws enough to (a) explain them to the other members, and (b) get the other members to agree that a land grant would be to their benefit. Since the majority of hacienda peones and free villagers are illiterate, and many do not even speak or understand Spanish, they need one person to interpret for them and then represent them (by writing and presenting the petition to the Local Agrarian Commission). This is what the broker does—organizes the community to seek ejido status, petitions the government for the community, and often follows the petition through the political channels to assure its acceptance by the President.

The broker continues to act for the ejido as it seeks new economic benefits such as piped water, electricity, Ejido Bank credit. For example, in Hach Pech, Yucatán, only the schoolteacher knew how to write
petitions and to send them to the right agencies to get irrigated citrus groves, piped water, and electricity for the ejido. This knowledge gained him the authority to play broker between the ejido community and the national agrarian administration (Press 1969: 212).

How does an individual become the broker in such a situation? Partly through playing the other two roles (patron and leader of a power group) but also by broadcasting his superior knowledge of the national agrarian laws and political structure (organization plus personal contacts) to the other community members. This knowledge is based on his superior education to the majority of community members (a speaking, reading, and writing knowledge of Spanish) and often on his wider travel experience within and beyond his state.

In short, by assuming that there are individuals on the local level who can start and carry through the process of gaining a land grant from the President of Mexico, the law makes it possible for one or a small group of individuals to play broker between the community and the national agrarian reform structure.

The law makes another assumption which can be interpreted as the need for someone to play the broker role. This assumption is that members of an ejido may be treated not as individual landowners but as a collective block with one opinion and therefore one spokesman (or one committee of spokesmen). This coincides with a further assumption that both the national government and the local ejido want the ejido to maintain its corporate nature and structural distance from the national society.

Once the process of land return is begun, the petitioners are organized into a new governing unit which is granted relative autonomy within the community. While the governing board cannot legislate new laws, it is "empowered to deal with the important local problems that affect the community--land, water, education, credit, cooperation, and so forth" (Tannenbaum 1929: 417). That is, it has the authority to make policy decisions for all members of the ejido.

The implication of this organization is that by the time an issue leaves
the ejido level, it must already be resolved one way or another (not by reporting that a majority support a given issue and a minority oppose it). The supralocal agrarian structure will act only on one opinion. Therefore, the supralocal structure sees the necessity for only one representative of the ejido. There is no need to hear two opinions on one issue (see also Nash 1970).

The fact that many communities have a tradition of consensus decisionmaking enforces the national conception that there is only one opinion in an ejido (Miller 1965; Friedrich 1964; Redfield 1950). This view of one opinion, one representative gives additional supralocal and, in the case of communities which favor consensus decisions, local support to one individual acting as broker for the entire ejido.

Beyond the assumptions of the laws is the actual government structure which the laws prescribe for an ejido. Brief examination of the laws can be used to increase the possibility that one individual could act as broker for the entire ejido. Two laws following the ratification of the Constitution redefined the form of local government to be established in an ejido.

The first, Circular 51 (1922), states that each ejido should elect a governing board of three, the Ejido Administrative Committee, to receive the ejido grant and distribute the land to community members, that 20% of the ejido members have the authority to petition the Delegate to the National Agrarian Commission to call a new election should the governing board control too much power, that the ejido should be organized cooperatively to take maximum advantage of agricultural technology, and that the National Agrarian Commission should guide ejido programs as well as distribute land (Simpson 1937: 319-320). Furthermore, Circular 51 provides for the perpetual community ownership of forest, brush, and pasture land; and distribution of the products derived from the land exploited communally in proportion to the amount of work done (Ibid).

The second, the Law of Ejido Patrimony (1925), modified the above
format by replacing the Ejido Administrative Committee with the Ejido Commissariat and the Board of Vigilance. The Commissariat consists of three members elected by majority vote every two years. Its function is to represent the village on higher administrative levels, to distribute ejido lands and direct the exploitation of the common properties, to call meetings, and to carry out the instructions of the community (Ibid: 324). The Board of Vigilance (three members) is elected every two years to check the power of the Ejido Commissariat by also having the power to call meetings of the community and by reporting any trouble in the community to the State and National Agrarian Commission (Ibid: 325). In communities where the Ejido Committee is elected by majority vote, the minority group is supposed to elect the Board of Vigilance. In addition, all ejido land not set aside for common use (i.e., town, pasture, forest) is to be permanently allotted to individuals whose ownership is limited by not being allowed to sell, mortgage, or rent it to someone outside the village (Ibid: 259).

This form of organization is meant to disperse power on the local level. But such a goal is easily subverted by not following the laws or by 'writing' new ones. This is easily accomplished if an individual or group of individuals can control the community's understanding of the laws in the first place. If the population cannot read, then the interpreters of the laws can tell the people what they like and thereby establish their own set of operating rules. The result is that in some communities (such as Chan Kom, as will be seen in Section III), the executive, legislative, and judicial functions of government may be concentrated in one person or an individual and his followers. Many communities lack a Board of Vigilance. Often control of the government structure results in monopolization of the broker role between the ejido
and supralocal government agencies. As long as the state or federal government cannot or will not check up on the local ejido, individuals can continue to monopolize the ejido government and therefore the broker role.

In order to subvert the laws, it is often necessary for an individual to be part of or lead a power group. A power group is a core of loyal followers who help their leader fight for control of the decision-making process in the ejido. Each follower is attached to the group through some dyadic tie to the leader: kinship, fictive kinship, friendship, economic obligation. Research in Mexico indicates that a power group is often made up of two levels, the inner core and an outer ring of supporters (Miller 1965; Young 1965; Friedrich 1971). The inner core usually consists of members having kin ties to the leader. Friedrich (1964: 194) states that in Naranja, the core members (10-30 men) share a patronym or matronym with the leader, who is usually the patriarch of an extended family. In other words, a leader's core group is drawn from his brothers, sons, nephews, and cousins.

The peripheral (noncore) members of a power group are often drawn to the leader in his role as patron to individuals (rather than to the entire ejido). People join the leader's power group because they either already owe him a favor (taken in the form of political loyalty) (Ceme 1934: 218) or they hope to receive a political or economic reward from him (Friedrich 1965, 1971).

The above paragraphs describe what a power group is and how a leader forms such a group. But they do not explain why a leader needs a power group in order to gain control of the local government and therefore the broker role between the local and supralocal government structures. The logical reason for a power group is really simple and also buried in the legal structure of the ejido. The legal granting of autonomous
status to the ejido (i.e., treating it as a closed corporate landholding community) shifts the responsibility for the kind of elections held from the national government structure to each ejido community. While the law states that all positions for office shall be filled by democratic election, such elections can easily be prevented where there is no supra-local supervision. Research has shown that, in fact, democratic elections are usually prevented by coercion through physical threats or threats of unequal distribution of land, etc. Elections which are not done by secret ballot are not democratic. Cases are reported where officials marked the ballots for the voters. Any voter approaching the election table where the ballot was marked who indicated a preference other than that held by the officials was told he could not vote as he wished (Foster 1967). In Zinacantán, Chiapas, local representatives are elected by men clustering around their candidate. The man with the largest number surrounding him wins (Vogt 1969). But if an individual sees the strongest and most violent men of the community favoring one candidate, might he not be swayed to join them to prevent them from harming him or his family and to gain their physical protection?

The result is that in order to gain the cacique status and play the role of broker, an individual must (and does) use physical force to gain power. As he cannot wield enough force alone, he must gather a group of supporters around him (Miller 1959, 1965; Friedrich 1965).

I have already mentioned that one method of gaining supporters is to become a patron to them. To play this third crucial role means that a man is in the position to grant economic and political favors. The granting of economic favors is accomplished by dispensing one's own wealth to individuals (e.g., giving presents when sponsoring someone's child at a ceremony—compadrazgo) or by dispensing economic resources
gained through one's political position. For example, as local representative of the national Ejido Bank, Pedro Caso had the power to withhold or grant government loans to each Naranja ejidatario (Friedrich 1968: 254).

Political favors are usually official posts granted supporters by their leader. These posts are valuable because the incumbent is usually able to build a political or financial base or both while he is in office (Siverts 1965). Once again, in order to be able to dispense political favors, the leader of a power group must be able to control elections and the positions open at each election. A leader can sometimes get an official post in the supralocal hierarchy of government agencies if he has pull with the authorities who assign people to such posts.

Patronage, like brokerage, may extend between an individual and several members of his community, or it may extend to the entire community. When an individual plays patron to the entire ejido, he is able to become a cacique. How is community-wide patronage accomplished? The law states that the ejido committee has the power to set policy and distribute ejido plots and water rights every two years. If an individual controls the ejido committee, then he can be seen as the patron who apportions the land and water. This is because apportionment is not done democratically in Assembly but is done autocratically by the ejido committee (Miller 1965). People are assigned plots; they do not choose them. While all ejidatarios must receive land, there is usually a wide range in quality and amount of land apportioned, quality being determined by fertility and proximity to water and the settlement. Thus the committee grants favors to its relatives and supporters by giving them large, fertile fields while it spites its enemies or nonsupporters by assigning them small fields of low fertility. As the ejidatarios are dependent upon land for their livelihood (or else they do not qualify as
ejidatarios), land apportionment may cause differential wealth accumulation in a community. Thus people can see that their family livelihood depends upon the pleasure or displeasure of a committee, which can often be a front for the power of one man.

In summary, while the national laws regarding land grants and ejido organization were intended to establish democratic control of public policy in the ejido, some of them have left room for autocratic control of public policy because they were ambiguous or misinterpreted. Misinterpretation or modification of these laws could lead to the encouragement of someone or a group of individuals to play the roles of broker and patron to the entire ejido. Furthermore, in order for an individual to play these roles to the entire ejido, he needs the backing of a power group which can help him skirt certain laws, especially the laws concerning democratic election. I have given some indication that, logically and empirically, the laws make it possible for an individual and his supporters to monopolize each role for the entire ejido. This will become clear in the following section, where the national political structure is seen to encourage these trends also.

II. Implications of the National Political Structure For the Achievement of Cacique Status

The national political structure developed after 1917 encouraged the performance of the three roles in the ejido as much as the laws did. Furthermore, the national political structure increased the possibility that one person would play all three roles at one time for the entire ejido and thereby gain the status of cacique.

Prior to the Revolution, Porfirio Díaz changed from president to dictator of Mexico. Surrounded by a small group of advisors (known as 'los científicos'), he dictated the laws to the legislature, executed
them through his control over the army, and acted as judge in many cases, including land disputes. Through absolute control of all three branches of government, he undermined the principles of the 1856 Constitution and increased the wealth differentiation within Mexico by favoring the requests of his friends. His and his advisors' oligarchic power was destroyed by the Revolution (1910), which was begun by Madero with the idea of establishing democratic elections and forbidding any individual from holding office for two consecutive terms. Between 1910 and 1924, the country was constantly wracked by civil war as one individual and his backers tried to overthrow the incumbent President on the principle that he was not pursuing the two major goals of the Revolution—democratic election and land reform. Once the rebellion of de la Huerta (1923-1924) was put down, the country settled into relative political stability, i.e., political struggle did not take place on the national level.

Following the beginning of political stability came the founding of the one-party political system. Basically, the major political party formed a structure parallel to the government's, with the President of Mexico heading both. Both structures were pyramidally shaped, with single lines extending from one level of organization to the next. Often the person in one position of the political structure holds the same position in the government structure as well.

What is the significance of a one-party national political structure for the political structure of an ejido community in Mexico? It means that in order for an individual to perform one of three roles (broker, patron, leader of a power group) for the entire ejido, he needs to play the other two roles also. In this way, the national political structure encourages the achievement of the three roles central to cacique status by one individual. This will be clear as we examine three major implications of the one-party structure for the local-level political
structure.

First, a one-party structure means that political rivalries are resolved within the party before election day. Therefore elections have little political meaning, although Foster (1967) suggests that they have patriotic meaning. If elections do not determine who gains control of public (ejido) policy-making (i.e., distribution of land, water rights, government positions, and other economic benefits), then something else does. In Mexico, the 'something else' is either physical force provided by the supporters of a leader (potential or actual cacique) or physical force or political support provided by authorities on the suprlocal levels of the government and political hierarchies (Hansen 1971). Political support is in the forms of (a) voting for the leader's candidates, (b) influencing others to vote for the leader's candidates, and (c) fighting with leader's faction when opposition occurs.

Support from governmental and political superiors is often in the form of military aid to put down opposition on the part of a competing faction or of the entire ejido (e.g. Chan Kom, Refield 1950; Tepotzlán, Lewis 1949). Furthermore, the slate of candidates for ejido offices must be approved by the next highest level of government (Foster 1967: 176). Therefore, it seems logical that officials would give support to local leaders by approving the slates which help them keep control of the public policy or by changing the slates until they do.

In order to gain such support, an individual must have active contact with higher-ups. Such contact is often made when playing the broker role between the ejido and the higher authorities. Contact is then reinforced (or vice versa) through personal ties such as business partnerships or fictive kinship (compadrazgo). Of course, using ties to higher officials to assure support during local-level political contests would
depend upon the officials' gaining and/or maintaining their position in the political structure.

Up to 1934 when political struggles on the state or municipal levels often were resolved at elections, the broker for an ejido had much to offer a candidate on these levels of government—voter support, if the broker has enough power to control local elections. This is becoming the trend in state-level politics again. During the 1930's-1950's when there was only one slate of candidates, strength at the polls was still important for an official's legitimacy, i.e., as a representative of the people, he had to have a strong showing at the polls. And physical backing was often necessary to win a political contest before election time. The local leaders often provided the manpower to win physical contests on the supralocal level.

One should not forget that while the above description talks in terms of resolution of political contests, such contests are often not resolved, i.e., factionalism may continue for decades as in Tepotzlán (Lewis 1951) or may be resolved in a particularly bloody manner (e.g., Friedrich 1966: 212). It would seem that if political control of an ejido largely depends on political support of supralocal leaders adhering to one party, then whichever local group gets the support of the hierarchy would easily win the local political contest. However, it is not so easy because factional fighting is occurring on the supralocal level also. A local-level group risks its future by backing one of these factions, and often the outcome of supralocal factional fights is unknown until the last minute (a characteristic of factionalism). Thus local-level factions can back the wrong supralocal faction and lose all their supralocal support.

The second implication of the one-party political structure in
Mexico is that there is only one line of access to power and political favors. When the political and government structures are parallel in form and overlap in personnel, there are no alternate means to gaining government posts and to controlling the power which holding such positions usually entails. Furthermore, many have noted that the only way to gain wealth in Mexico is through the same political structure. And prestige follows wealth and power.

The significance of this single line of access to power for obtaining the status of cacique of a corporate landholding community is three-fold. First, it means that an entire group of people (ejido) who sometimes have divergent views about what they want and how to get it are limited to one political representative who doubles as the representative to the government as well. In a two- or more-party structure, community members are not limited to one person to appeal to for help but can go to the representative of one of several parties. That is, they have alternative personnel to gain favors from and to give political support to. Silverman (1964) describes how several political parties and labor unions in a small farming town in Italy compete for the support of the people by offering them services, e.g., mediation and loans. The competition between parties blocks any one group from monopolizing the communication channels between the community and national government, thereby eliminating the possibility that one individual and his supporters may perform the broker role for the entire community.

In Mexico, the competition for the broker role is resolved on the local level before the role is even performed. That is, political competition takes the form of factional fights, thus necessitating that a
potential cacique have a strong power group supporting him. If one faction is not strong enough to eliminate competition, then two factions will alternate performing the broker role (Friedrich 1966), changing who controls the role at each election. In other words, several factions cannot represent the people simultaneously; they must alternate for control of this role. This is because there is only one political party powerful enough to grant the favors sought by the community and by the leaders' supporters. This party (PRI) controls the government (who gets office, which community gets benefits, what the policy is).

The second implication of the single line of access follows from the first: The major way for an individual to obtain the political favors which he then dispenses to the community in his role as patron is to gain the support of the PRI officials, using his personal ties to them for the purpose of obtaining such favors for the community. I have mentioned in Section I that personal ties are often begun by the individual playing the broker role between the supralocal officials and the community they represent. The point is that, logically speaking, an individual cannot belong to an opposition party and expect to obtain favors from the party which controls the government. In fact, he cannot even back the wrong (i.e., losing) faction within the PRI and expect to gain political favors. This was the case in Tapilula where one faction had to leave when it supported the losing ticket for state candidates (Simpson 1937: 322).

The third import of a single line of access is that if the government and political structures overlap in personnel, then an individual holding a post in both structures can use the power that is concomitant with the post he holds in one structure to enhance his or someone else's position in the other structure. There are several examples of a municipal or state government official sending the militia to help a local-
level leader win a political contest or put down any community-wide opposition to him (Lewis 1955; Redfield 1950).

Once again, the performance of each role helps the individual perform the others: To become a broker, one must win a factional fight, a fight which is sometimes resolved by outside support which one gained while learning or playing the broker role. Otherwise it is resolved by the physical strength of one's backers, or power group. And patronage follows from one's ties to the proper authorities, ties which were also often gained through playing the broker role.

The final implication of the one-party structure is that each level in the political hierarchy is controlled by the one above it, thereby enhancing tight party control. The result is that local individuals depend on the officials of the next highest level for political power rather than on the people in the community whom they supposedly represent. The significance of this situation is obvious. First, if one's political power does not depend on the people one represents, then local elections need not be democratic (i.e., by secret ballot). The literature is full of examples of elections for ejido and municipal office, none of which are conducted by secret ballot (Foster 1948: 181; Vogt 1969: 290, etc.). The result is that the only means by which a community can rid itself of a bad leader are nonelectory, i.e., by actual or character assassination. Friedrich (1966) reports that one cacique of Naranja was assassinated, while Dunwell (1965) reports that the cacique of Navenchauk was deposed when his opponents forced him into a political contest which he lost because the state governor refused to back him.

The second significance is the other half of the first-- political power often depends on the patronage of political superiors. The above example illustrates this. It has been mentioned that backing the wrong
patron results in the political downfall and perhaps physical expulsion of a leader and his power group from the community to which they belong.

The hierarchical organization of the one-party structure also means that, in agrarian Mexico, political power in corporate landholding communities depends on physical force provided by higher officials, support which is often gained by the performance of the broker role on the part of the leader.

In conclusion, three major characteristics of a one-party political structure (political contests are not resolved in secret ballot elections; there is a single line of access to power and political favors; and political power depends on the support of one's party/government superiors and one's power group rather than on one's constituents) are seen to increase the possibility that one individual should and could play all three roles (broker, patron, leader of a power group) to the entire ejido community and thus become cacique to that community.

III. The Process of Caciquismo: Gaining, Maintaining and Losing the Status

I have mentioned in the Introduction that caciquismo is really a process of one individual gaining, maintaining, and eventually losing the cacique status. This status is really a position one holds when one acts as broker and patron to the entire, or majority of the ejido. Achievement of these two roles depends partly on the backing of a local power group, of which the cacique is the leader, and partly on the support of politicians operating on the supralocal level. In the previous two sections I have indicated that the national laws and one-party political structure together permit the possibility that all three roles are performed in an ejido and that one person may simultaneously play all three roles to a community. In the following section, I wish to illus-
strate the processual nature of caciquismo, i.e., that one individual achieves all three roles and uses each role to advance the other two. I plan to do this by (a) giving two extensive examples, in this case one life history and one village history, (b) summarizing the process in two charts which represent other life histories found in the literature, and (c) organizing other life histories found in the literature into charts to see whether or not they follow the same process.

The first example is of Eustaquio Ceme, 'Don Eus,' of Chan Kom, Yucatán. His education shows that an individual does not accidentally become a cacique but carefully learns the roles over the first two to three decades of his life. This implies that caciquismo is not an event which happens to adults but is a life process which begins in childhood.

Chan Kom was started as a ranchería (hamlet) of Ebtun by the father and uncles of Don Eus (Ceme 1934: 214). By 1918, the original settlers were joined by others who helped to make it a hamlet with a two-class structure. Its inhabitants were either literate, bilingual (Spanish and Maya) former leaders of free towns or freed, monolingual (Maya) illiterate, former debt peons from neighboring haciendas which had recently been closed down by government decree (Reifield 1950: 8). Don Eus and his relatives belonged to the former group. This group of about four families acted as spokesmen for the rest of the community members. Thus Don Eus was born into and reared in the group which monopolized the broker role between the community and the supralocal government and political structures. This was important, for he was trained as a potential broker.

Don Eus was prepared for leadership by his uncle and patriarch of an extended family, Don Fano. By sending Don Eus with older family members on trips to Mérida (the capital of Yucatán), Don Fano gave the boy
the opportunity to meet and form ties (compadrazgo, friendship, business acquaintance) with government officials which he could later use to become political broker and economic patron of Chan Kom. He gave Don Eus administrative experience (around 1920) by having him appointed treasurer of Ebtún during Don Fano's term as Comisario there. Finally, Don Fano sent Don Eus on business trips to buy and sell cattle throughout Yucatán. These trips taught him to be an entrepreneur to increase his profit through the careful buying and selling of cattle, and to make contact with other influential people in the peninsula.

But in order to attain the broker role to an entire community, the role itself must be necessary. In Chan Kom, the existence of the broker role depended upon the attainment of ejido and pueblo status for the community, for as long as Chan Kom was a ranchería within the municipality of Ebtún, the people of Chan Kom could easily communicate with the officials in Ebtún, thereby making the broker role to the entire community unnecessary. Ejido status meant communication in Spanish and sometimes in writing with an entire government bureaucracy located in the state capital, Mérida. This changing status was accomplished by the four leading families in August, 1926 (Redfield and Villa R. 1934: 29), following the agrarian reform program established in the 1917 Constitution and two Circulars already described (see Section I).

I have already stated that the purpose of the laws was to disperse power and thereby establish democratic government within the ejido. But the leading families did not establish the government organization in Chan Kom as stated in the Law of Ejido Patrimony as there was no one to enforce the Law. Instead, they modified it from an executive committee of three elected every two years to a comisario and suplente (substitute) elected annually. The old comisario would preside over the election and
was thus able to influence its outcome. In fact, a vote was rarely taken as the people knew beforehand who would be the next comisario (Ibid: 102-103). In this way, the law was subverted to allow for oligarchic or autocratic organization.

Don Eus and his followers were further aided in monopolizing the broker role by the one-party system whereby all adult males were automatically members of the Liga Local. The League annually elected five party officers to represent the pueblo in Mérida during the election of state deputies to the National Congress. At the party meetings, the officers established contact with state and municipal politicians, thereby positioning themselves to be able to control what news and ideas got filtered down to the pueblo.

How were the leading families able to modify the application of national law in Chan Kom and get away with it? First, they were the only literate Spanish-speakers in Chan Kom and therefore had the ability and authority to interpret the law to their fellow villagers. Since the other people could not read, they had no way of challenging the leaders' interpretation of agrarian law. That is, the leading families used their superior knowledge to gain the authority to interpret law. Second, the leaders had already assumed the broker role by establishing contact with officials in Mérida. Because Chan Kom was physically isolated in the 1920's, there was no one else for the people to consult than the leading families. Third, Chan Kom followed the practice of consensus decisions (Redfield 1950). In order to achieve consensus, some force was used. Those who disagreed with the policy of the leaders stayed away from the Assembly.

Don Eus also began to learn how to perform the patronage role with the initial aid and continual guidance of Don Fano. By supporting his
uncle (working for him, political loyalty) and emphasizing their kin bond, Don Eus got Don Fano to start him in business (cattle ranching). By building his own economic base, Don Eus was then in a position to lend money, sponsor a fiesta, and give gifts, thus gaining a reputation as economic patron (Ceme 1934: 218).

From this position he started accumulating peripheral supporters to the power group in which he belonged (by virtue of his birth and continued loyalty to his uncle). Through his economic patronage, he made people obligated to repay his patronage in kind (by repaying the loans or giving labor) or in political loyalty. In this way, he gained local supporters who formed the peripheral part of his power group. Here, kinship is translated into wealth and wealth into political power.

By the time Don Eus was in his late 20's, he had already learned how to perform the three roles. The next 30-40 years were spent trying to gain sole control of these roles. He accomplished this by gaining partial control of each role, then by using his performance of each role to achieve the complete control of the others.

He started to attain partial control of the broker role by gaining political office and using the office to boost his power base. In 1928, he was elected both Ejido Commissariat President and Liga President (Ceme 1934: 223). This meant that he was the first to have the power to distribute ejido land in Chan Kom. He placed the leading families around the plaza and blocked others from getting land there. Because the plaza is the focus of trade, political action and religious activity, a house on the plaza has important consequences (Redfield and Villa R. 1934: 66).

By holding the office of Liga President, Don Eus was responsible and visible to the PRI officials in Mérida. By 1929, he was elected
comisario; he was reelected in 1931. The combination of holding these offices with being part of a politically powerful family gave Don Eus the opportunity to enhance his broker status. Now he had the authority to represent Chan Kom in municipal, department, and state meetings. The result is that he gained additional opportunity to act as the communication channel between the two levels of government. Furthermore, he was part of the power group which controlled all the offices, making decisions for and enforcing them on the community. They were able to accomplish the latter because they controlled the police force and means of punishment through the assignment of communal labor. Eventually they forced the rest of the community into an apolitical, passive role by reducing the powers of the General Assembly, by keeping the rest of the population from accumulating wealth through unremunitive labor, and by heavy taxation.

In 1935 the necessity for the role of broker between the entire community and the government hierarchy was guaranteed when Chan Kom became the cabecera, or seat of a new municipality. This meant that if any citizens wanted to appeal the actions of Chan Kom's leaders to higher government authorities, they would have to go to Mérida and deal with the state officials rather than to Cuncunul and the municipal officials. This made appeal more difficult, for the physical and structural distance was greater; the language barrier and culture gap between the state authorities and peon milperos practically blocked communication. The role of broker became even more necessary and powerful. This is because instead of being under the control of a cabecera, Chan Kom would only have to answer to Mérida and would have rancherías under its control (Redfield 1950: 20). An additional advantage was that the municipal officers received government salary whereas pueblo officers did not (Goldkind
Don Eus and his power group took immediate advantage of the new status by getting Don Eus elected the first municipal President (Goldkind 1965: 872). In this way, the men of the principal families continued to make policy for Chan Kom and extended their control to the surrounding pueblos which were assigned to the municipality. Because Don Eus now represented a municipality rather than a mere pueblo when he went to the state capital, his political power and prestige increased there (Redfield 1950: 87). Thus the structural necessity for a broker and Don Eus' role as sole broker for the community was assured.

During the same period, Don Eus was working toward becoming head of the most potent power group in Chan Kom. Achievement of this role was synonymous with transferring control of the village from a group of leading families to his own family. By the early 1930's, these families had split into factions, with the Ceme family becoming the core of one of them. By 1938, the opposing faction lost a political contest, giving as the reason for their defeat the fact that they had "failed to enlist the aid of the outside government" against the Cemes (Ibid: 104). Thus Don Eus' supporters must have used outside political pull to destroy their competition for complete control of the village. The result was that the losing faction emigrated, leaving the Ceme faction as the sole power group with any clout in Chan Kom. Also in the 1930's the previous head of the Ceme supporters, Don Fano, must have died and Don Eus assumed full leadership of the group. Thus there existed one power group with Don Eus at its head by 1940.

The Cemes under Don Eus' leadership continued to squash any opposition to their rule from the 1940's through the 1960's (Redfield 1950: 20; Goldkind 1966: 339). Some of their methods included borrowing
federal troops to put down a rebellion, forcing opponents to emigrate, and controlling immigration to keep down the number of literate people who could qualify for public office.

By the 1960's, the cacicazgo pattern was solidified and centered around Don Eus. A teacher who formerly taught in Chan Kom explained that:

All political power is in the hand of Don Eus and his relatives. Whatever they decide to do is what happens. They respect no principle but their own advantage. They calculate every action. They will do anything for money and nothing if it gains them no money.

(Goldkind 1966: 340)

Travelers' reports indicated the process was completed when Don Eus died in the late 1960's. No one has reported the political implications of his death. But Don Eus' life history illustrates that (a) caciquismo depends upon the simultaneous performance of three roles, (b) playing one of these three roles helps one get in the position to play the others, and (c) the national laws and national political structure increase the possibility that one can attain the cacique status. The same pattern emerges in the political history of Naranja (sometimes referred to as Durazno), a Tarascán pueblo of longstanding (Friedrich 1964: 195).

The collected works of Friedrich cover the political history of this town from the 1890's through 1963, giving a clear picture of both the continuity of leadership within one family extended matrilineally (usually the sister's son becomes next cacique) and of the connection between the post-Revolutionary cacique's power base and the new agrarian laws and national political structure. All four men (Joaquín de la Cruz, Primo Tapia, Otón, Pedro Caso) organized their power groups around the issue of agrarian reform in the pueblo. The first, Joaquín de la Cruz, was the son of the village leader, Ambrosio de la Cruz. He began agitating for agrarian reform when he first entered law school in 1888 and continued his battle on the local level when he returned to
Naranja to collect and educate a small group of followers in the problem. His views were not new in the area; many were discussing agrarian reform in neighboring towns at this time. He was significant in that he was local and he tried to get the legal deeds necessary to return Naranja's stolen land to the community (it had been given to a wealthy family for establishing an hacienda by Díaz; Friedrich 1971: 55). He eventually left Naranja to become a state judge until his assassination in 1919 (Ibid: 52-57).

Upon Joaquín's death, his maternal nephew Primo Tapia returned from his long sojourn with the IWW in the U.S. to take over instituting land reform in Naranja (1920). He did so by first gaining leadership over the core group of supporters of his dead uncle Joaquín, the majority of whom were kin (cousins, nephews) to Primo (Ibid: 79). Friedrich says that Primo was accepted as leader because he was considered one of the family and because his supporters felt that he could push through reforms which would help them make economic gains (Ibid: 89). In other words, Primo was accepted as head of a power group because members of that group felt (a) he could best perform the broker role between them and the agrarian officials in order to achieve agrarian reform, and (b) he would then patronize his supporters (themselves) with the fruits of agrarian reform—land and political office. Most of his supporters were not qualified for playing the broker role simply because they could not speak/read Spanish (Ibid: 90).

Primo soon proved that he was capable of performing the broker role when (1921) he took the signatures of Naranjeros (gathered for another purpose) to the state capital and petitioned for an ejido grant (Ibid: 92). Friedrich remarks later that the grant went through relatively rapidly, partly because of Primo's connections with the ruling politi-
cians of the state at that time (Ibid: 101). Primo further assured his success by organizing the entire Zacapu region into a League of Agrarian Communities to act as a power base from which to push for reform.

When the ejido grant was passed for Naranja and the surrounding communities, Primo's followers held the important governmental posts in Naranja and were elected ejido officers. Since Circular 51 had been passed before Naranja received its ejido grant, the land grant also meant the establishment of a dual local government, consisting of civil (executive committee) and ejidal (Ejidal Commissariat) branches (Friedrich 1964: 201). While the format imposed two sets of officials, of meetings and of elections on Naranja's political organization, there was nothing to stop Tapia from holding top office in both branches: comisario of the executive committee and chairman of the Ejidal Commissariat (Ibid: 202). In fact, Friedrich adds that "men in both arms of government often work as a group, at times flexibly switching roles" (Ibid: 201).

Primo and his followers were the ones to organize the village into communal farming teams and to apportion the harvest to each participant (ejidatarios and hired labor from other towns) in the farmwork (Friedrich 1971: 126). What is important here is that once the land grant went through, Primo automatically became patron to the entire ejido through the grant and through his followers' dispensation of the harvest. He also became patron to his followers by getting them elected to local office and by granting them extra shares of the harvest for cash crops, the proceeds of which ostensibly went to "further the agrarian cause" (Ibid: 119). In other words, Primo's followers got their first pay-off with the very first harvest. During 1926, Primo brought additional benefits to the ejido when he established a primary school, a cooperative clothing store, and cooperative poultry farm. He also "initiated the
construction of new roads, dykes, and canals in the ejido" (Ibid: 126). Primo continued to work for agrarian reform in the ejido until his assassination in 1928. His story illustrates how one man could achieve not only local control but also regional control through the amassing of the three roles. It should be noted, however, that just as Primo was no ordinary village cacique, so he amassed power in a slightly different way from Don Eus. That is, Primo was regional cacique before ejido status was granted to Naranja and before he played the role of patron to the entire community (although he obviously was rewarding his followers throughout his 1920-1925 campaign for agrarian reform). This was possible because he had amassed such a large, regional power base.

The story of Naranja now continues and may best be seen from the point of view of the life history of a later cacique, Pedro Caso. Pedro was born in 1911. His mother was the niece of Primo Tapia and the sister of Oton, Tapia's favorite nephew whom he groomed for eventual leadership and who had eventually succeeded Tapia as Naranja cacique in the 1940's (Friedrich 1964: 195). In turn, Pedro became the favorite nephew of his uncle Oton and was prepared for leadership by him. While playing messenger for his great-uncle Tapia, Pedro expanded his connections to the neighboring local leaders. Thus he started his 'career' with the basis for playing two of the three roles, potential head of a (family-based) power group because he was born into a powerful family and was trained by its leaders, and broker because he was taught to read and write Spanish and to establish connections with neighboring political leaders.

By the time Pedro was in his teens, his great-uncle had brought the national government's plan for local organization to Naranja and had started connecting Naranja's and the family's political future to state officials/politicians. After the Calles government had Tapia assas-
nated (Friedrich 1966: 210), a series of factional fights resulted as Tapia's support group struggled to keep control of the ejido. However, the old power group lost, and the opposition group led by the Roca family gained control of the ejido from 1929 to 1935. At that time, they backed the wrong ticket for national President and state officials and were forced to flee Naranja (30 families), leaving Pedro's family in control again (Friedrich 1964: 195).

During the time of factionalism and Roca control (1926-1935), Pedro was in Morelos, studying in school and learning the political ropes. While there, he participated in a communist cell and must have learned the laws, for he was able to quote whole sections of the Constitution and the Agrarian Code (passed in 1932) later on. He was able to study because he had family financial backing. This phase of his life helped prepare him for the role of broker because he gained knowledge of the system to interpret it to the illiterate Naranja inhabitants and made contact with the political elite of the state. After studying, Pedro taught primary school throughout the state of Michoacán and did not return home until 1938.

During 1935-1936, the Casos controlled Naranja. Then they split into competing factions. By 1939, the faction led by Otón (Pedro's sponsoring uncle) won the fight—after 21 murders were committed (Friedrich 1966: 212). During the struggle, Pedro returned home and backed his uncle. When Otón won the factional fight, Pedro received certain benefits which enabled him to start performing the three essential roles for Cacique. Otón apportioned him great tracts of land from which he cultivated and built his wealth. This started Pedro to becoming an economic patron to individual members of the community. His uncle started appointing Pedro to government offices in the pueblo. Because of his greater knowledge of the laws and his contacts with the state political leaders, Pedro was able to use these offices
to become a political broker. Finally, by joining Otón's faction, Pedro placed himself in the position of potential leader of that faction. He helped build the reputation of the faction by personally gaining the reputation of a killer, thus making him a dangerous and powerful man in the area (Friedrich 1968: 252).

In 1941, Otón was elected President of the Naranja Ejidal Commissariat and thereby gained the power to distribute ejido land. Otón was able to legally expropriate the land of the losing faction by, first, killing one of its members and blocking the others from working in their fields for 2 years and, second, by invoking the law which states that an individual's land reverts back to the community if he fails to cultivate it for two years. Otón then distributed the expropriated land to members of his faction (Friedrich 1965: 129). By 1952, Otón had gained enough backing to be elected President of the executive committee (Ibid: 131).

The higher the position of Otón became, the higher Pedro could rise in the political hierarchy of the ejido. Pedro had become the third wealthiest man in Naranja by 1956, when Otón had established himself as cacique there. Pedro invested his surplus income in the education of his children, in "outside political investments in the state chapter of the Masons," and in PRI. Such investments could gain him political support in the future.

Furthermore, during the 1950's Pedro was gaining control of activities which were central to performing the three roles. He took on one of the key positions from which to play the broker role when he became the local representative of the Ejido Bank, controlling who would receive government loans in the community. Furthermore, he became a covert judge, an arbiter of intracommunity disputes because he knew the laws and
the Tarascan speech of reconciliation by heart (Ibid). He performed the functions of the municipal and district courts to save the people court expenses, jail sentences, and fines (Ibid: 254), and to pocket the fees and patronage himself. His method of arbitration was informal but his method of enforcement was effective, for he had backers to force others to comply with his decisions. His backers were his own half-brothers although they all were nominally supporting Otón.

By the mid-1950's, Pedro was not performing the final role, heading a power group. Although he was "one of the principal elements who dictated to the pueblo," he was blocked from achieving this role and becoming cacique by the fact that Otón was holding that post (Friedrich 1968: 257). Perhaps this is why Pedro and Otón "could hardly stand each other" (Ibid: 258). In 1959, Otón was murdered, and Pedro and his half-brothers left town. But in 1963 "the man who had been senator during Pedro's term as alternate was elected governor. Within months, the rebellious faction was dispersed, and Pedro, now sole leader of the Casos, returned to 'direct the destinies of his pueblo" (Friedrich 1968: 258). He remained cacique from 1963 to 1966 when he died from a heart attack.

Pedro Caso's life history parallels Don Eus'. Both were raised to leadership roles in their communities by families which were already prominent members. Both took several decades to achieve the status of cacique and did so by first playing the roles of broker, patron, and member of a power group to some people in the community, then by using the power base built from one role to increase their control of the other two. Eventually, they both became sole brokers and patrons for their communities and heads of the power group in which they had always been members.

The following two charts are meant to show that the similarity between Don Eus' and Pedro Caso's lives is not coincidence but is exem-
pany of the entire pattern of the caciquismo process in many twentieth-century corporate landholding Mexican communities. It will be noted that while the last stages of both charts coincide, the initial stages differ according to how the potential cacique enters the community, as a member born and/or raised there or as an outsider who joins the community already in a position of authority.

(see Tables I and II, following)

The following two charts (Tables III and IV) summarize the literature that gives enough information on life histories of twentieth-century Mexican caciques to fill or partially fill the chart. Those reports giving sufficient data to block out the chronological development of the men are marked with alphabetical order following chronological order. Those reports which are not complete enough are marked simply by checkmarks, indicating that the individual went through certain stages, but the order in which he went through these stages is not clear from the literature.
Table I: Chronological Ordering of the Process of Attaining the Cacique Status by a Man Born into the Community Which He Eventually Controls

Stage I: Gain an education
- speak/write/read Spanish
- start making contact with supralocal officials
- learn agrarian laws
  (preparation for broker role)

Stage II: Start accumulating wealth
  (preparation for patron role)

Stage III: Prepare for leadership of a power group by maintaining membership in an already existing group (often one’s extended family) and gaining peripheral members through - patronage based on distribution of own wealth
- promised patronage when public office is achieved: jobs, better land, more irrigated water, etc.

Stage IV: Start using contacts on supralocal level of political/government structure to help win local political contests for oneself and one’s power group. This is partly done by knowing to pick a winning leader on the supralocal level and by playing client to one’s backers.

Stage V: Use public office to
- increase personal wealth and wealth of members of one’s power group
- act as broker between community and upper echelon on some or all issues
- act as patron to the community by distributing political favors obtained from upper echelon, making clear that the community would not have received these benefits without one’s help
- block opposition from gaining control of any of the above roles by using the physical support of one’s power group and the physical/political support of the supralocal officials

Stage VI: Gain leadership of one’s power group by destroying opposition or waiting one’s turn as successor to the present leader

Stage VII: Convert temporary control of 1 or a few local offices into permanent control of all offices by oneself and one’s supporters in order to monopolize control of patron and broker roles to the entire community

Stage VIII: Declare oneself or be referred to as cacique of the community
Table II: Chronological Ordering of the Process of Attaining the Cacique Status by a Man Not Born into the Community He Eventually Controls but Who Enters the Community in a Position of Leadership (e.g., Schoolteacher)

Stage I: Get an education
- speak/write/read Spanish
- know agrarian and civil laws
- start making contacts with state or municipal leaders where one will work (optional if the move is postponed until post-education years)

Stage II: Move to community one will eventually control but in a role of potential power (brokerage power), e.g., schoolteacher in a bilingual or monolingual community

Stage III: Start or continue establishing ties with supralocal officials through one's official position in the community. At the same time
- start playing patron and broker to individuals in the community by acting as liason between them and government officials in a capacity which uses one's knowledge but not necessarily one's official position (e.g., act as translator for Indians in municipal or regional court)
- start accumulating wealth by having people pay for the services one performs
- start gathering a support group by acting as their spokesman, organizer, broker, patron

Stage IV: Gain official control of public office by securing offices for one's supporters

Stage V: Use control of public offices to
- increase personal wealth and that of one's supporters
- act as broker between community and supralocal hierarchy on some or all issues
- act as patron to the community by distributing political favors obtained from supralocal officials
- block opposition from gaining control of any of the above roles by using the physical support of one's power group and the physical/political support of the supralocal officials

Stage VI: Convert temporary control of 1 or a few local offices by one's supporters into permanent control of all offices in order to monopolize control of patron and broker roles to the entire community

Stage VII: Declare oneself or be referred to as cacique of the community
Table III: Histories of Caciques Born into the Community They Eventually Control
(Stages Correspond to those of Table I)

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Table IV: Histories of Caciques Not Born into the Community They Eventually Control (Stages Correspond to Those in Table II)

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IV. Summary and Conclusion

Analysis of the literature on caciquismo (political bossism) in post-1917 Mexican ejido communities indicates that (a) caciquismo is a life process started in childhood and completed when an individual has become sole broker and patron to his community as well as leader of a power group, and (b) some of the national laws concerning agrarian reform and the national political structure (as it developed into a one-party structure) have been factors in encouraging the continuation of this type of political organization on the local level. These conclusions have been based on a discussion of the logical implications of some agrarian laws and of the national political structure, which was then illustrated by case studies wherever possible to show that the logical possibilities have been used by actual or potential caciques.

Briefly, the laws outlining how a community is to obtain an ejido grant and how that grant is to be administered make it necessary for there to be a broker between the community and agrarian bureaucracy and for one person to play that role for an entire community. Being in the position of broker means that the individual plays client to his bureaucratic and political superiors while he plays patron to his inferiors, i.e., the rest of the community. This is because as sole distributor of benefits from his superiors, he makes the community feel that without him (and his personal connections to his superiors), the community would not receive the benefits of a land grant, piped water, electricity, Ejido Bank credit, etc. All are limited goods which must be apportioned among many rural communities. While the goal of Mexico is to provide these services to all rural communities, achievement of that goal takes time, and there is no rule (e.g., greatest need) to determine which communities get awarded these benefits before others.
The national political structure further influences the continuation of caciquismo within ejido communities. A one-party structure means that political contests are usually resolved before elections; thus, in order to get elected, an individual needs a power group behind him to provide physical force and political contacts with superiors (on the supralocal level) which in turn determine political force (on the local level). Thus, to become elected and therefore eligible to play the broker and patron roles to the community, a man needs the support of a power group and eventually must head it in order to control it. A one-party structure also means that there is only one line of access to power and to political favors (i.e., economic benefits to the community and political patronage to an individual and his followers). As a result, only one man and his support group (the one who monopolizes the line of access) will be able to play patron to the community at one time. Finally, a one-party structure implies an overlap in personnel between the administration (bureaucracy) and party officials. The implication of this is that an individual with power in one hierarchy (governmental or political) can use it to boost his power in the other.

The final section of this paper (Section III) is a summary and analysis of the literature on life histories of twentieth-century Mexican caciques in ejido communities. The purpose of this section has been to illustrate my point that caciquismo is a process of attaining, maintaining, and eventually losing the status of cacique.

The major reason for describing caciquismo as a process is that it points out that attainment of the cacique status is really synonymous with achievement of three roles—patron and broker to the entire community, and leader of a power group. Such analysis clarifies the connection between
the agrarian laws, national political structure, and caciquismo. That is, the continuation of caciquismo in twentieth-century Mexican ejido communities despite continued government opposition appears to be encouraged by some of the laws and the political structure.
NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was published in America Indígena 37:4:851-81 (December, 1977) under the title, "El Caciquismo en el ejido post-revolucionario."

2. Gibson (1964: 36) notes that cacique is an Arawak term adopted by the conquering Spaniards who used it to refer to the leaders of a settlement. These leaders were used as middlemen between the Indian settlement and the Spanish rulers, the sole means of communication between the two levels of society.

3. An 'ejido grant' following the Revolution refers to a land grant to adult male agriculturalists in a community by the national government (President of Mexico). This grant is in the name of the community and is inalienable to that community except by Presidential decree. Individuals have usufruct rights to the land as long as they are cultivating it and may pass the land to their wives, children or children-in-law, but they cannot sell it.

4. Yucatán and some other states also established an agrarian union, the Liga de Resistencia, which includes all villages and hacienda laborers and is meant to function as a regional grievance board by the ejidatarios (Tannenbaum 1929:416).

5. Dunwell (1965) reports that the man who had been cacique of Naven­ chauk before 1962 based his power on his control of the ejido committee for over 20 years.
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