

## THE EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF AN OPEN, CORPORATE VILLAGE

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Ethnographers and students of peasant communities in particular have been criticized for failing to deal with the patterns relating their little communities to the outside world (Steward 1956). More recent years have witnessed several attempts to state these patterns in rather general terms for several major culture areas (Wolf 1955; Marriott 1955, 1959). A partial picture can be pieced together for communities such as Tepoztlan, Tzintzuntzan, Cherán and Yalálag (Redfield 1930; Foster 1948; Beals 1946; Fuente 1949). But to date no case has been thoroughly analyzed.

The following is an attempt to illuminate the nature and scope of such relations by concentrating on their statistical and qualitative evolution over seventy years in one Mexican village. Topical headings include, for example, demography, economics, education, politics, and religion. An empirical but-tress, rather dramatic in some details, is thus provided for certain contemporary theories about the nature of peasant society (Redfield 1941). The descriptive facts are conceptually related, furthermore, to the evidence for the corporate structure of the village. By the corporateness of a village is meant three things: first, concrete patterns of culture, the costumbres, that unite the villagers to the exclusion of outsiders; second, a community structure of institutions and values, notably political ones, which effectively mediate or control external relationships; third, and most generically, an estate comprising rights over persons and various forms of incorporeal and corporeal property, especially land, in whose assets a number of individuals share in accordance with a transgenerational set of statuses that are politically differentiated at least in part (Maine 1884; Wolf 1957). My thesis is that many aspects of corporate organization are revealed by analyzing the external ties of a village.

### 1. Culture Sketch

The village of Naranja is part of Tarascan society, a group of some seventy thousand Indian peasants living at 6,500 feet in the cool, green mountains of southwestern Mexico. The salient features of the village culture may be itemized, for the sake of brevity at this point: a population of about 1,500, general Spanish-Tarascan bilingualism, plow-and-hoe agriculture, maize as a major cash crop, a diet largely limited to maize, beans and chili, adobe dwellings of two rooms, an almost total absence of native crafts, and the recent introduction of a few modern improvements such as electrification. Most of the best land is communally administered ejido, worked in inalienable family plots by small bilateral descent groups.

The village is considered during four historical periods: first, the indigenous culture as reconstructed for about 1885; then a socially troubled time (1890-1921) following the dessication by Spanish capitalists of an adjacent

marshy lake, the principal source of livelihood. From 1921 to 1926 the peasants struggled for the rich, black soil of the former marsh. The fourth time span runs from 1926 until the present (1956). The relations of Naranja to its region, the Tarascan area, the state, and the nation, are explored as fully as possible, with particular attention to her cultural integration with other Tarascan communities.

## 2. Demography

The municipal records for 1885, 1895 and 1908 indicate a population of about 800, held fairly constant by a high infant mortality rate, deteriorating economic conditions, and the exclusion of most mestizos due to intense in-group feeling. The violence of the agrarian struggle (1920-1924) led to the emigration of almost half the population and by 1926 one third had settled elsewhere for good. Factionalism since then has retarded growth through political homicide (e.g., eleven killings in the worst year), and a fluctuating exodus (e.g., 36 "Gochista" families departed in 1934-1936). Today over 50 families of political refugees reside in Zacapu, the municipal seat, and at least ten in Morelia, the state capital, fourteen in Mexico City or other cities, and many in Tarascan towns such as Cherán; because of ethnic differences emigrant Naranjeños rarely settle in small mestizo communities. The adult immigrants into Naranja do not exceed 15 percent of the population. They are divided equally between men and women (72/73), representing 18 Tarascan and 20 mestizo communities from within a 25-mile radius, plus a very few persons of distant provenience. To conclude, the population has barely doubled in 70 years despite the land reform, the immigration, and a recent reduction of infant mortality rates from over 50 to less than 20 percent. Naranja, while generating almost all its own population, has thus been constantly tied to the outer world to the demographic point where, at least once, almost more of it was outside than inside the confines of the pueblo. These population statistics partly symbolize a desperate struggle to maintain corporate integrity in the face of rapid culture change.

## 3. Technology

The present account will focus on major forces rather than the many external relations resulting from minor technological innovations such as the 23 bicycles and the 55 sewing machines. In 1938-1939 the national East-West highway was laid through Naranja. At least one bus runs through the village every half hour; trips are now taken to Mexico City and Guadalajara that would have been unusual twenty years ago. Several battered local buses, two owned by Naranjeños, also increase the temptation to go to Zacapu. Buses, cars with tourists, and trucks, have been the major force breaking down the indigenous character of the village, according to most inhabitants; since 1945 men have largely stopped wearing white cotton manta and colored sashes.

In 1939 Naranja cooperated with Tiríndaro and the national government to procure the pumping and piping of water from the nearby pond to faucets in the village. Electrification, introduced about the same time, was in part Naranja's reward for active political support to the Cárdenas faction during the 1930's. By 1956 electrification had brought 35 radio sets, three corn mills, and, above all, the broadcasting by loudspeakers of Mexican music records, the latter

exerting a tremendous influence on Spanish language abilities and personal relations between the sexes. Chapbooks of popular, usually romantic songs are read more widely than the few comic books, and the periodicals occasionally received in the town hall (including two Communist magazines). Naranja is now more central within the Mexican communications network than many mestizo villages.

#### 4. Economics

##### a. Agricultural Labor

After the drainage of the swamp in the 1890's, the Naranjeños turned to migrant labor in the southern plantations of the tierra caliente, especially Colima. By the time of the Mexican Revolution the majority of men were making such excursions at least once a year, usually walking with their families for three days, then working for one to three months, and finally walking home. Life in these labor camps was hard on the women and children. Many men began going to the United States. Such experiences opened individuals to different ways of life and were partly responsible for the generation of tradition-flouting radicals who later fought for the agrarian reform. Most of the principal agrarian leaders had visited the United States by 1920, and at least four had participated actively in I.W.W. groups.

After 1924 labor migration was curtailed and Naranja was transformed from a source of labor into a market for it; during the harvests scores to hundreds of mestizo and Indian peons moved into the valley in a pattern that continues in reduced form to the present day. In 1955-1956, the relatively small number of 53 outside laborers, mainly Indians, took part in the ejido harvest, bringing their families, putting up with acquaintances, and mingling constantly with the Naranjeños. Today, some Naranjeños hardly ever work, preferring to rent their plots or hire help. Partly because mechanization would only increase the labor surplus, Naranja's technology remains quite traditional. The nuclear families work their land with plow and hoe, the maize and beans are hand-picked, the wheat is cut with a sickle. Such simple agricultural toil on small plots has been a major force in maintaining the corporate structure.

The war-time bracero fever and the population growth of the past ten years have led to a revival of migration to the United States. Most braceros go as individuals, but in 1956 over half were obtaining contracts through the agency of their political leaders. Economic need motivates these seasonal migrants; many manage to pay off debts or to buy property. But many others in their teens or twenties mainly desire a brief escape from the life risks peculiar to their little community, and a tour through the orchards and bordellos of the Great Civilization. They sometimes return with nothing but their worn-out clothes.

##### b. Industrial Labor

Before the desiccation Naranja, like most Tarascan villages, was unified through communally specialized industries. A third of the population worked

part time weaving mats for export and some others employed themselves by selling the superb Zacapu rushes to weavers in the Pátzcuaro region. Almost everyone wove straw "braids" and poorer individuals were constantly "braiding." Some thirty local hatters used these products, but most braids, and the hats, were purchased by outside buyers. Braiding continued until the 1930's, but today is largely limited to older women and the very poor, who thus manage to earn about one peso a day. Many people express a regret that no new industries have come since the agrarian reform, but the leaders continue to set up covert obstacles to such potentially competitive centers of power. In addition, the ever-present political unrest functions to maintain corporate integrity by making Naranja a poor prospect for the outside entrepreneur.

On the other hand, in 1947 the Mexican branch of the Celanese Corporation built an ultra-modern, 1300-man synthetic fiber plant in the municipal seat of Zacapu. About 30 Naranjeños worked on the construction and about 40 have actually labored on the production line at some time, if often just for a few months. In 1956, 14 men were appearing regularly at their jobs, earning 16 or more pesos a day in contrast to the norm of 5 or 6 for agricultural labor. The striking unwillingness of Naranjeños to leave their folk culture was due in part to the unhealthy conditions (acid fumes injurious to the lungs), to the exigencies of a mass-production work schedule, and, finally, to the relative adequacy of land in the village. In other words, the great majority preferred to till their own little plots under familiar conditions for a bit more than subsistence rather than earn ten extra pesos a day by hiring a peon and standing on the assembly line. And young leaders are really too involved in Naranja politics.

Factory work habits have not changed Naranja at large, but the social image of a steady worker winning a good wage and emulating the mestizos, was gaining ground. And the local propensity to political activity was evidenced by the election of Naranjeños as secretaries to the factory labor union for two successive years from 1954 to 1956. Most of the 10 Naranjeños industrially employed in Mexico City are political refugees, indicating in microcosm the important Mexican correlation between the exodus from village politics and the growing labor pool of a mushrooming national industry. For a village of 1,500, Naranja was definitely part of the Mexican industrial scene.

### c. Commerce

The system of inter-village exchange through itinerant traders and local markets still powerfully relates Naranja to the ancient Tarascan network and sets her off from the mestizos. But she is comparatively less integrated because she has lost her native crafts and even lacks maize to reciprocate during some months of the year. During a typical month peddlers from over a dozen communities will come in one to four groups every day or every other day, selling earrings, blankets, textiles, vegetables, bread, pozole, woodwork, and many types of fish and pottery. Zacapu is most frequently represented, with about 25 peddler units a month. Many peddlers come from the Lake and the Sierra, but almost none from the Western region. And, because of political reasons, the contiguous agrarian villages of Tirindaro and Tarejero are barely represented at all. The hundreds of peddlers from dozens of different communities that visit Naranja during one year are more than half of them older women.

They talk a great deal during the day, usually in Tarascan; the wares are often so few, and the prices so low, that conversation must be a principal reward. Much news about fiestas, deaths, and so forth is circulated by these saleswomen, though they have been coming less frequently in recent times because of the linguistic shift toward Spanish in Naranja.

Another good index of Naranja's areal integration is the statistics for her sole regional fiesta, to the patron saint "Our Father Jesús," formerly a great attraction because of the miraculous powers of the icon. In 1956, 51 communities were represented commercially, 34 of them Tarascan, that is, 34/66 of the possible total; 13 were mestizo communities from the Tarascan area, and the rest were outside mestizo. The number of salesmen for each community varied enormously, from the 51 Santa Fe potters to many pueblos with only one to five individuals. Over 90 percent of the salesmen were vending their local or familial products and the overwhelming bulk of the business was between Tarascans. Turnover is fast since many groups are buying each others' goods; for example, the fine green pottery from Patamban was sold out early the first morning. Other wares sold included: wooden trays, baskets, bronze bowls, toys, deep-fried pigskin (carnitas), and many kinds of vegetables, fruits, fish, and maize products. The absence of native weaving and the quantity of machine-made textiles both indicate the degree of mestization in clothing.

Economic dependence on mestizo Mexico was also indicated by the salesmen from mestizo towns, including Zacapu, Quiroga, Pátzcuaro, Morelia, and even distant Dolores Hidalgo, and Guanajuato. Although many of these mestizo towns have only one sales unit, the financial value of their transactions may have exceeded that of all the other 44 communities put together. The mestizo products consisted mainly of hardware, jewelry, textiles, pottery, religious paraphernalia, tropical fruits, ice cream and soft drinks. The 12 bushels of wheel-turned pottery from Guanajuato were sold out by 5:00 the first day. During the two-day fiesta almost all the Naranjeños were strolling about, talking with the merchants.

Outside buying constitutes the third dimension of village commerce. Someone in almost every Naranja family goes to Zacapu at least once a month and some families are represented up to several times a week. Maize is sold for cash in Zacapu and almost all material goods are purchased at retail in the same community, notably cloth, salt, hardware, candles, alcoholic beverages, and machines. The ready accessibility of Zacapu has tended to increase Naranja's economic dependence in the worst sense of the word. At harvest time, and after obtaining a loan, the urge to "go to Zacapu" often leads to disastrous consequences; one peasant squandered a 500 peso loan in one afternoon, buying clothes for his entire family, getting completely drunk, and, in conclusion, having himself driven around the plaza until the last centavito was gone.

The agrarian reform brought both land and a fairly coherent anti-capitalistic ideology; today the business enterprise of the Naranjeños is near the minimum. One man makes fireworks, but he is an immigrant from another Tarascan town. About ten women a day sell corn products in Zacapu and Quiroga, but only nine women bothered to sell anything at the aforementioned Padre Jesus

fiesta, although an excellent profit could have been made due to the absence of transport costs. In their behavior and their ideas about themselves the Naranjeño are poor peasants who till the soil. The absence of business enterprise, subtly and not so subtly reinforced by the political leaders, has had the double effect of inhibiting the intrusion of outsiders and the development of contractual relations on the outside by Naranjeños acting as independent agents.

d. Ejido

The economic significance of the maize bowl created in the Zacapu Valley in the 1890's was soon recognized at the state and national levels. A railroad was constructed to haul the tremendous harvests to the Pátzcuaro station. Naranjeños participated in these developments as hired men. Since 1924, Naranja has formed part of the nationwide ejido system, subject to some extent to the National Department of Agrarian Affairs, the statutes of the Agrarian Code, frequent visits by federal inspectors, and, finally, to the economic organization of the Zacapu Ejidal Bank. Ejidal economics links Naranja to the outer world in especially significant ways because the entirely agricultural peasants are so dependent on the export of maize. Economically, Naranja is an open community (Wolf 1955:461).

At present, 240 of the 295 heads of families own land. Of these, 218, or 200 if we discount absentee owners, have ejido plots of 2.6 hectares each, and 88 own private land that is also very productive, ranging from 29 individuals with over 10,000 meters of furrow to 10 with less than 1,000. Most such private land is rented out at low rates to friends and relatives. Most families and the village itself are thus economically self-sufficient in that they raise enough maize and beans for their own consumption and enough of a cash crop to buy the remaining necessities. These minimal details indicate, at first blush, that Naranja is amply provided and that the rich lands are broadly distributed. Naranja effectively controls her own good soil. Let us turn to a consideration of the economics in a wider sense.

The Zacapu Ejido Bank is meant to guide and implement the decisions of its associates, who are the presidents of the 45 village ejido councils. Naranja joined the Bank in 1954 as a result of a disastrous crop failure the preceding year. The Bank is empowered to advance loans of 100 to 1,000 pesos to individuals, supposedly to defray production costs. These loans must be transacted on a communal basis through the leaders, who advance a certain part of the ejido land as collateral and then simply confiscate the requisite amount of maize owed from each individual at the time of the communally organized harvest. About one third of the ejidatarios are indebted up to the 1,000-peso limit, which is almost equal to one third of the value of the annual crop of the average plot. In 1956 the total debt of the village was 124,000 pesos, or an average of 720 pesos for the 172 indebted ejidatarios, and equal to about one sixth of the total crop value which approaches two thirds of a million pesos. Naranja was the most deeply in debt and in arrears of the 45 Zacapu Bank communities. Many leaders resent the bank because it increases the indebtedness of the irresponsible peasants and might eventually weaken the jealously guarded autonomy of the village.

Naranja individuals are indebted in a second way. At least half the villagers sell some of their crop in advance to money lenders and about one sixth sell almost all their crop this way at 30 to 100 percent annual interest. Some have sold their crop two and even three years in advance; 30 of the 218 ejidatarios were not retaining any of their harvest in 1956. The four principal money-lenders are local women, interestingly enough, two of them born outside the pueblo, and three of them mestizas. They depend in part on the political inviolability of women. Two of them contribute substantially to the coffers of both political factions. All four of them live simply. The Ejidal Bank is charged with combatting them, and their business allies in Zacapu, by subvening "good elements" in the village to lend money at seven percent. Unfortunately, the "good element" chosen was the leading cacique's eldest nephew, whose wife and best friend's mother are also the outstanding usurers. The nephew quite understandably lent out only 25,000, although the Bank would readily have supported up to 350,000, or more than half the total crop value; this figure symbolizes both the degree of usury that the Bank is trying to oppose, and the degree of potential financial dependency on outside agencies that the Naranja leaders are rather successfully trying to inhibit. To date Naranja has at least retained economic autonomy to the extent that most usury and pre-purchasing is handled by its own residents within the framework of a comparatively loose credit system. Many of the local debts are in fact never repaid, and a drastic shift in factional control such as took place in 1959 may entail the wholesale nullification of obligations to a usurer too closely allied with the dead or exiled leaders. In this way the play of factions may contribute to the economic self-sufficiency of the corporate village.

The final function of the Ejidal Bank is to support public works. The unusual soils of the Zacapu region have been professionally analyzed, but the sporadic application of chemical fertilizers had disastrous results due to variations in the chemical content of different sections of the vast plain; those cautious villagers who used the fertilizer as white wash for their houses ended up having the last laugh. The absolute necessity of keeping up a complicated system of canals to drain the former marsh during the rainy season has continued to develop as a major political and economic problem during this century. The crops of the former Spanish landlords were much bigger because they drained the lands more efficiently. The agrarian caciques, on the other hand, have neglected hydraulic problems because of their preoccupation with the power struggle within and between communities; in the rainy years some of the ejido furrows are knee-deep below water. Trying to extend its assistance in every way, the Ejidal Bank in 1955 organized the drainage of a clogged river north of Zacapu, Naranja eventually paying 20,712 of the promised 32,648 pesos. Substantial loans have been floated to other villages for building bridges, buying machinery, and so forth, but the Naranja leaders oppose the intrusion of outside influence. To conclude, the ejidal system as a whole has had the double and partly contradictory effect of reviving the communal boundaries of economic self-sufficiency while at the same time increasing the outward ties through administrative institutions and financial agencies. Five percent of the ejido crop must be paid annually as a fixed national tax.

#### 4. Athletics

Various sports have both integrated Naranja and joined it to the outside world. In former times a type of indigenous field hockey was played with contiguous communities; the games are still remembered by middle-aged informants. During the comparative affluence of the 1930's many men acquired horses and trick riding became a widespread diversion, the mounted militia of Naranja winning many regional competitions. Today the Naranjeños play with Tirindaro and Zacapu at the native game of palillos, bouncing sticks on flat rocks and scoring how they fall. One man is a successful middle-weight prize fighter. Two men are on the factory baseball team, one a top pitcher. A pool hall, built in 1954, is in constant use; Naranja men often come into contact with outsiders in the pool rooms of other towns and in the United States, though they tend to avoid drinking with strangers.

Basketball, introduced in the 1920's, has done the most to increase outside contacts. During the 1930's, a gifted physical education teacher and some equally gifted, and tall, youths built a team that twice won the state championships in play-offs against capital teams from Zamorra and Morelia, and in the second year defeated the state champions from neighboring Jalisco. This is extraordinary, of course, for an Indian pueblo of 1,500 souls and certainly contributed to the mestization of some of the players. On the other hand, such interaction between communities in accordance with the "rules of the game" does not have quite the acculturation effects that one might optimistically predict; some members of the great 1937 team developed into political "fighters" with impressive homicide records. Athletics is one of the main forces molding future leaders. In 1956 Naranja was playing basketball once or twice a week throughout the season with other teams in the region.

#### 5. Education

Naranja has strikingly exemplified the pursuit of improvement through land and books in village Mexico. The first primary school went into operation a few years before the Revolution and somewhat reduced illiteracy. Several of the agrarian leaders received secondary schooling in Michoacán religious seminaries and, in two cases, the law college in Morelia. By the time the agrarian revolt went into full swing in 1921, however, the bulk of the Naranjeños were still illiterate, monolingually Tarascan peasants. The plank of increased education figured prominently in the agrarian program; a school was constructed in 1926 and a nephew of the cacique was sent to an agricultural institute in Morelia. In the mid-1930's Naranja had attained a primary school staff of eight to ten, including a manual arts shop. Several young Naranjeños attended the Tarascan Institute in Paracho and then worked as primary school teachers in other Tarascan-speaking towns. A stream of enthusiastic adolescents sallied forth to higher education in Morelia and Mexico City, with the result that today 26 former villagers are pursuing professional careers in other parts of Mexico, mainly as teachers, but also as doctors (4), lawyers (7), engineers, technicians, and government workers. And the process continues although the local school is down to a staff of three teachers. In 1956, a total of 52 young people or about three percent of the pueblo were studying in outside schools. Thus an indigenous village can serve as the exporter of talent to a growing nation. Most adult Naranjeños recognize the value of at least some education, and the advanced



education of one's children, accepted as a sort of non-ostentatious expenditure of surplus earnings, functions as an economic leveller; one leader was maintaining seven children in city schools and many were supporting three or four.

The change in outlook engendered by study and travel have had but limited repercussions on the village itself, since most of the educated eventually settle elsewhere. People often lament that Naranja is drained of its talent. In 1956, after all the reform, only 45 percent of the whole population was literate, the judge was illiterate, and the town mayor nearly so. The average Naranjeño does not foster ignorance, especially about the outside world, but he is ambivalent toward educated Mexicans and he does need to know precious little reading and writing to get along quite well within the community.

The main outside influence of education has been funnelled through the primary school itself and a long series of teachers, many of them mestizos. These agents have produced the ideological integration of contemporary Naranja, such as it is, linked in turn to agrarian socialism in other parts of Mexico. Due to the pronounced radicalism of the local caciques many teachers since 1926 have been Communists or at least politically left-wing. Their instruction of history and current events has left a deep impression on Naranja children so that today the average villager is ideally an agrarian no matter what his actual disillusionments. Some of the educated elite sympathize strongly with Communism.

On the other hand, the Naranja school has long been a center of intrigue, a distrusted source of influence, especially since three of the top leaders married mestiza teachers. Few teachers, even a nephew of the ruling cacique, have endured in their position more than a few years, and some have lasted only a few months under potentially dangerous circumstances. Many villagers still suspect any urban, mestizo teacher; they are seldom made welcome at fiestas. Some of the leaders have been accused of being prejudiced against education because it weakens their control over the community. In 1956, a new municipal school director came to Naranja and roundly denounced all the leaders of both factions for interfering in education. They sat quietly in the town hall, listening while he spoke, but he was transferred a month later. For such reasons many of the teachers have sought to overcome the leaders' envy by outdoing them in political "sincerity."

A penetrating effect of the school has been to increase bilingualism by breaking down the resistance to Spanish; Spanish and simple arithmetic seem to help much more than manual arts in enabling the Naranjeños to deal with the mestizo world. As a result of actively enforced legal sanctions, most children spend much of the years from six to twelve in school, constantly exposed to Spanish as the medium of instruction. The school, combined with increased outside contacts, and the prestige of Spanish, has led to a rapid linguistic shift. In 1956, less than one fifth of the children under eighteen spoke Tarascan well, and only about one half of the men between 20 and 40 felt it to be their first language, although many more named it as their mother tongue. However, most women and the older people of both sexes named Tarascan as their first language, which means that children, especially the girls, still hear a great deal in the home and acquire at least a passive understanding. Despite its attrition, the Tarascan language, like certain child rearing

practices, remains among the crucial patterns setting off Naranja from the national culture.

## 6. Social

Various social bonds also link Naranja to the outer world, although they function far more significantly to bind the villagers to each other. The community is highly egalitarian in its norms, consisting of self-styled "indigenous peasants," plus a few in-dwelling mestizos. And little social stratification is revealed by observable indices, despite appreciable economic differences; fiestas, theft, and the division of private lands are constantly levelling out the population. The office of carguero, the elected organizer of certain local fiestas, has been impoverishing one of the more conservative families every year since its reinstatement in 1951. The fiesta and carguero systems can be seen as a sharp-toothed mechanism guaranteeing considerable reality to the corporate ideal of a pueblo of socially equal, poor peasants.

With certain significant exceptions, most Naranjeños have their intimate and important ties within the village. The emotionally vital "friends of confidence" are usually found within the village, although at least five percent have close friends outside. Over 95 percent of the baptismal compadres of Naranjeños are other Naranjeños; the compadrazgo, not a manipulative relationship, is mainly used to seal a bond with respected, well-known age-mates. The fifty-odd acknowledged out-of-town compadres are mainly in Zacapu, especially in the case of Naranja factory hands, or in the Indian towns of Azajo, Pitchataro, and Santa Fe. The village is still primarily endogamous, although intermarriage with mestizo women had increased to about ten percent in 1956. Affinal ties with the contiguous Indian villages of Tarejero and Tirindaro are non-existent or greatly weakened because of the strained political relations. Naranja women are sought after within the larger region of Zacapu, however, and there are no old maids and few unattached widows. But the husbands of such out-marrying girls seldom move into the village, because of political conditions. Blood ties within the nuclear family are still sufficiently charged with meaning to make fathers, sons and brothers cleave to each other as absolute blocks in political relations, and the on-going vendetta. With external relations increasing but still fairly marginal, one is lead to conclude that the strongly local character of primary bonds has been a principal mechanism for maintaining the corporateness of Naranja. Political factionalism has imparted a fresh necessity to the personal ties of friendship, blood, marriage, and ritual kinship.

Somewhat deviant social relations are connected with prostitution, Free Masonry, and the top leaders. Naranja men now visit the brothels of Zacapu more frequently, on an average of three times a year, which means that most men now acquire their first sexual experiences this way, that some men go once or twice a week, and that some other men have never gone at all. About six times infatuated Naranjeños have brought prostitutes back to Naranja for a few months because they "fell in love." In the second place, eleven Naranjeños are Masons, a politically liberal organization in Mexico. The cacique who was dominant in 1956 had reached the highest rank, of 33, which partly explains the speedy military and political help he has occasionally received from high quarters. Third, both the leading caciques and a nephew

and a son of each are married to outside mestizas, with sharp effects on their own integration within the community. Furthermore, only the ruling cacique and his nephew, and the opposition leaders, have many out-of-town compadres; two of the latter have only outside compadres, and the former have linked themselves with equals or superiors in the state political network--one compadre of the ruling cacique is a general and ex-governor. And just as for compadres, it is the top leaders and the most mestizo or the most Indian villagers who have the most outside friends. As political leaders become compromised in the larger struggle for power they lose in integration with the corporate village.

## 7. Politics

Since the 1880's Naranja politics, though largely and usually autonomous, has never been completely intelligible in those terms. Before the desiccation it was controlled in a fairly representative fashion by the elders speaking for the main families under one scion of the comparatively wealthy and educated de la Cruz line. After about 1890 power shifted into the hands of the two mestizo families who had collaborated with the landlords and the clergy in transferring land rights and carrying out the drainage. The son of the formerly dominant family studied law in Morelia and developed into an agrarian leader widely known in state circles. Following his assassination in 1919, his nephew, Primo Tapia de la Cruz, returned from the United States, where he had been organizing I.W.W. strikes, and took over as the regional director of the agrarian reform until his own assassination in 1926 by direct if informal orders of Plutarco Elias Calles, the national president. The basic force contributing to Naranja's political hypertrophy at this time and to the violence and general stress of the agrarian movement was that the lands of the Zacapu plain were anything but marginal. The corporate Indian villages were claiming and holding land that the larger society could well have used (Wolf 1955:457).

Since 1926, Naranja leaders have been remarkably active in the left wing of the state PRI party under Lázaro Cárdenas. Naranja leaders are well known in the National Peasant Confederation; in 1956, the Secretary General came directly from Mexico City to give the highlight speech at the Primo Tapia fiesta. The state-wide League of Agrarian Communities was originally organized and first presided over by Primo Tapia, and since then two Naranja caciques have served as the Secretary General to this official body of the state peasantry, including the politically difficult times of 1932-1935 and 1956-1959. The League represents over 900 Michoacán villages. The regional committee of the League in the Zacapu district includes 19 communities and is still very powerful in mediating relations to high politicians and in channelling outside aid. With the exception of one term, Naranja leaders have also served as state representative (1932-1935, 1939-1941), and as alternate to the national representative (in 1951-1954). And three Naranjeños have been elected to the municipal presidency. Three candidates for state representative were assassinated in their home pueblos by peasant gunmen sent from Naranja. Many lesser individuals in the general Tarascan area have suffered similarly from Naranja leaders and fighters, especially during the so-called "capture" of Tirindaro. Naranja's role with respect to various formal offices thus provides a telling index of her status as a bastion of "indigenous, red-boned Cardenism." Her

widely attested homogeneity of political ideology is thus functionally correlated with her far-ranging and aggressive efforts at political domination outside the narrow, local confines.

Naranja's informal relations with outside politics are reflected in the failure of municipal police and local military units to interfere in her political embroilings, except for the brief periods when "anti-revolutionary" forces were strong in the state--1921-1924, 1932-1934, and 1945. At such times from five to fifteen villagers have been incarcerated. Otherwise, few of the political killings--77 in the past 36 years--have been punished by any external agents although Naranja would technically fall under regional and national law and law enforcement. Homicides and attempts at homicide generally result in a visit by a policeman from Zacapu hours or days after the fact. It is mainly theft and sex offenses that finally get tried at the municipal level. In fact, the Naranja leaders have managed to keep their pueblo fairly free from control by mestizos and outside politicians. They even resent the nearby Celanese plant because of its power and they have refused to cooperate on several occasions with either the American managers or the Mexican labor union. Such factional leaders are quite explicit about their intention to retain the informal autonomy of Naranja.

The village has two locally elected governments. The civil government, with annually elected president, secretary and treasurer, is largely concerned with local affairs, but also deals with the respective municipal and state organizations involved with cases of crime, the property tax, secular fiestas, elections, and the periodic boundary disputes with other villages. The ejidal government, with four officers elected every three years, is mainly concerned with ejido taxes, the collection of debts, numerous conflicting land claims, and the great communal harvest around Christmas time. The officers in either government tend to be older agrarian fighters or young former school teachers who have returned to agriculture. The slate of officers elected usually reflects the prior decision of the faction which happens to be dominant at the time. Each of these informal factions is nucleated around one bilaterally and affirmally extended group and village politics is thought of as a struggle between or within such "families." The flourishing strength of kinship as a framework for both informal factionalism and formal government has--given the role of politics in Naranja--contributed its bit to the corporate integrity of the community (Friedrich 1957).

#### 8. Witchcraft and Science

Most Naranja women believe in witchcraft and a large minority has resorted to it at some time. Of the three now in residence, the only active witch returned several years ago after a long exile in San Jerónimo. Aside from privately recited formulae, most Naranjeños look outside the pueblo for professional services, especially to Zacapu, where a witch was murdered in 1956, and to San Jerónimo, the witchcraft center for the Lake Region, and to Cherán, focus of this art for the entire Tarascan area. The frequent trips to such centers constantly reinforce the areal integration of the Tarascan communities, and the superstitious beliefs of the women; for example, in 1956 a dying Naranjeña was rushed to Cherán to be washed in the blood of a brown pig. Since witchcraft is exclusively directed toward fellow-villagers, it remains a

significant mechanism of corporate structure, the institutionalized expression of intimate if negative, envious relationships, Witchcraft, like religion, has somewhat declined in the face of the secularization consequent upon the agrarian reform.

Scientific notions spread through schools and the mass media have undermined but by no means eliminated many folk beliefs in hell, or even an after-world, in spirits and goblins, and in the magical causes of sickness and other misfortunes. A young doctor resided in the village for two years and today most Naranjeños have recourse to the several doctors in Zacapu, some large families seeking consultation many times a year. But in general the folk science of Naranja differs little from that of highly conservative pueblos such as Azajo. The main consequence of modern medicine has been the tremendous drop in infant mortality.

### 9. Religion

Many of the most pervasive and extended bonds to the outer world were provided by religion. Until 1918 the village supported a priest, linked, of course, to counterparts in Tiríndaro, Tarejero and Zacapu in a regional clerical organization of great power that was connected in turn to higher levels in Pátzcuaro and Morelia. Pilgrims were exchanged with most other Tarascan villages throughout the year. More particularly, Naranja was united with the four contiguous pueblos of Tiríndaro, Tarejero, Azajo and Pitchátaro in two kinds of fiesta cycles. Both the one-day Corpus Christi celebration, with its dance of the professions, and the five-day Easter fiesta, with an imposing four-day passion play, were carried out on a rotating five-year basis; two years out of five Naranja played host to thousands of pilgrims and eight times during the same period hundreds of Naranjeños would visit the other four communities. This interaction reinforced the Tarascan aspects of Naranja culture, and its cessation has certainly contributed to mestization.

Naranja participates less today in all outside fiestas. Unlike other villagers, Naranjeños never carry a corona, a variously sized wooden icon, and only four pilgrimages are infallibly undertaken. Some 13 other patron saint fiestas are generally attended by 15 to 50 pilgrims and visitors from Naranja; over one half of these occur during the two months of the rainy season, and ten out of the 13 are in Tarascan-speaking towns. On the other hand, the political antagonism between Naranja and Tarejero, starting in 1927, is demonstrated today by the total absence of visitors from the latter community although it lies only five miles away across open fields. Many persons from the adjacent village of Tiríndaro also refuse to attend Naranja fiestas because of politics. As these three Indian communities have broken with each other they have turned increasingly to the small mestizo hamlets that adjoin them. The weakening of ethnic integrity within Naranja is thus inextricably linked to the weakening of its cultural ties with Tiríndaro and Tarejero. Culture change may be seen in terms of the changing relations within a network of villages.

Both the ideological and the institutional bases of Naranja religion were seriously weakened by the atheism of the agrarian movement. Primo Tapia, the agrarian cacique, combatted the clergy in various memorable ways, but still

supported the locally organized parts of the folk religion, such as the fiesta cycles just described. But during the 1930's the left-wing extremists converted the church and the priest's house into granaries and meeting houses, and even prevented the performance of the sacraments; during the entire period from 1921-1941, Naranja was ideologically related to world socialism. The clear segregation of politics and religion into two largely independent and sometimes conflicting institutions greatly weakened both the strength of the religion and one form of village corporateness. Some important local fiestas, notably that to the Virgin of the Assumption, have died out, and all the others, such as Carnival, Saint John, "Tigers," and the Three Kings, do not bring together the community as before.

Even during the 1920's and 1930's, however, Naranja women generally managed to maintain covert ties with the faith, often travelling to priests in distant villages to have their children baptised. In religion as elsewhere, it has been the women, participating less in external relations, who have continued to mediate between their children and the peculiar Naranja adjustment of mestizo and Indian values of which they are the principal agents. They organize locally the beautiful, year-long rituals in the church on the plaza. Since 1940 there has been a gradual relaxation of anti-clerical rigor at the national level. A priest was re-admitted to neighboring Tirindaro and is allowed to visit Naranja once a month to perform mass. One cacique was even secretly married "for the sake of the children." But due to the general vigilance and hostility of the factional leaders the regional clergy is kept fairly ineffectual in its attempts to relate Naranja to the outer world.

In 1956, many vital internal and external relationships were still deriving from the fiesta system. The quasi-religious individual rites of passage of baptism, marriage and death do not differ significantly from those in other villages as regards the amount of money spent or the numbers of relatives and friends participating. "Tacari" on December 15, and the following eight Posadas, evoke almost total participation, partly because they also function as a sort of coming out period for the young girls. All but the "fanatical revolutionaries" seem to observe the local celebration of All Souls and the Day of the Dead.

Most important today is still the patron saint fiesta, visited in 1956 by groups of one to over 20 pilgrims each from 66 communities, 47 of them Tarascan, plus about ten from villages that I could not identify. This means that almost 75 percent (47/66) of Tarasco was represented in Naranja, an impressive index of the annual affirmation of areal solidarity. The big western region was only represented by the ayate-manufacturing pueblo of Tarecuato, and this was due to the special fact that about one third of the Naranja population moved to that village in the 1860's. Some of the 19 mestizo communities at the fiesta were still Tarascan in 1900. Ancient cultural connections may be indicated by the pilgrim groups from two towns just east and west of Morelia, the latter, Zitacuaro, a strongpoint of the preconquest Tarascan Empire (Stanislawsky 1947). The same is true of the sizable Naranja groups of pilgrims still travelling to the distant and no longer Tarascan towns of San Juan de los Conejos and San Juan de los Lagos. We find considerable congruence between pilgrimage obligations and cultural affinity.

In 1956, the Padre Jesús fiesta was still significantly religious; many of the merchants present were selling only enough lemons and bread to subsist. But religiosity has declined since former times. For example, Naranja used to be well known for her "Little Old Men," a dance with strongly religious connotations that calls forth competition between villages and the exchange of accomplished groups. This form of spiritual interaction has been weakened by politics. In 1956, there were only five sets of dancers in Naranja, and no "Little Old Men" at all. Some Tarascan visitors to the Padre Jesús fiesta claimed that Naranja was changing. The celebration itself is now organized by the government officers for civil profits, that come to at least 2,000 pesos, with the religious managers playing a supporting role. Political and governmental principles unite the pueblo somewhat less effectively because they mainly concern adult men and always imply the divisive struggle for power.

### 10. Music

Naranja's egregious role in the music of the Tarascan area goes back to at least the 1880's when a member of the Gochi political family studied briefly in an unspecified city and allegedly brought back modern instruments, notably the trumpet. Since then one Gochi has been director of a military band in Mexico City and another performs in Morelia. The band often accompanied Primo Tapia from 1920-1926, the high quality of its music presumably enhancing the agrarian program. During 1956, the band, numbering 12 pieces, played about 22 times in 17 different communities, 12 of them in the Tarascan area, but only five of them Tarascan. All were patron saint fiestas except for the patriotic celebrations in the tierra caliente to the south. The band usually plays with the help of scores on the outside, but at the dozens of familial and local affairs in Naranja and adjoining villages they perform extemporaneously on native themes, or "tunes" (sones). These tunes significantly link all Tarascan communities and set them off from the mestizos; Naranja musicians will discuss tunes and borrow new improvisations when performing out of town. The band is in great demand and some members play several nights a week, earning three pesos or more on each occasion.

The serious study of music in Naranja has led to the recent formation of a 25-piece orchestra which dresses in gabardine suits and plays everything from rancherías to blues to cha-cha-cha. In the past few years it has performed in 21 communities, 14 of them Tarascan (gabardine suits are not worn in the Tarascan pueblos). In 1956, much larger centers were visited, such as Pátzcuaro, Quiroga, Morelia, Zacapu (six times), and a mammoth political rally in Chupícuaro. After a competition with the Morelia orchestra Naranja was judged to be about equal. The group earns a total of about 1,200 pesos for one or two days, that is, an average of 50 pesos for each musician, but it may collect up to 4,000 pesos for an Independence Day performance, when it holds out against the many towns competing for its services.

Naranja continues today as the innovating center for new styles and instruments. Outside bands are only invited to Naranja for the patron saint fiesta. Since the village to a certain extent specializes in maize, politics and music, there has inevitably been some interrelation between the two. The ruling Cruz political family, never musically inclined, tends to suspect the musicians as a separate center of power. The Gochis, on the other hand, were

and still are almost all musicians. Naranja has only recently recovered from the exodus in 1934 of 36 Góehista families. Thus kinship-dominated politics has decisively influenced the musical history of a Mexican pueblo.

Naranja's external relations have not been exhaustively covered above. For example, about seven men are drafted every year to serve in the army. But the foregoing documentation, some of it unique for the community study literature, sufficiently establishes the factual basis for the following theoretical conclusions.

### Conclusions

First, the present study shows that external ties can serve as fairly diagnostic indices of community dynamics. Specifically, every cultural domain in Naranja with external connections, such as education, involves a partly discrete set of leaders and specialists, such as the teachers. Today the political leaders exercise a demonstrable control over these other mediators to the outer world and part of the struggle for power is itself stimulated by the felt urgency of retaining such hegemony. Many aspects of communal customs, acculturation and corporate structure appear to be most readily explicable in terms of fairly concrete political relationships.

Second, most Tarascan communities are more or less open religiously and economically, and some of the most conservative, such as Azafo, are also the most open in the sense that their external relations are the most developed. Naranja still participates in Tarascan areal culture by playing her special communal role and constantly redefining her relations within a complex system of reciprocity. But as part of rapid culture change, Naranja has been losing in integration with the Tarascan world more or less what she has been gaining through mestizo contacts. Thus, maize is exported instead of mats and hats, and more Spanish is spoken with more mestizos, and less Tarascan with fewer Indians. The basic shift has been not from an isolated folk culture but from a vigorous areal culture toward increased participation in national, mestizo life. It is the content rather than the degree of external relations that has principally altered since 1885.

Third, the culture of Naranja has been appreciably changed in terms of the parameters generally used to measure corporateness: literacy, economic relations, ethnocentric attitudes, the role of politics as independent of religion, the importance of magic, and so forth (Wolf 1957:457-61). Nevertheless, the present article demonstrates that corporate structure is still strong today. Naranja is unusually open in transportation and communications, in the sale of a huge cash crop of maize, in her export of musical skills, and her egregious political role. But she remains almost a closed corporation in her primary social bonds, her local religious fiestas, her jealously guarded political autonomy, and the close attachment of most of her families to their small plots of land. Thus, while fully recognizing the generally close and inverse relation between the quality of corporateness and the nature and degree of external relationships, it would still seem more fruitful in the case of Naranja to regard these two dimensions as partly independent of each other. In actual fact, the increase of outside ties may stimulate the development of institutions guaranteed to preserve a minimum of corporate integrity. For



these reasons, I have concluded that Naranja should be classified as an "open, corporate peasant village."<sup>1</sup>

#### ENDNOTE

1. The field work was conducted in Mexico between February, 1955, and July, 1956. I thank Sidney Mintz for his valuable comments on this paper.

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