THE MESOAMERICAN BARRIO: A RECIPROCITY MODEL
FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

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INTRODUCTION

Among the traditional communities of Mesoamerica, the *barrio* or municipal ward frequently occurs as a unit of social organization between the family and the pueblo. Its importance as a device for canalizing social behavior is suggested by its broad distribution and the relative absence in the area today of broadscale competitive institutions, such as corporate unilineal kin groups. I wish to clarify the historic and functional position of the barrio, especially with reference to that type which I call the civil-religious barrio, and to call attention to recurring patterns of interaction between barrios that appear to qualify as structural devices for communicating social distance.

My findings are based on a survey of barrio organization in seventy-three Mesoamerican Indian and peasant communities, largely as comprehended from published sources but supplemented by personal observations in several Zoque Indian and Zoque-derived communities in the state of Chiapas, México.

SPANISH BACKGROUND AND LATITUDE OF THE BARRIO MODEL

The barrio concept as applied in the New World has a terminological prototype in Spain. There a barrio is basically a unit of a territorially circumscribed population aggregate. Two variations on this territorial concept appear. One involves the sense of peripherality. Thus, small communities which are outlying satellites of a larger urban center but are dependent in some manner upon it are often referred to as barrios. Related to this is the use of the term to designate contiguous divisions of an urban center which are, nevertheless, peripheral to the nucleus of that center. The second variation on the usage of the term involves its application to wards or subdivisions of an urban center irrespective of the notion of peripherality. Both usages are sometimes applied in the same metropolitan area.

The satellite village concept appears to represent considerable antiquity. The Spanish word *barrio* is derived from the Arabic *barri*, meaning *exterior* (Enciclopedia Universal, 7:938), suggesting early application of the word to population units outside the walled city. The majority of contemporary Spanish communities which integrate the term barrio in their formal names are dependencies of larger centers or were former dependencies which through population growth have become urban wards (Enciclopedia Universal, 7:938-940).

The barrio in Spain may also be a vehicle of sociocultural expression. Barrios commonly are administrative units of municipal districts, often with a patron saint assigned to them. Spanish barrios are often used to express urban-rural or rich-poor differences, and there is a widespread tendency to dichotomize towns into upper (*arriba*) and lower (*abajo*) barrios, which have implied but rarely demonstrated sociocultural differences. That one's own barrio is a familiar unit is expressed by popular phrases: *estar de barrio* or *vestido de barrio* refer to informal dress; *ir al otro barrio*, to go to the other barrio, signifies to die (Enciclopedia Universal,

7:938). The Spanish barrio thus expresses more than demographic and territorial dimensions; the social dimension is also an important ingredient of the model.

We can assume that Spanish conquerors in Mexico and Guatemala applied the term barrio to any Indian population units that met the standards of its use in Spain. However, the present survey reveals that considerable functional latitude is encompassed by the term. I have noted the following applications.

Spatially isolated village segments. Spatially isolated units of a population have been called barrios. The most frequent application in the literature of the Conquest and the Colonial period is to satellites of larger towns. This usage persists today; examples are the satellites of the historically new *ejido* of El Pacayal, Chiapas (Tejeda Fonseca, 1961:321). Administrative dependency is often implied if the barrios are satellites of a larger community. Chiñas describes the community of El Centro, apparently her pseudonym for Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, as surrounded by a cluster of politically dependent barrios (Chiñas, 1973:20).

Naturally bounded units. Rivers, ravines, and hills divide urban areas into zones which are conveniently called barrios in the absence of other criteria. Tlacoatzintepec, Oaxaca, for example, has barrios that are separated by a ravine (Weitlaner and Castro, 1954:119). In this category possibly belongs the *barrio arriba* (upper barrio) and *barrio abajo* (lower barrio) combination that occurs frequently; Totontepec, Oaxaca, a Mixe town is an example (Beals, 1945:29-32). I also include here barrios bounded by streets, railroad tracks or other man-made devices which preceded barrio assignment. Fences or walls built to divide preexisting barrios do not qualify as boundaries for this category.

Ethnic and socioeconomic units. Ethnic and linguistic subgroups within the same town often are distinguished as barrios. Beals (1932:118) has found references to such barrios in the sixteenth century contact literature for Sinaloa. A contemporary example, Mecapalapa, Puebla, is said to be composed of "mestizo, totonaco, tepehua, and otomí barrios" (Museo Nacional . . . , 1951:117).

Intracommunal economic differences, in the absence of ethnic differences, are quite characteristic of formally organized barrio systems, and it is difficult to know which came first. In some towns local trade groups hold barrio status, as at Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca (Marroquín, 1957:57). Generalized wealth polarity is reflected in the *barrio de los ricos* and the *barrio de los probres* familiar to most ethnographers who have worked in Mesoamerican towns.

In recent years quasi-ethnic differences have appeared in many communities following the activities of evangelical missionaries. In small towns converts frequently tend to live close to one another, forming barrios. In Pueblo Nuevo Solistahuacán, Chiapas, I was told of a *barrio de los Adventistas* (Seventh Day Adventists).

Factional opposition units. The term barrio sometimes refers to localized functions. There appear to be at least two versions. One simply equates spatial distance with social distance, but polarizes it by utilizing some arbitrary intermediate boundary. Nuñez (1963) has observed that a central street is the accepted boundary between two highly factional but otherwise weakly expressed barrios in Cajititlán, Jalisco. A second version results from the localization of formerly dispersed factions. The barrios of Ocuilapa, a Zoque village in Chiapas, are the result of one faction, following a political dispute, segregating itself voluntarily and resettling in a location at the edge of the village.

Administrative units. Territorial administrative units are often called barrios. A barrio of the ancient Mixteco-Chocho town of Texupa was governed by a *calpixque* appointed by a *principal-gobernador* of the pueblo (Dahlgren de Jordan, 1954:157). The barrios of modern Panchimalco, El Salvador, were purposely created for administrative purposes in this century (Marroquín, 1959:52, 72). In Mexico such purposeful political divisions tend to be called *secciones* rather than barrios.

Localized unilinear kinship units. Localized unilinear kinship groups, where there are more than one in the town, may be treated as barrios. Such units are few, reflecting the rarity of unilinear organization in Mesoamerica today. Nutini (1962:62) identifies the barrio of Contla, Tlaxcala, as "a semilocalized, patrilineal, exogamous clan, subdivided into lineages." The equivalence derives, not from a recognition of the unilinear character of the units, but from their localization and associated cermonial functions.

Sodality units. In parts of the Zapotec and Mixe areas, as at Choapan and Totontepec, the term barrio has come to signify a religious brotherhood charged with the stewardship of a saint (Fuente, 1947:188). These barrios are associated with specific territorial units from which they draw their membership in part. They are open-end variations of the once widespread religious cofradías. In these towns the term barrio may originally have applied to the territorial unit and only later was transferred to the ceremonial representatives of that unit. It is most likely a regional development from the political-religious type of barrio.

Civil-religious ceremonial units. The most highly institutionalized barrio is the political-religious ceremonial unit. Its boundaries may be defined by physical means, but its ceremonial functions provide its character. In kin group terms the vast majority of these barrios are agamous or relatively endogamous, ambilateral descent groups; kinship, then, is not a primary factor in their localization. The ceremonial unit has both ancient and modern expressions, including the aboriginal Aztec *calpulli*, according to the analyses of Monzón (1949) and Carrasco (Nutini, 1961:67), the present-day *calpul* of the Tzotzil of Chalchihuitán, Chiapas, (Guiteras Holmes, 1951) and the majority of units in contemporary Mesoamerica called barrios. The modern barrio and the ancient calpulli are not identical institutions. They share a sufficient number of features, however, to fit the same generic type.

I call this type of unit the *civil-religious barrio* because of the civil and religious ceremonial activities associated with it. In this I have followed Carrasco (1961) who describes Mesoamerican *cargo* systems as civil-religious hierarchies. The civil-religious barrio as the maximal expression of the territorial barrio is the focus of the remainder of this paper.

ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL-RELIGIOUS BARRIO

Regardless of similarities between the civil-religious barrio and pre-Columbian territorial institutions such as the calpulli, many characteristics of this barrio type were present in Spanish culture and transmitted to Mesoamerica as a consequence of conquest. The Spanish concept of community was a central theme in this imposition.

From the inception of the Conquest, the efficient reorganization of New World Indian communities was envisaged and legislated. They were to have semiautonomous local governments modeled after the Spanish *ayuntamiento*, without, however, any direct access to the colonial administration. This model for municipal government had first been applied to towns in Spain by the Spanish monarchs of the eleventh and twelfth centuries under the title of *común* or *consejo*. Each community constituted a republic in an organizational sense, and was governed by a council of officers elected by the heads of families and headed by an *alcalde*. The común possessed civil and criminal jurisdiction as well as economic functions (Aguirre Beltrán, 1953:29). As early as 1512, the Laws of Burgos provided that each new Indian community created by *congregación* or consolidation of smaller villages should have a church, certain specified church officers, and an ayuntamiento headed by one or two alcaldes to be elected by the populace in the presence of the priest (Simpson, 1934:44). In Mesoamerica, ayuntamientos were established for villages in Oaxaca by Cortés in the first decade following the Conquest, and the viceroy, Ramírez de Fuenleal, made such reorganization official policy for New Spain in 1532. The term *ayuntamiento*, however, came to be reserved for the Spanish-Criollo towns while the same institution in Indian pueblos was simply called *el común* (Aguirre Beltrán, 1953:31-32).

The influence of the Church in the formation of communes was especially strong during the first century after the Conquest. The right to missionize had been conveyed to the regular orders, which established churches and convents in larger towns and chapels, periodically visited by a priest, in smaller towns. The supervision of elections by priests was ordered to cease by the viceroy in 1622 (Aguirre Beltrán, 1953:41), but by then church offices had been integrated in the official body of the común. Carrasco (1961) describes and documents the fusion of religious and civil offices into a single civil-religious hierarchy that remained a salient characteristic of Indian community organization in Mesoamerica until today.

Aguirre Beltrán (1953:32-37) and Carrasco (1961:492) have pointed out that in the creation of the Indian republics lifetime indigenous offices of the pre-Conquest Period were reconstituted or simply identified with the yearly offices in the communes, especially in the lower levels of the hierarchy. In this synthesis aboriginal territorial and social structure was preserved. Functionaries of communes which had possessed a ward structure before the reorganization were drawn from those wards on the equal representation basis, thus preserving for those wards some of their aboriginal political and ceremonial status. Aguirre Beltrán (1953:39-41) has reviewed this incorporation of indigenous wards as barrios in the común structure. Their prior social character appears to have been such that administration by officials from other barrios or towns was resisted vigorously. Village level representation was requested for the home barrio through fear of not receiving just treatment otherwise, a sentiment reminiscent of contemporary interbarrio relations in small towns and suggesting that the cognitive basis of social organization has changed little since contact. In 1758 the viceroy Marqués de las Amarillas officially expedited the use of the barrio as a unit of común organization, a policy confirmed in a *real cedula* of 1770. The late date of this official action merely confirms the continued strength of indigenous ward organization and the probability that it had been long used as a convenient tool by Spanish administrators. The territorial barrio was thus perpetuated as a representative unit in the civil-religious hierarchy of the community.

Both satellite communities and urban wards became civil-religious barrios. Satellite barrios of this type persist in a few places today, as at Contla, Tlaxcala (Nutini, 1961:68). Urban barrios, apparently of indigenous origin, occur at Tepoztlán, Morelos, which has some of the satellite type as well (Redfield, 1930:76-77). Urban barrios sometimes have rural origins. At Tzintzuntzan, Michoacán, early satellite barrios were abandoned, their inhabitants settling locally in the urban center where they continued for some time as urban barrios (Foster, 1948:25-26, 201-202). At Quiroga, Michoacán, the satellites simply fused with the urban center through population growth but retained their autonomy as barrios (Brand, 1951:14-15).

One of the more important sources for urban barrios was the *congregaciones de indio* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, by which smaller villages were consolidated with larger ones for political, economic and religious efficiency. The concept was first legislated in the Laws of Burgos of 1512, although it was not generally implemented in New Spain until the period of 1598 to 1605 when, under the viceroyalties of the Count of Monterrey and the Marquis of Montesclaros, congregaciones were intensively effected south of a line between Tampico and Gaudalajara (Simpson, 1934:31-42). The commission of Pedro de Cervantes to congregate the province of Tlanchinol (in the present state of Hidalgo) specified that in the new town he should "put in one place the villages and estancias that are brought in, accommodating them on one street, one village in one part (barrio) and another in another" (Simpson, 1934:97). He accomplished this for several new pueblos, calling the component units barrios and giving each barrio the name of the village from which it was formed (Simpson, 1934:92-128). He was instructed to permit barrios which formerly were head towns to elect independently their own *regidor* and *alcalde* (Simpson, 1934:101). Since these barrios had possessed churches in their original locations (Simpson, 1934:123-124), it must be assumed that some autonomy of religious activity was also preserved in the new location. There can be little doubt that similar instructions were issued to other agents of congregation, and that this same process of barrio formation was repeated elsewhere. Reyes García documents a number of cases of barrio formation through congregation in the highlands of Chiapas.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CIVIL-RELIGIOUS BARRIO

A civil religious barrio has specific organizational properties. Although each of these properties, identified below, is not always present, they occur in combination with such frequency that as a group they represent an ideal model for a fully developed civil-religious barrio.

1. Tutelary saint
2. Annual fiesta for the tutelary saint
3. *Mayordomía* (stewardship) of the tutelary saint, circulated within the barrio
4. Saint's lands, communally owned by the barrio, for the support of the tutelary's cult
5. Chapel, on barrio land housing the tutelary's image
6. *Tequio* (communal labor service) for chapel repair, working the saint's lands, and other public works regulated by the barrio
7. Civil lands (commons) communally owned by the barrio
8. *Principales* or officers with civil-religious functions

Of these traits, only the patron saint approaches universality; usually the barrio bears the saint's name. In rare instances a barrio has no tutelary saint but treats the pueblo patron saint as its own, practicing its cult apart from other barrios in the community. The annual fiesta of the patron saint is nearly as universal as the saint itself and is regularly associated with a mayordomia (Thomas, 1962). In Spain a *cofradía* or cofraternity dedicated to the saint was the vehicle for the mayordomía, designating one of its members or an outsider to serve as *mayordomo* (steward) of the saint each year (Foster, 1960:164). Foster (1953) has documented the failure of the cofradía in the New World. In Mesoamerica the concept of a brotherhood vehicle either declined from an earlier higher incidence or simply was never introduced in Indian villages by the priesthood; the residential pueblo or barrio instead became the sponsor of the mayordomía (Thomas, 1962:61).

Saint's lands, barrio owned and dedicated to the support of the patron's cult, were cultivated under the direction of the mayordomo and the income used to lighten his burden. Now rare, formerly they were a regular feature of the civil-religious barrio; the mayordomo, properly speaking a steward of public lands, draws his title from this now diminished role (Carrasco, 1961:493).

Although saint's lands are rarely found today, the barrio chapel for housing the patron's image is relatively common for satellite village barrios. They occur also for urban barrios, but frequently a single pueblo church may serve all barrios of the community. The manpower for working saint's lands and for repairing the church is provided by the institution of tequio or corvee, by which labor is conscripted from the male membership of the barrio. The barrio may also function as a unit for regulating labor conscription for extrabarrio, community projects of a civil nature. Theoretically tequio could be levelled for civil projects within the barrio, but such instances are rare.

Barrio ownership of secular lands is rather common. Such communal ownership is not to be confused with communal tenure, which is absent. That the barrio is a land-holding corporation is inferred when it is the maximal group within which individuals hold rights of alienation of land, as at Chalchihuitan, Chiapas, where lineage or family lands cannot be transferred or sold to lineages or families of other barrios (Guiteras Holmes, 1951:200).

Formal political organization within barrios is often absent today. In traditional communities, however, an elderly elite may exercise more than nominal authority in keeping order within the barrio. Known as principales (principle men), *ancianos* (elders), or *pasados* (past office holders), they are men who have gained prestige through the political and religious offices they have held. The incidence and the level of their authority were higher in the past than they are at present.

PATTERNS OF BARRIO INTERACTION

Official personnel internal to the barrio tend to be hierarchically graded by relative authority or contribution. Thus, a group of mayordomía officers for a barrio saint typically is graduated from the first mayordomo downward through others of inferior rank. The same is true of the elderly elite. This tendency to internal hierarchy contrasts sharply with the manner in which barrios integrate at the pueblo level. Here the salient character of the civil-religious barrio, that of an autonomous religious and political unit, is conveyed by the social distance evident in interbarrio relations. This social distance is illustrated by the noncorporate

manner in which barrios formally organize to meet any community obligation to which they are mutually committed. Examples are the fiesta of the pueblo patron saint, church festivals such as carnival, Lent and Easter, and the constitution of civil ayuntamiento. Two principles of organization are apparent, that of reciprocity as expressed by rotation and that of synchronic autonomy as expressed through parallel action. Each peculiarly institutionalizes a kind of structural autonomy that, while permitting social interaction between barrios, preserves an optimum degree of social distance.

The rotation principle conveys barrio autonomy by the periodic transfer from one barrio to another of the civil or religious offices of the pueblo. Each barrio takes its turn and then yields to another, a device which effectively gives equal representation to each barrio while maintaining its autonomy through temporal isolation from the other. A number of variations are possible. In Ayutla, a Mixe pueblo in Oaxaca, the civil offices of *presidente* and alcalde rotate yearly back and forth between its two barrios; the two posts at any one time must represent different barrios. In this village each barrio has its own teams of regidores and *mayores* that rotate in office, those of one barrio serving one week, those of the other the next week (Beals, 1945:32). The rotation principle is by no means limited in its application to dual barrio systems. At San Bernadino Contla, a Nahuatl community in Tlaxcala, all pueblo level fiestas are the responsibility of a single barrio in any one year, requiring ten years for the complete circuit through the ten barrios (Nutini, 1961:73). The principle shows a wide latitude of application in pueblo affairs. Tequio at Chalchihuitán, a Tzotzil village in Chiapas, rotates from one *calpul* to another. These *calpules* would be called barrios elsewhere but here have the rare characteristic of being localized unilineal kingroups (Guiteras Holmes, 1951:202).

The principle of parallel action communicates autonomy through the synchronic or simultaneous duplication of pueblo level offices by the barrios. Each barrio parallels the efforts of the others, effectively giving equal community representation to each while maintaining autonomy through spatial isolation. For example, the traditional ayuntamiento at San Juan Chamula, a Tzotzil village in Chiapas, is formed by three delegations of ranked officers, one from each barrio; six ranks or positions exist and are duplicated in each of the delegations (Pozas, 1959:134). This union of duplicate sets of hierarchically ranked officers not only is a common method for constituting civil bodies, but is widely used for religious groups as well. Fiestas of the village patron saint are handled in this manner at Quiroga, a mestizo town in Michoacán (Brand, 1951:203-204), and at the Chinantec pueblo of Ojitlán, Oaxaca (Weitlaner, 1951:445). The same structural principle sometimes applies even to single representatives; at Ojitlán each barrio is represented on the municipal council by a single member who is elected by the barrio's council of elders (Weitlaner, 1951:445). Consolidation of delegations need not occur, however. At Chamula the church festivals of carnival and Holy Week are managed by ranked *Alférez Pasión* and *Alférez Ojob* groups in each barrio independently of each other, with no unified pueblo body being constituted (Pozas, 1959:168-169).

Barrio systems that work on the rotation principle in one area of pueblo level responsibility often use synchronic, autonomous organization in another. I suggest the two principles are alternative responses to the problem of organizing socially distant parties in cooperative ventures. Hierarchy of the sort that proves efficient within the barrio does not suffice between barrios, because a smoothly operating hierarchy requires some of the representative contingents to submit to the authority of others. Theoretically, social units which are competitive, mutually suspicious or otherwise factional would resist such submission and would favor rotation and synchronic autonomy as means for organizing because emphasis on autonomy best represents their factional and fissive tendencies. Robert Lowie recognized the implicit factionalism in these modes when he observed that Plains Indian military societies were associated with less intrasociety strife in those tribes where the societies were hierarchic than in those where they were autonomous and equal (Lowie, 1948:324).

Rotation or synchronic autonomy in a civil-ceremonial system, if they indeed express social distance, should be correlated with manifestations of divisiveness between the parties so organized. It is not difficult to identify such tendencies in interbarrio relations. The ethnographic literature on Mesoamerica provides many examples of interbarrio competition, strife, and factionalism. At Contla, Tlaxcala, during carnival each barrio supports a team of masked *comparsas* performers which competes with those of other barrios in terms of showmanship (Nutini, 1961:73). Overt aggression rarely occurs between two barrios of a

multiple barrio system, but instead tends to be expressed by the restructuring of the multiple barrios into dual factions. At Huautla, a Mazatec pueblo in Oaxaca, the five barrios are grouped into two rival factions, two in one and three in the other. They regularly operate in the same combinations on religious occasions and formerly expressed their factionalism by overt violence (Villa Rojas, 1955:82, 84). Similar factions, in another five-barrio system, exist at Ojitlán, Oaxaca, where in past years each attempted the destruction of the other's altar during the All Saints festival. Girls of the two factions attend mass in separate groups guarded by the young men of their respective barrios (Weitlaner, 1951:446). Less violent political factionalism occurs in the three barrio system of Chamula, where a smaller barrio is being absorbed by another to form one of the factions (Pozas, 1959:33-35). These examples have one common denominator: each barrio or section of the factional pairs contrasts ethnically, or with respect to class or acculturational position. At Ojitlán, a Chinantec town, one faction accuses the other of Mazatec origin (Weitlaner, 1951:442). At Huautla, one faction is partly of Spanish descent and considers itself superior to the other (Villa Rojas, 1955:83). At Chamula, one faction is agricultural and traditional, the other commercial and progressive (Pozas, 1959:34-35). The barrio obviously is a sufficient structure for canalizing stress behavior.

The barrio has been characterized by Ricardo Pozas as possessing all the political elements of a pueblo (Pozas, 1959:35). All civil and religious features of the barrio are present in many Mesoamerican pueblos that do not possess barrio subdivisions. The barrio town, then, is analogous to a confederation of independent and socially distant pueblos, linked not by sentiment but by interdependence of roles relative to shared ritual obligations. The barrio community may be said to have only a symbolic organic solidarity in Durkheim's sense (1933:111-200), its ritualized unity analogous to the functional interdependence of the parts of an organism.

Rotation and parallelism as principles for expressing social distance are not restricted to barrio inter-action. In the largely Zoque town of San Bartolomé Rayón, Chiapas, the image of Santa Teresita on the day of her fiesta is carried in laps around the town plaza by alternating teams of girls representing the memberships of two parallel religious associations, one composed of Zoque girls, the other ladino girls. This division of voluntary church associations along ethnic lines is widespread in the region. At Piedra Blanca, an Isthmian Mixe town, a political dispute resulted in the children of factional groups attending class at the village school on alternate days (Mann, 1958:122-123).

Rotation and parallelism as described above for Mesoamerica are probably but regional expressions of a reciprocity-avoidance scheme utilized universally to accomodate stress-laden social relations. North African Berber districts, and sometimes communities, are nearly always divided into two opposing factions called *sofs*, elective or appointive offices frequently are filled alternately from each faction, or a principal officer and his assistant may be chosen from opposite factions for the same term (Murdock, 1959:122-123). At Santa Clara, New Mexico, a Tewa village, the two nonlocalized moieties that reciprocated semiannually in ceremonial and civil matters experienced such a build-up of factional tension that all cooperative, nonreciprocating activities ceased. Associations that formerly had cut across moiety lines became so polarized to one or the other moiety that a degree of complementary and parallel organization resulted (Dozier, 1966:175-183). Murdock, in his Ethno-Atlas, documents many societies scattered around the world in which communities are segmented into barrios, wards, or hamlets (Murdock, 1967:170-233, column 19). If these were examined more closely, many undoubtedly would be found to interact by means of formalized rotation and synchronic parallelism.

It should not be overlooked that reciprocity and parallelism in barrio organization appear structurally similar to license and avoidance relationships in kinship behavior. Radcliffe-Brown (1952:91ff) has observed that the latter are alternative modes of handling the same relationship when that relationship is complicated by the contradictory presence of both a sense of social "conjunction" (license) and one of "disjunction" (avoidance). Applied to barrios, disjunction is found in the social isolation barrios achieve through parallel organization, whereas conjunction is apparent in the reciprocity of barrios through rotation.

CORPORATE IDENTITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CANALIZATION

As with unilineal kingroups, barrios reach a level of collective identity or corporacy whereby they serve as vehicles for a great deal of social function beyond formal civil and religious offices. That barrios can be

corporate is evident, for they delegate representation as in the previously described pueblo level cargo groups, and they continue in existence beyond the life of individual members. The image of corporacy is furthered when we consider the strength of the barrio in ascribing obligatory service to membership. A Tzotzil from San Juan Chamula who goes to reside outside his municipio may be appointed nevertheless to office by his barrio officials, who then systematically seek his return (Pozas, 1959:137). At Tepoztlán, families who move from the barrio are still obligated to make their annual formal contribution to the saint's fiesta; pledges to the saint made by heads of families are binding on their families after the deaths of the former (Redfield, 1930:74). This closed corporate quality of the barrio is widely reinforced by the mechanism of patrilineally inherited membership for males, as in the Tzeltal villages of Oxchuc and Cancuc in Chiapas (Guiteras Holmes, 1952b:103) and the Nahua village of Contla in Tlaxcala (Nutini, 1961:72). This is probably not so much an emphasis on lineality as it is a recognition of the patrilocal or virilocal family as the unit of ceremonial obligation. That residence is at the heart of the matter is conveyed by the fact women usually change their affiliation when they marry into another barrio (Weitlaner, 1951:444; Nutini, 1961:72), thus enhancing the corporate facade through nominal renunciation of outside obligations.

Faced with this capacity of corporate reality, it is not surprising that barrios regulate a variety of behavior beyond the formal civil-religious system. Social units such as calpullis, clans, ethnic groups, and previously independent villages, when incorporated into Spanish-type civil-religious systems as self-defined barrios, would of course retain for a time some of their previous social reality. But the process by which barrios develop into social groups is better observed in those new barrio systems that emerge from time to time without governmental imposition from the factional devisiveness so characteristic of Mesoamerican life. A good example is Ocuilapa, a Zoque village in Chiapas, where religious and political disputes led to the development of strong progressives and conservatives factions. The progressives eventually segregated themselves from the conservatives and resettled on the periphery of the village. Both factions then built barrio chapels but continued collective operation of the original village church. In barrio development by fission social polarization occurs first; the ceremonial appurtenances symbolizing social distances are added later. Such barrios, after ceremonialization has refined their boundaries, often become strangely durable, suggesting they serve real social need. This durability appears to develop by a process of institutional canalization, the progressive attachment of various functions to one institutional structure. Sometimes ceremonialization follows such extensive behavioral channeling; it is not assumed to be the catalyst that sets the process in motion.

Canalization is evident in the areas of political behavior, class ascription, economic specialization, and marriage regulation. Political functions are most obvious in the delegated representatives barrios sometimes provide to fill village civil offices. But social distance remains and is asserted, for in many towns it is assumed officials will favor their own barrios. The Mixe of Totontepec, Oaxaca, where municipio offices rotate yearly from barrio to barrio, believe officials currently in power not only favor their own barrios but misappropriate public funds at the expense of other barrios (Beals, 1945:29, 32).

The general classlessness of Meosamerican Indian and peasant societies, when these societies are considered as social isolates, mitigates against the regulation of social class by barrios. But with the appearance of ladinos in Indian communities, or with the development of acculturational differentiations in traditional communities, barrios regularly come to express a folk-elite polarity. Villa Rojas (1955:83) observed that in the Mazatec community of Huautla people from two of the five barrios formerly were characterized by Spanish surnames, particular speech mannerisms, and differences in clothing; furthermore, they considered themselves socially superior people from the other three barrios. Marroquín reports that in Panchimalco, El Salvador, where ladinos are concentrated in one particular barrio, some poor Indian inhabitants of the same barrio express pride in living there, saying that to do so signifies being ladino. There is a tendency here to reserve the word barrio for satellite aggregations; as citizens of higher social class concentrate in the town center, the term has come to signify lower social status (Marroquín, 1959). Similar class implications for the word occur in El Pacayal, Chiapas (Tejeda Fonseca, 1961:321). As ladinos in Indian towns tend to usurp political offices, the barrio in such circumstances comes to express political as well as class hierarchy.

The role of barrio boundaries in channeling economic behavior is difficult to assess because localized economic specialization may have fostered the original barrio segregation. In the Tzotzil village of Chamula,

where certain barrios are dedicated to cultivation and others to commerce (Pozas, 1959:34-35), we do not know which came first, specialization or barrio lines. Once a particular specialization is localized to a particular barrio, it does not easily cross boundaries to be nurtured competitively in neighboring barrios. At the Mixtecan market town of Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca, each satellite barrio has its own specialty trade to serve the needs of the urban center (Marroquín, 1957:164).

By far the most common expression of marriage regulation by the civil-religious barrio is its tendency to endogamy. In the few instances where barrio exogamy is practiced, the barrio is synonymous with an unilineal kingroup, as in the Cora village of Jesus Maria in Nayarit (Monzón, 1972) and Contla, Tlaxcala (Nutini, 1961:72). Rather strict barrio endogamy is sometimes cited, as for the Tzeltal and Tzotzil villages of Chiapas (Verbisky, 1961:296). However, this may be correlated with unilineality or tendencies to it. For example, the Tzotzil municipio of Chalchihuitán consists of five endogamous units locally called calpules but identified by Guiteras Holmes as barrios. Although they are subdivided into exogamous lineages (Guiteras Holmes, 1951:203), it would be inappropriate to call them phratries, which has connotations of exogamy. More commonly, barrio endogamy is qualified as a tendency, as Pozas does for Chamula (1959:34). Some barrio systems, however, are simply agamous; Mixe barrios, for example, appear to have no marriage regulation function (Beals, 1945:32).

Relative endogamy, when occurring with the usual bilaterality, makes the barrio into that type of kingroup Murdock (1949:63) calls a deme. Members, however, probably do not sense their barrio as a kingroup, as often exogamy with respect to family names is required. At Ojitlán, Oaxaca, where barrios tend to be endogamous, people with identical surnames cannot marry within the barrio, but outside the barrio the same name is considered to be a *línea distinta* (Weitlaner, 1951:443).

If a populace has not had sufficient time to develop a strong sense of barrio identities through the process of canalization, barrios may remain a weak social force in the community. At Panchimalco, El Salvador, where barrios are recent administrative creations, membership in them is not unified by pride and sentiment; families living in one barrio may be devoted to the saint's cult of another, and mayordomos of the barrio cofradías may be appointed by the municipal officials with no resentment on the part of barrio members (Marroquín, 1959:74-75). At the other extreme, the social solidarity that emerges from long term canalized behavior is difficult to dissolve. At the Populuca community of Sayula, Veracruz, Guiteras Holmes (1952a:112-113) found that, when the administrative functions of barrios were transferred to new political sections with different boundaries, barrio solidarity persisted for a long time before it finally was redirected to the new section boundaries. Social solidarity sometimes approaches the level of ethnicity. Fuente (1960:237) describes the barrio of the Zapotecs as highly ethnocentric and suggests that the recent tendency by officials to turn barrios into administrative sections is to soften the manifestations of ethnocentrism.

The ritual reciprocity that occurs among barrios participating in civil-religious cargo systems undoubtedly resolves a great deal of the tension implicit in their social distance. In the absence of such formal reciprocity or supplementing it there is often a great deal of rivalry and competition, no less ritualized by its regularity. Such rivalry is especially associated with events of the religious calendar. The success of the barrio fiesta is often a measure of barrio prestige, as Redfield (1930;79) notes for Tepoztlán. The competition in showmanship among barrio-sponsored groups of masked comparsas at Contla, Tlaxcala, during carnival illustrates a similar regulation of rivalry. Purely secular areas may also provide the context for ritualized rivalry. Among the Mazatecs of Huautla, tequio groups, each representing one of the two factional divisions of barrios, compete to see which can complete the more road repair in a given time (Villa Rojas, 1955:85). Play-like conflicts often occur between young male peer groups of different barrios. An elderly Zoque of Tuxltla Gutiérrez informs me that in his youth late prepubescent boys of barrio Las Canoitas frequently engaged in rock-throwing battles with boys from neighboring barrios, but the battles always seemed to end in stalemate. Nuñez tells me that boys of one barrio in Cajititlán, Jalisco, seek liaisons with girls of the other, because to do so is risque, dangerous, and elevating in the eyes of ones peers; a beating is probable if one is caught by boys of the other barrio.

Summarizing, barrios obviously provide the structure for orienting a great deal of behavior not directly connected with the formal civil-religious system. Characterized by social distance and the familiarity of face-to-face relations, the barrio may be said to possess a mechanical solidarity in Durkheim's sense (1933:70-110). Ties among members are based on sentiment and roles are ambiguous, with little apparent organic interdependence. Evidently, the formal barrio is considerably reinforced by canalized behavior and persists, in part, because of it.

BARRIO BREAKDOWN

Civil-religious type barrios may decline and disappear in towns where they have long endured. The dissolution of civil-religious cargo systems is implicated, but the development of social class differentials may be more at the heart of the matter.

In the classless, not necessarily homogeneous, Indian societies the wealthy are pressured to serve as office holders in the cargo system again and again, as at Chamula (Pozas, 1959:136), with the result that wealth accruement is discouraged. With the development of class differentials in acculturating Indian communities and the consequent attraction of social mobility, individuals re-examine their social identities and new ones, derived through achievement, come to be favored at the expense of the ascribed ones of barrio and traditional community. Wealth becomes functional in the new context of class mobility, which yields social prestige without financial loss to the individual, and comes to relate to his community through economic class symbiosis and money mediated contractual relations. Concomitantly, the kinship and neighborhood identities characteristic of the small barrio-organized society are depreciated.

With the intrusion of national culture coincident with class development come competing institutions which are not essentially locality reciprocal as are cargo systems and barrios. In particular the voluntary religious associations, the so-called *presidencias* and *hermandades*, usurp the responsibility for fiestas, providing an economical way of expressing a continuing community consciousness. Diagnostic of mestizo culture, they may serve the cult of an image concurrently served by Indian cargo holders. In the Zoque community of San Bartolomé Rayón, in the weeks immediately prior to a fiesta, presidencias solicit funds from door to door, recording carefully on a list the size of each person's donation. Although individuals control their contributions, functional to class maintenance and mobility purposes each successive contributor is expected to examine the list of previous contributions.

Constitutional government, introduced by mestizo elements, further disrupts traditional systems. Civil posts are removed from cargo, and thereby barrio, regulation. Barring further changes, the barrios may persist by filling religious offices alone, as at San Luis Jilotepeque, Guatemala (Gillen, 1951:73-74). Mestizoized town governments further diminish the role of religious office holders by secularizing the fiesta of the patron saint, as Beals (1946:120) documents for Cherán, Michoacán. The countermanding of the civil-religious authority structure weakens the role of traditional elders, as agents of the pueblo or barrio, in imposing obligatory office.

Barrio breakdown is not a systematic and regular process. The multiple barrio system tends to pass through a dual stage before disappearance. Quiroga, Michoacán, for example, formerly had a multiple barrio system; today there are only two barrios, the upper and the lower, each supporting the patron's fiesta in parallel, nonreciprocating fashion (Brand, 1951:14, 204). Not all dual barrio systems are stages in a breakdown process. Those of the Mixe appear to be longstanding and of the reciprocating type (Beals, 1945:31-33). The development of dual barrios from multiple barrio systems may be related to developing class oppositions. At Huautla, Oaxaca, where five barrio are grouped into two factions, two in one and three in the other, one faction claims Spanish descent and social superiority (Villa Rojas, 1955:82-84). At Ojitlán, a Chinantec town, similar factions exist in a five barrio system, one of which is said to be of Mazatec origin; the two divisions exhibit a great deal of animosity toward one another (Weitlaner, 1951:442, 446). In the three barrio system of Chamula, Chiapas, where a smaller barrio is being absorbed by another to form one of two factions, one

faction is agricultural and traditional, the other commercial and progressive (Pozas, 1959:33-35). A possible explanation for these instances of dualization is that in the early growth of social classes social hetereogeneity is still easily canalized by barrios. In the absence of true economic interdependency of classes, which will come later, the cleavage occurs along barrio lines, presumably lines of least social resistance.

CONCLUSION

The civil-religious barrio exhibits the major elements or principles of social organization: coordination, foresight, responsibility and basic compensation (Firth, 1961:75-79). Members' activities and behavior are coordinated to achieve common civic goals. Systematizing of activity permits foresight, increasing the probability that responsibilities will be carried out, thereby eliminating uncertainties. Provision is made for individuals to assume civic responsibilities and for authority to assign this responsibility by others. The appointee is compensated in the form of prestige, deference, and a sense of security through membership.

Radcliffe-Brown (1952:62) indicates that by the prior utilization of certain structural principles, the field of possibilities for behavior becomes categorized. Murdock (1941:250) concludes that "The evolution of social organization is always channelized by characteristics of existing structure." The history of the barrio demonstrates the efficacy of such general structural principles in channeling diffuse social behavior. In societies with corporate unilineal kingroups, the complexity of mutually inclusive and exclusive relationships complicates social interaction and increases the number of relationships to be differentiated (Murdock, 1949:109). Small Mesoamerican communities, with their amorphous kindred and ego centered contractual networks, have fewer relationships to distinguish; corporate unilinear kingroups, for example, which could formalize reciprocity and canalize behavior are rare. In the absence of other vehicles for formal reciprocity and canalization, the barrio accomplishes these purposes.

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