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WILLIAM R. YAWORSKY
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NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN THE HIGHLANDS OF GUERRERO, MEXICO

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

BY

Ross Hassig
Chris Kyle
Stephen Sloan
Peter A. Ch
Cuce Shum

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Abstract

A complex of intertwined economic subsidy programs and political patronage networks has long formed a pillar of social stability in rural Mexico. Recent economic reforms have reduced or eliminated key subsidy programs and this has compromised the effectiveness of traditional patronage networks, creating considerable economic and political uncertainty. A variety of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have appeared in the resulting vacuum, most with the stated purpose of promoting economic development initiatives or protecting human rights. This dissertation examines NGOs in the vicinity of Chilapa, Guerrero, and how they have come to perform key functions in a state directed project of economic restructuring. NGOs in highland Guerrero relate to rural communities chiefly as conduits for government projects. So while the increasing importance of NGOs in rural Mexico appears to signal a governmental retreat from the rural economy, it actually persists in this "independent" guise.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Mexican state of Guerrero is currently experiencing economic and institutional convulsions that threaten to tear apart the state's social fabric. A patronage system that had maintained political stability in the rural sector for over half a century has ended in bankruptcy, leaving elites unable to continue underwriting the arrangement. This crisis has compelled the government to find a less costly regulatory mechanism to fill the institutional void. The chosen solution to this problem is the creation of "nongovernmental organizations."

This is a study of how these nongovernmental organizations (NGOs[1]) operate in the economic hinterland of the small urban settlement of Chilapa de Alvarez, a municipal *cabecera* (administrative seat) and regional marketing center located in the east-central highlands of Guerrero, Mexico. Chilapa's hinterland is populated by small-scale agriculturalists living in villages of eighty to two-thousand residents, the majority of them in extreme poverty. Social stability in the region is affected by the presence of two sporadic guerrilla movements, banditry, and village land conflicts. Government financed NGOs have entered this zone with the stated intentions of ameliorating the poverty and inequalities that fuel political instability. In east-central Guerrero, NGOs are currently involved in the promotion and monitoring of human rights, democratization, poverty alleviation, and economic development. This study addresses how NGOs have

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[1] A list of all acronyms used in this dissertation may be found in Appendix A.

contributed to these diverse processes, the ways in which NGOs maintain themselves, and their impact on rural communities.

I argue that NGOs in highland Guerrero are best viewed as government dependencies operating as fundamental pillars of neoliberal economic restructuring. The NGOs examined in this study are largely government financed and implement projects designed or approved by the state, sometimes even performing the functions normally associated with government bureaucracies. Although many members of these organizations are highly critical of the Mexican government's neoliberal development project, the programs that they administer all further the economic restructuring that began in 1982 and that continues to this day. NGOs sustain the project of economic and institutional reform by broadly advancing the government's agenda, most particularly in two key arenas: legal reform and economic development.

Over the course of the past decade the Mexican government has intensified the pace at which it has implemented economic policies known as neoliberal reform. This entailed reducing or eliminating international trade barriers, domestic subsidy programs, and other regulatory mechanisms protecting economically marginal sectors of society from otherwise ruinous competition but too costly for the state to sustain. The deleterious socioeconomic effects of the state's abrupt withdrawal from key sectors of the economy can only be mitigated by attracting foreign investment and by identifying economic niches of comparative advantage. However, observers recognize that no significant foreign investment will be forthcoming until legal reforms render contracts and other elements of civil and criminal law consistently enforceable. Any hope for an

adequate regulatory framework to protect business investments and trade is inconceivable without an independent, transparent, and powerful judiciary (Castañeda 1993:385).[2]

These legal reforms are championed throughout the Chilapa region by a government financed human rights NGO. The universal conceptions of human rights posited by this group dovetails nicely with government efforts to replace heterogenous and contradictory local customs commonly found in rural, often indigenous, communities with uniform legal codes approved by the Mexican state. Through the work of this NGO a standardized conception of civil, human, criminal, and agrarian rights is promoted throughout the countryside. It also mediates conflicts exacerbated by the recent agrarian reform laws, acts as an oversight committee for Mexico's powerful military and police forces, and works to reduce the monopolies and corruption rampant in Guerrero's political and business circles. Under the generic label of "human rights" it promotes freedom of speech, humane internal security practices, impartial justice, and lawful dissent. This activism protects both individuals and groups from arbitrary or illegal acts committed by the state or third parties. Human rights NGOs have the net effect of creating a legal system and business climate in Guerrero that is increasingly attractive to foreign investors. Human rights is thus a handmaiden to the overall reform project.

NGOs charged with economic development in Chilapa relate to rural

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[2] "Indeed, even the conservatives' dogmatic reliance on the market is a pipe dream without the regulatory framework that allows markets to function properly" (Castañeda 1993:385).

communities chiefly as conduits through which government projects are implemented. Neoliberal reform initiatives, spearheaded by the powerful Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL) and its financial dependencies, the regional NGOs, advance government economic policy through their focus on poverty alleviation and sustainable rural development.[3] They do this by aiding communities in finding areas of comparative advantage in the global economy; through the support of regional micro industries; through the funding of temporary employment projects; and via the promotion of ecologically responsible economic practices. All of these activities contribute to the government program of trade liberalization by ensuring that the ongoing integration of the Chilapa region into the global economy provides some sort of sustainable remuneration for local communities.

While NGOs can play an adaptive role in neoliberal reform (see Annis 1988; Bebbington and Thiele 1993:51; and Ribbe et al., 1990:18-20), not all of the regional NGOs are entirely coopted by the state. Despite their economic dependence on government subsidies, many maintain a degree of political autonomy that was uncommon in Mexico before the late 1980s. Again and again fieldwork[4] revealed NGOs whose leaders were ideologically opposed to the neoliberal project and lobbied behind

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[3] Sustainable development is usually defined as the implementation of economic initiatives that serve the needs of the present generation while still preserving abundant natural resources for future generations (Vivian 1994; WCED 1987). This definition has been criticized for its imprecision (Buttel et al. 1991; Redclift 1987). In highland Guerrero, deforestation represents a major challenge for those who seek to develop the economy in a "sustainable" manner.

[4] Preliminary fieldwork for this research began in the summer of 1998. The bulk of the fieldwork was conducted from May of 1999 through June of 2000.

the scenes against the then-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Nevertheless, they were administering government financed and government initiated projects that put into practice the regional foundations of the neoliberal reform effort. Notwithstanding the rhetorical statements issued by various observers and parties regarding the relationship between state and NGOs, the latter do not provide "alternatives to development" (see R. Kothari 1993) in east-central Guerrero, nor do they herald the "liberation of subjugated knowledges" (see Foucault 1980). Because NGOs advanced the government's agenda of economic and legal reformation, the ruling PRI tolerated their gestures of political autonomy. PRI ascendency in rural Mexico had already been seriously compromised by both the widespread withdrawal of subsidies that previously underwrote their authoritarian model of political control and by the world wide turn to western style multiparty democracy. The institutional mechanism that arose after the decline of the traditional political patronage system was the economic union between state bureaucracies and their financial satellites, the NGOs. The Mexican state and the regional NGOs have developed symbiotic relations that permit the implementation of the former's objectives while ensuring the survival of the latter.

This research reconsiders the scope of the current state intervention in the rural economy. In the case of Guerrero, neoliberal reform does not imply the abandonment of the rural sector by the state. Rather, it involves a more targeted continuation of state subsidies through government programs such as the National Solidarity Program (PRONASOL, now incorporated into SEDESOL) and via the large scale incorporation of NGOs into the government's development apparatus. In important respects, rural

Guerrero has been protected from the full effects of radical free market reform. Intense governmental subsidy programs continue in the state despite the apparent contradiction with the rationale of neoliberal development.[5] NGOs, in a sense, have become the new face of government in view of their crucial position in the state's artery of subsidy transfers. So while the increasing importance of NGOs in rural Mexico appears to signal a governmental retreat from the rural economy, it actually persists in this independent guise.

Anthropological Perspectives on NGOs

Perhaps the title of this section is misleading; much of the academic literature on NGOs has been written by non-anthropologists. This literature is so vast and amorphorous that no simple summary is practical. The term NGO has been used to describe both national and international organizations based either in the developed or developing world (Bebbington and Thiele 1993:7). Scholars often distinguish between "northern" NGOs and "southern" NGOs, i.e., northern NGOs are headquartered in affluent, industrialized nations, while southern NGOs are those indigenous to developing countries. This paper addresses groups that operate in Chilapa de Alvarez and that focus on regional human rights monitoring and economic development. They are southern NGOs (i.e., indigenous to Chilapa, although one maintains periodic dealings with a

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[5] Fox (1995:1), anticipating my finding, writes that "in the case of Mexico's ambitious rural development reforms, the withdrawal of past patterns of heavy-handed state economic intervention has been accompanied by the construction of new regulatory institutions that maintain significant central state involvement in rural life." In the case of Chilapa's hinterland, this array of "new regulatory mechanisms" translates into SEDESOL and NGOs.

Dutch "northern NGO") that share organizational and operational features identified in Carroll's (1992) *Intermediary NGOs: the Supporting Links in Grassroots Development.* Carroll (1992:9) noted that the term NGO has been used to describe hundreds of types of organizations, ranging from political action committees to private businesses and sports clubs. His work went on to identify and examine three organizational types relevant to the present study: the grassroots support organization (GSO), the membership support organization (MSO), and the primary grassroots organization (PGO). Carroll (1992:11) defines them in the following terms:

> GSO. A GSO is a civic developmental entity that provides services [and] allied support to local groups of disadvantaged rural or urban households and individuals. In its capacity as an intermediary institution, a GSO forges links between the beneficiaries and the often remote levels of government, donor, and financial institutions. It may also provide services indirectly to other organizations that support the poor or perform coordinating or networking functions.
>
> MSO. An MSO has similar attributes. It also provides services and linkages to local groups. However, an MSO represents and is accountable to its base membership, at least in principle.
>
> PGO. Both GSOs and MSOs are distinguished from primary grassroots organizations by scope, complexity, and function. A PGO is the smallest aggregation of individuals or households that regularly engage in some joint development activity as an expression of collective interest. GSOs and MSOs tend to serve, represent, and work with several primary groups. In other words, they operate on the next level above the primary grassroots organizations and seek to support and assist them (Carroll 1992:11).

PGOs are base groups composed of actors meeting their own needs, while MSOs and GSOs service a number of different base groups, primarily by accessing state resources for them. Hence we can define PGOs as base organizations and GSOs and MSOs as intermediary organizations. Individuals elected from and by the PGOs come to form these MSO supra-communal bodies (Bebbington and Thiele 1993:7). GSOs, in

contrast, are self appointed and are often ethnically and socioeconomically distinct from their base constituencies. These three organizational types are currently operating in the Chilapa region and are the focal point of my study. Although there are other organizations (such as sporting clubs) in the municipality that may fit an expanded definition of NGOs, these three subtypes constitute the focus of this research. An ethnographic study of all organizations in any given region that could conceivably be defined as NGOs is not attempted in the present study. A focussed study of those organizations whose activities are "developmental" in nature allows examination of the political relationships affecting *development* practice. These activities include the promotion of human rights, indigenous rights, land reform, democratization, poverty alleviation, and economic development.

Broadly speaking, theorists of NGO behavior advance two competing interpretations of the social effects of these increasingly visible forms of organization. One school of thought, represented by the writings of Burbach (2001), Frank (1992), R. Kothari (1993), and S. Kothari (1993), finds that these organizations further the "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" (Foucault 1980) and value their ability to politicize issues that were not formerly politicized. These theorists laud NGO attempts to alter relations of power and have confidence in their ability to achieve ideological autonomy from the prevailing development apparatus.[6] Inspired in part by the activism

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[6] One case study that appears to cast doubt on this position was conducted by Stone (1989) in Nepal. She found that the ideology of independence and self-reliance in rural development has meaning primarily for western developers but was irrelevant to Nepalese villagers. The rural poor instead perceive the world as predicated on personal and hierarchical relations that must be forged with powerful outside patrons.

of Paulo Freire, NGOs are portrayed as centers of resistance, where alternative discourses and practices can be nurtured and spread in a counter hegemonic campaign of human liberation. More specifically, these theorists see in NGOs vehicles through which subaltern peoples, particularly women, subsistence agriculturalists, and indigenous groups, may create a more socialistic and egalitarian socioeconomic order that represents a real and viable alternative to neoliberal development (Nash 2001:250-251). NGOs are said to promote this alternative development model by focussing on human needs, fostering self-reliance, promoting ecologically sustainable living conditions, and empowering people to transform their societies (Nerfin 1987; see also Bebbington 1997). Some of these scholars (Salamon 1994:109; see also Clark 1991; Korten 1990) assert that these incipient NGOs may herald a revolution in social organization as consequential as the origin of the state itself, a process that may even influence the future development of human nature.

A second trend in NGO studies highlights historical continuities in social organization and NGO subordination to, or complicity with, the state's development apparatus. A representative example of this perspective is the analysis undertaken by Wood (1997), who went so far as to label NGOs as nodal points in a "franchise state" that jettisons state responsibility for social welfare onto the private sector. Uphoff (1986), in a similar vein, used the term "intermediation" to describe a process of state decentralization that tasks membership organizations with providing services that otherwise might be undertaken by government agencies. Ferguson's (1990) study of the development industry in Lesotho is perhaps the best known example of how the state

furthers its power through development institutions. In the Mexican context, farmer organizations that can be labeled as NGOs have been described by Johnson (n.d.) as being components in a process of "reconfiguring corporatism" through their strengthening of the PRI's tattered rural base. In these and similar studies, the intimacy of state-NGO relations are emphasized.

This study supports the second interpretation of NGO processes and effects, specifically in regards to the activities of NGOs operating in east-central Guerrero. However, my analysis goes beyond previous research by demonstrating that the widely touted voluntarism and subaltern resistance supposedly practiced by even the most left-leaning NGOs are playing into the hands of the state. It is not always a matter of outright cooptation. Instead, NGO members are unwittingly manipulated by the state to effectively impose legal norms or programs mandated by the central government. The government derives real advantage by permitting heart-felt idealists the opportunity to operate in the countryside because the ideology and credibility these groups have with the rural poor masks the actual state-amplifying effects.

It is appropriate to point out that scholars such as Escobar (1995) represent a hybrid, or midway position when compared to the two general perspectives outlined above. Escobar is correct in noting that the state development apparatus is enhancing conventional elite-client relations, in that clients are controlled by the development industry. However, he also proposes that grassroots social movements and grassroots NGOs evidence real potential as the building blocks of a viable development alternative, an assertion that I did not find convincing evidence for in my fieldsite. NGOs in

highland Guerrero are functioning much like the neoliberal equivalent of the old 1970s parastatals, not as organizations offering "development alternatives." Clark (1995:58) notes that "alternatives" here implies two or more mutually exclusive alternative routes to development. Clark (1995:48) doubts that any regional population has a real choice between the government's development model and those championed by "alternative" NGOs. This lack of real alternatives is quite evident in Guerrero. Regional NGOs function like neoliberal parastatals because they relate to communities primarily as pillars of the state's SEDESOL development apparatus. Although NGOs are free to seek out foreign funding and to devise their own projects, in practice they are dependent on the Mexican government for financing, which typically must be approved on a yearly basis. The approval requires that they run projects deemed worthy by the state, drawing all local NGOs that seek state funding into the government's strategy of regional development.[7]

Through the allocation of small government grants these NGOs have come to implement rural development projects and have staffed and maintained human rights centers that very much promote the government's economic agenda. Rather than witnessing a retreat of the state from the rural economy, the emergence of these government financed NGOs (along with the concomitant PRONASOL program) signals a continuation of targeted subsidies to Mexico's marginal agrarian populations. Structural

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[7] The Mexican state relies heavily on loans from the World Bank to help underwrite the costs of structural adjustment. For a deeper consideration of that arrangement, see Johnson's (forthcoming) Ph.D. dissertation "Reconfiguring Corporatism: Peasant Movements and Foreign Aid in Guerrero, Mexico."

adjustment policies implemented by the state have emerged to respond to the realities of the global economy (Fox and Gordillo 1989; de Janvrey et al. 1989; Healey and Robinson 1992). The collapse of the Soviet Union and growing unpopularity of one-party states has provided further impetus for social change. Finally, factors ranging from demographic imbalances to increases in technological, communication, and transport efficiency are creating novel conditions to which populations must adjust. NGOs, as government sponsored adaptive mechanisms, serve a variety of purposes, both political and economic, that complement state policies. They administer workfare projects that ameliorate the harsher economic edges of structural adjustment; they can increase regime legitimacy through the cooptation of key constituencies; and they aid in the construction of new legal norms in the countryside that facilitate neoliberal development.

Although this assessment is compatible with the widely accepted notion that NGOs constitute a voluntary or civil "third sector" that is complementary to government and business (Brown and Korten, 1989; Carroll 1992; Korten 1990; Paul 1991), establishing empirically the related assumption that NGOs are driven by values rather than profit is troublesome. The motives of NGO leadership and cadre remains questionable, and NGOs in east-central Guerrero have much closer relations with government than the typology implies. Alternatively, Easman and Uphoff (1992) suggest a private-public continuum, and Brown and Korten (1989) have designed a four tier typology that includes a category of hybrid governmental / nongovernmental organizations (GONGOs). It is this last category that best approximates the relationship between state and NGO in east-central Guerrero.

NGOs, Democracy, and Social Service Delivery

Democracy remains an important related theme in NGO studies. Often discussed in the context of "empowerment" or "capacity-building" (e.g., Carroll 1992), NGOs are viewed as potentially important players in democratization. However, as Latin American military dictatorships are replaced by parliamentary democracies, NGOs are having to turn inward and examine how they themselves measure up to contemporary standards of democratic governance (Baviskar 1995; Bebbington and Thiele 1993; Bebbington and Farrington 1993:204-205). Some observers worry that the "Iron Law of Oligarchy" (the tendency of organizations to drift from participatory forms to oligarchy) poses a real challenge to the legitimacy of development NGOs (Michels 1959; Fisher 1994; Fox 1992; Uphoff 1996). Also of concern are reports that some democratically elected governments have harassed NGOs more than the previous authoritarian regimes (Carroll et al. 1991; Salman and Eaves 1989).

Another debate centers on the issue of whether or not NGOs perform development and social service delivery more efficiently than governments. Many theorists at one time assumed an NGO comparative advantage *vis a vis* government, and offered up NGOs as a "magic bullet" that could miraculously cure development ills. Later research (Fowler 1988; UNDP 1993) challenged these assumptions by maintaining that NGO performance was not innately superior to the services provided by governments. Contradicting these claims were further studies (e.g., Farrington and Bebbington 1993) that cautiously supported the idea of an NGO comparative advantage. More recent studies (Zaidi 1999) underline NGO inadequacies and call for increased

state involvement. In Mexico the issue of comparative advantage is muddled by the extensive commingling of NGO-state projects, and the focus has shifted to examining methods of widening the impact of development ventures, a process referred to as "scaling-up" in NGO literature. Many of these studies in fact advocate closer state-NGO relationships.

State-Society Relations in Rural Mexico Before the Crisis

The year 1982 was a watershed for rural Mexico. The financing that had made possible a complex set of institutions, incentives, and subsidies was suddenly withdrawn when the Mexican state agreed to World Bank financial guidelines. The government of Mexico adapted austerity measures that precluded continued untargeted subsidies, provoking a crisis that led to reformation in the chain of institutions that transferred subsidies into the nation's destitute rural areas.

Before the institutional reorganization initiated in 1982, two broad categories of bureaucratic mechanisms existed through which the state intervened in rural society. First, there was a set of institutions that administered and underwrote the transfer of economic inputs into the agrarian sector. Secondly, there was a chain of farmer organizations that facilitated political control. The organizational motif unifying these arrangements was populism[8] (or corporatism), a political strategy that required political subservience as a precondition for access to state benefits. It is unremarkable that a one-party state like PRI-era Mexico would base its rural presence around corporatist

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[8] See Salinas de Gortari (2002:294-296) for a succinct description of populist strategy as seen through the eyes of a former President of Mexico.

organizations. What observers found surprising was the Mexican state's uncanny ability to anticipate social unrest with preemptive strategies channeled through these organizations. A matrix of state agencies and enterprises offered credit, technical assistance, and guaranteed crop purchases to producers of maize, coffee, cocoa, sugarcane, and tropical fruits. The Mexican Fertilizer Company (FERTIMEX) also subsidized the distribution of fertilizer, and, along with the Ministry of Agriculture (SARH), offered technical assistance. Mandatory crop insurance issued by the National Livestock and Insurance Company (ANAGSA) formed an important input of extralegal funds to the rural sector.[9] Augmenting these funds for production was credit made available by the Rural Bank (BANRURAL). The main effect of these efforts was to consolidate government control over production and marketing (Fox 1992).

Prior to the 1980s, the flow of government subsidies to the Chilapa region was relatively weak. This was largely due to Chilapa's geographic isolation and poor transportation networks. Yet the government was able to grease the machinery of patronage in Chilapa through the practice of issuing titles to land that had previously been appropriated by the rural poor. Thirty-three *ejidos*[10] and twelve *comunidades*

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[9] ANAGSA agents, bank officials, and the small-scale producers enrolled in their program regularly reported catastrophic crop losses in order to collect insurance. The crops were in fact intact, and the insurance was split among the parties involved (Myhre 1998).

[10] Ejidos are rural communities that petitioned for and received land redistributed by the Mexican government after the 1910 revolution. Until recently, ejido lands could not be legally sold (although there were always thriving black markets in ejido land) and land titles were held communally. Recent agrarian reforms may lead to greater ejido privatization (Cornelius 1998; DeWalt and Rees 1994).

agrarias [11] were created in the *municipio* (municipality) of Chilapa alone during the postrevolutionary years. This process cemented the loyalty of a generation of poor farmers to the ruling PRI because it legitimized their land claims. However, this recognition came with a series of regulations that restricted production. For example, intercropping was excluded from credit support on many ejido lands, even though the practice was known to be favored by many families (de Janvrey et al. 1997:9). These restrictions shut off many potentially attractive agricultural options for small-holders. Ejido agriculture in particular had experienced deformation and had evolved into a repressed agrarian economy subordinated under a one-party model of political control (de Janvrey et al. 1997:9).

Rural health services in Mexico were negligible during this period but were suddenly extended throughout the countryside starting in 1979, when a network of rural clinics was established. Each clinic was alloted a recent medical school graduate and two assistants who were to be recruited from the village. Within two months 973 clinics had opened and by 1986 over 3,000 small clinics were functioning in Mexico's rural areas (Sherraden 1991:257). The clinics dispensed medication to treat illnesses endemic to rural Mexico and provided primary health care. This venture was funded by the oil industry and international loans, and administered by merging resources from the

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[11] Comunidades agrarias are rural communities very similar to ejidos in legal configuration. The main difference is that comunidades agrarias are meant to have a greater degree of local self-governance. Around Chilapa they are better known as *bienes comunales* (good lands) and generally have populations that manifest micro-ethnic indígena identities. See DeWalt and Rees (1994) for a useful overview of both tenure systems.

National Plan for Depressed Zones and Marginal Groups (COPLAMAR) and the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) into a new agency known as IMSS-COPLAMAR (Sherrarden 1991:258).

Operating in tandem with these government agencies was a parallel network of corporate organizations designed to include the rural sector into a subordinate and dependent relationship with the government. The National Farmer Confederation (CNC), a formal sector of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), acted as the nationwide umbrella organization that incorporated all farmers into league with the ruling party. The CNC required these farmer leagues to provide vocal political support to the PRI in exchange for preferential access to subsidies or favorable action on land redistribution. Cooptation or violence neutralized independent farmer movements that eventually emerged, such as the General Union of Workers and Farmers of Mexico (UGOCM) and the Independent Farmer Central (Fox 1992). However, by the 1970s a lack of land suitable for redistribution combined with a rising population of landless poor led to rural mobilizations that could not be easily controlled through corporatist channels. Lacking suitable land to redistribute, elites began to substitute agricultural subsidies as the central resource advanced by the state into the rural sector.

In the countryside at the local level, ejidos, ejido unions, and Rural Collective Interest Associations (ARICS) formed the pillars of corporatist representation. Through this network of local, regional, and state affiliates, farmers were represented and controlled in corporatist fashion. During the 1970s and 1980s, periodic presidential economic initiatives led to the creation of new, parallel social organizations, such as

Agro-Industrial Units for Women (UAIMS) and the Community Committees for the Distribution of Foodstuffs (CCA). The latter in particular were granted a degree of autonomy that was absent in the earlier farmer leagues. The reasoning behind this mild relaxation in state control remains unclear, yet contributing factors included the presence of reformist currents in development agencies (Fox 1995), rising social demands brought about by a scarcity of land suitable for redistribution, and stagnation in the agricultural sector (Paré 1990:84-85).

In Guerrero the political opening, however small, undoubtedly helped alleviate social tensions in a state that had a history of guerrilla mobilizations. The hard-line authoritarian administration of Guerrero's governor, Reuben Figueroa Figueroa (1975-1981) had exacerbated social tensions, and a reformist, populist administration was selected in 1981 to keep peace in the troubled state. Figueroa Figueroa was replaced by the relatively liberal Governor Alejandro Cervantes Delgado (1981-1987) who successfully lobbied for considerable spending on social projects, even during the era of austerity programs initiated by President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988). Snyder (2000:307) points out that Mexico's ruling elites considered Guerrero to be a "problem state" marred by latent insurgency, and hence consented to inflated public spending to govern in such a milieu. The civil discontent in Guerrero (and Oaxaca) warranted a populist political project that was fiscally impossible at the national level.[12] President

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[12] Snyder (2000) reports that neighboring Oaxaca, another notorious trouble state, actually received more federal funds after the 1983 economic crisis. "The state government was literally awash in resources (Snyder 2000:314)." It is worth noting that when Guerrero's governors in the 1990s began dismantling Cervantes Delgado's populist welfare programs, guerrilla violence flared up again.

López Portillo (1976-1982) had selected Cervantes Delgado to oversee this project because it was recognized that he had the motivation and skill to govern in a unifying style.[13]

Under Cervantes Delgado's administration, Guerrero witnessed incipient NGOs emerging in the early 1980s. Through interaction with the public sector, these NGOs foreshadowed the rise of the 1990s era SEDESOL-NGO arrangement. Notable among these early NGOs was "Analysis, Distribution, and Management" (ANADEGES) and its affiliated "Guerrero Committee to Promote Rural Development Research" (COPIDER). Both helped initiate a program called "Solidarity Funds for Farmer Development" that extended collateral-free loans to poor farmers (Hernandez and Fox 1995:193-194). This program emerged during Cervantes Delgado's term and was later used as a model for PRONASOL's nation-wide rural credit scheme. The state's interest in, and involvement with, rural organizations was also increasingly in evidence nationwide: by 1981, two-thirds of the rural producers organizations operating in Mexico traced their origins to government sponsored development agencies, while the rest were largely tied to the CNC (Hernandez and Fox 1995:191).

Neoliberal Reforms

The economic crisis of 1982 precipitated a scaling back of the subsidy system in

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[13] It was clear to me that Cervantes Delgado had the respect of both the left and right-wing opposition. He appeared in Chilapa during my fieldwork for a book signing, and to my surprise, Emilio Silva, a local *Chilapeño* and PAN organizer who was in charge of Vicente Fox's presidential campaign for Guerrero, was tasked with providing introductions. Silva delivered a fiery and respectful homage to the old veteran, and the members of the local, left-leaning human rights center also privately expressed positive opinions of the former governor.

Mexico. The oil boom that had sustained growth had collapsed in 1981 and by 1982, Mexico found itself with a foreign debt approaching $100 billion US dollars. Mexico was unable to make debt payments while simultaneously maintaining its vast subsidy system. For the first time since the days of Cárdenas, Mexico's postrevolutionary leaders were confronted with the necessity of economic restructuring. With few real options, President Miguel de la Madrid adopted austerity measures imposed by the World Bank, producing massive unemployment and a dramatic reduction in the standard of living for working people. For example, between 1982 and 1984, forty percent of the population suffered an eighteen percent decrease in protein and caloric intake (Paré 1990:95). By 1989 real wages had fallen precipitously and forty-seven percent of the nation's population was officially living in poverty (Grindle 1991:132; Nash 2001:88).

The economic reforms initiated in 1982 set off a dramatic chain reaction of events which literally shook up the pillars of social stability in rural Mexico. The debt restructuring package signed by the government of Mexico and its foreign creditors demanded not only a massive austerity program but trade liberalization as well.[14] At the stroke of a pen, the rationale underlying the existing network of institutions in the countryside vanished, rendering obsolete a bureaucracy devised for managing intensive state controls over virtually all aspects of the economy and ensuring the political incorporation of rural peoples into a de facto one-party state. Institutional transformation then became a necessary element of the ensuing economic restructuring.

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[14] To be precise, between the years 1980 and 1991, the government of Mexico received thirteen separate structural and sectoral adjustment loans from the World Bank (Barry 1995:43).

Subsequently, state interventions in the rural sector were transformed in three broad and interrelated areas. First, the complex system of economic subsidies that simultaneously underwrote rural production and political subservience were reduced and more narrowly targeted (Fox 1994:182-183). Secondly, this process provoked a convulsive series of changes in the network of rural patronage organizations, such as the CNC and the ejido unions, that had existed in order to access subsidies and to ensure PRI hegemony. Finally, the legal framework governing political, social, and economic relations in rural Mexico was extensively altered, allowing for the privatization of communal lands, an end to land redistribution, and the promotion of a transparent, uniform, and enforceable set of legal norms.

The neoliberal reforms introduced in 1982 were expanded greatly during both the Salinas de Gortari administration (1988-1994) and the presidency of Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León (1994-2000). During these years, the PRI's monopoly on power slowly eroded. The 1985 earthquake had exposed massive corruption in the Mexican government itself, undermining public confidence in the PRI. Supposedly earthquake-proof buildings were found to have been constructed of shoddy material, while government and construction officials had pocketed the money earmarked for first class construction. Disaster relief funds from foreign nations were similarly abused. As discontent mounted, the PRI alliance began to splinter. The right-wing opposition National Action Party (PAN) won the governorships of several northern states. The left-wing National Democratic Front (FDN) was leading in the vote count for the 1988 presidential elections when the computer suddenly "malfunctioned." The government

presently announced that the PRI candidate for president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, had won. Charges of vote fraud were widespread and regime legitimacy reached a new low.

Salinas was faced with multiple challenges, not the least of which was the revival of the Mexican economy. In order to achieve this, he and his economic team accelerated and deepened the restructuring process. These reforms included the creation of a vast free trade market with Canada and the USA (through the North American Free Trade, or NAFTA, treaty). There were further reductions in subsidies along with the privatization of numerous state companies. Finally, Mexico's constitution was altered to allow a complete overhaul of the agrarian sector.

NAFTA's rationale was to improve the welfare of all three countries involved by creating a vast market without trade barriers, within which each nation and region would be able to discover and develop its own unique areas of competitive advantage. In many ways, this rationale is not unlike the findings of Leeman and Conkling (1975) who noted that as transport costs declined, micro environmental and other factors would begin to outweigh distance as a determinate of crop-growing patterns. The Zedillo administration subsequently entered Mexico into free trade arrangements with European and other Latin American nations.

Agrarian reforms were introduced in and after 1991 affecting land tenure systems and the state's responsibility to redistribute land. These reforms included provisions for the privatization of previously communal lands and an end to land redistribution. The changes were designed to eliminate *minifundios* (small-scale landholdings), create a rural middle class, and make Mexico more competitive in the world agricultural markets by

increasing the attractiveness of foreign investment. These agrarian reform laws involved the rewriting of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, a controversial step (DeWalt and Rees 1994:1). Article 27 of the 1917 Constitution responded to the Zapata-led rebels calls for land and liberty. This Article established the state's right of eminent domain over land and water and heralded massive land redistribution programs that by 1990 had led to the creation of 28,000 ejidos covering half of the nation's rural area and benefiting three million people (INEGI 1991a; DeWalt and Rees 1994:1). The end of the state's commitment to redistributing land further undermined the patronage network linking the rural poor with the elites.

At the beginning of Salinas's presidency, the government and community leadership in the rural sector arrived at a political agreement that adapted to these far-reaching economic reforms (de Janvrey et al. 1997:9). Subsidies were exchanged for political quiescence. The rising social demands combined with a declining supply of subsidies and land suitable for redistribution had weakened PRI control over rural organizations, yet this did not stop governmental efforts to reinforce producers organizations by way of channeling the remaining agricultural subsidies directly to them (de Janvrey et al. 1997:17; Fox 1994). These direct transfers were later institutionalized through PRONASOL and later SEDESOL, especially through specialized subprograms such as the National Fund for Solidarity Businesses (FONAES) that attended to rural areas (de Janvrey et al. 1997:17). SEDESOL itself would soon become the main link among existing producer organizations, the new generation of NGOs, and the state. In the early 1990s a complimentary program was established, the Direct Rural Support

Program (PROCAMPO), which provided direct cash payments to rural producers to offset income lost to NAFTA competition. The Program for the Certification of Ejido Land Rights and the Titling of Urban Land Plots (PROCEDE), was to oversee the implementation of legal reforms regulating ejidos and comunidades agrarias. These three agencies -- SEDESOL, PROCAMPO, and PROCEDE -- form the development triad of programs most intimately associated with neoliberal reforms.

NGO Origins in Chilapa

These economic and legal reforms constitute the institutional environment in which the current generation of social movements in rural Mexico operate. These contemporary organizations are classified by observers as nongovernment organizations. What typically distinguishes them from the earlier generations of state-sponsored rural organizations is the degree to which they permit participation by open government critics and opposition party members.[15] Vocal assertions of political autonomy by NGO members are tempered by the degree to which these organizations are economically dependent on the government of Mexico for survival and the degree to which they are intertwined with government bureaucracies and projects. The NGO of today in rural Guerrero is the neoliberal equivalent of the old corporate peasant leagues of the 1970s in that it is a nodal point in the link of subsidy transfers between state and rural society. Its primary function is either to aid communities in the search for their areas of comparative

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[15] "Participation (however limited) is being grudgingly offered as an alternative to patronage that governments can no longer finance, and repression they can no longer indulge as aid agencies become increasingly preoccupied with human rights" (Bebbington and Farrington 1993:204).

advantage in the global economy or to entrench new legal norms congruent with development in the countryside.

Development NGOs are nothing new in Latin America; for instance, by the 1960s they were already well established centers of welfare and grassroots organizing (Bebbington and Thiele 1993). Although informal and autonomous organizations have always existed in the modern Mexican state, their roles were limited and they did not constitute bulwarks of the subsidy network, in sharp contrast to the corporate CNC farmer leagues of yesterday or NGOs of today. Most observers of Mexico's NGO scene locate the 1985 earthquake as the key impetus for the origin of the current generation of NGOs (Castañeda 1995:242). The earthquake killed thousands and caused widespread damage in Mexico City. The government relief efforts proved to be feeble and a considerable grassroots mobilization took place in Mexico City to undertake those emergency tasks that the government was unable, or unwilling, to perform. Encouraged by their success, these organizations managed to find identities and members through their active struggle to improve the life chances of lower income individuals in society.

The 1985 earthquake was indeed a major factor behind NGO growth in the sprawling metropolis of Mexico City. However, in rural Guerrero this research affirms the impetus behind the organization of the current generation of NGOs to be President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's December 2, 1988 launch of his highly publicized National Solidarity Program.[16] PRONASOL sought to create and maintain regional grassroots

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[16] The urban NGOs that arose in Mexico City during the 1985 earthquake for the most part were subsequently co-opted or otherwise neutralized by PRONASOL. According to one PRONASOL official "those NGOs that overwhelmed the government after the 1985

organizations concerned with poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, and later, human, indigenous, and women's rights. The existence of many of the NGOs operating in the municipality of Chilapa de Alvarez are directly attributable to the emergence of this state funding and initiative. Other previously existing producer organizations and grassroots movements in Chilapa, (such as the local CCA, which had opened on the outskirts of town in 1980) were quickly drawn into this funding web as well.

PRONASOL's poverty alleviation strategy was consistent with those outlined in The World Development Report (1990), the World Bank's Assistance Strategies to Reduce Poverty (1991), and the UNDP Human Development Report (1990). All three papers advocated similar policies combining economic growth and safety nets in the form of subsidies and employment projects. PRONASOL (which was incorporated into SEDESOL in 1992) programs were to be targeted at the most vulnerable groups to protect the poor during structural adjustment (Riddell and Robinson 1995:14). This overall strategy of economic growth and targeted subsidies is the basic motif that unites SEDESOL and regional NGOs in a state-sponsored project of development.

Fox (1994:260) outlines three general methods in which PRONASOL (and now SEDESOL) is incorporating NGOs in rural Mexico. The first scenario involves those projects that are heavily influenced by traditional elites, often involving widespread corruption and old fashioned clientalism and corporatism. At the other end of the spectrum are those programs that are highly innovative and best approximate the official

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earthquake and during the 1988 elections became the basis of PRONASOL. We turned these organizations into instruments of change, into an engine driving our efforts" (Dresser 1994:156).

discourse of democratization, empowerment, equality, and transparency. In between these two extremes lies a grey area in which PRONASOL activities are most ambiguous. The programs in this third category are not of the traditional patron-client / blatant vote-buying variety. Instead, they are extended to PRI-affiliated, autonomous, and oppositional organizations alike. They have subtle strings attached, ones not readily apparent to the disinterested observer. These strings include financial dependency fostered by PRONASOL along with governmental control in determining the development agenda. Most social movement cadre and academic analysts in Mexico assert that this third scenario dominates PRONASOL-NGO relations, a phenomena often discussed under the rubric of "neocorporatism" (Fox 1994:260). The utility of this perspective is that it allows us to incorporate an appreciation for the very real transformation of the Mexican polity with a realization that elites are still "calling the shots."

Chapter Outlines

As SEDESOL is an omnipresent behind the scenes factor in NGO activity in Chilapa, no account of NGOs in highland Guerrero can be written without reference to the SEDESOL / PRONASOL projects that came to Guerrero during the early years of the Salinas administration and continue to this day. The state's primary vehicle for directing the neoliberal reform campaign in Guerrero is SEDESOL. Chapter Two details more closely the organization and programs of this bureaucracy and provides a brief survey of antecedent development programs in Mexico.

Chapter Three is intended to provide a socioeconomic overview of Chilapa and

its hinterland. The chapter introduces the fieldsite, a largely agrarian region with many sociocultural features customary to highland Mesoamerica. The fieldsite consists of a rural hinterland in east-central Guerrero and the region's central marketing town (Chilapa de Alvarez). It is a region with high indices of both poverty and marginality.[17] Chapter Three provides the reader with a broad overview of the adaptive strategies of the rural poor, the audience that local NGOs have placed greatest emphasis in aiding.

Macro economic reorganization has compelled the Mexican government to reshape many of the institutions that service rural Mexico. Part of this institutional restructuring has involved a major funding initiative to a generation of NGOs that emerged in the early and mid-1990s. Chapter Four examines the relationship between the government and NGOs in Chilapa, and details the various NGO organizational types operating in the region. The chapter discusses the sociopolitical histories of the major NGOs, the activities of each organization, and the flow of resources from government sources through NGOs into regional communities. Analysis reveals the intimacy of government-NGO relationships, and notes that the complex of intertwined governmental economic subsidy programs and ostensibly independent NGOs forms a safety net that ensures a modicum of social stability in this potentially unstable agrarian hinterland.[18]

Chapter Five examines human rights organizing as promoted by NGOs in

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[17] Marginality is a synonym for exclusion from the material benefits of economic growth. The term was first applied to describe conditions in Latin America's burgeoning shanty-towns (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:107).

[18] Bebbington (1997:66) goes so far as to say that "this type of institution is no longer an NGO in the historic sense of the term."

Chilapa. A key element in the reformation of the Mexican state is the government initiative to promote human rights. Increasingly, there exists a trend among Mexican elites toward viewing governmental transparency, respect for individual and property rights, and political stability, as necessary prerequisites for increasing levels of foreign investment. To achieve this goal, SEDESOL, in coordination with its dependency, the INI, funds NGO-administered human rights centers throughout the nation. Part of this study involves examining the operations of one such center, the Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights José María Morelos Y Pavon A.C., (JMMP), located in Chilapa. This center has taken over some of the functions normally associated with the judicial system. It often arranges the transfer of funds from SEDESOL to regional communities as part of its role as a conflict settlement service. The center also acts as a watchdog institution for Guerrero's security forces. Historically, Guerrero is noted for its authoritarian political structures and the lack of accountability to which local elites and security forces are obliged. Hence, the mid-1990s appearance of government financed human rights centers in this entity provided a unique opportunity to assess current behaviors and norms associated with the concept of human rights in Guerrero. From June of 1999 to June of 2000, research for this study included visiting rural communities with JMMP cadre, attending their workshops, and observing their dispute settlement methods and defense of human rights. The analysis in Chapter Five concedes that real conflicts of interest have occurred between these human rights centers and powerful sectors of Guerrero's political and security apparatus. However, the analysis goes further in demonstrating the utility of such human rights centers for bolstering the legal reforms

necessary for structural adjustment.

Chapter Six examines NGO projects geared towards economic development. The chapter documents the types of resources channeled through NGOs into Chilapa's hinterland and the effects of these inputs on regional standards of living. The chapter focuses on the activities of Chilapa's major development NGO, *Sanzekan Tinemi* (We Continue Together), and discusses this NGO as an intermediary organization charged with administering rural development projects. The case study of Sanzekan Tinemi provides both qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to NGOs and rural development. This chapter demonstrates the utility of NGOs in promoting micro industries that carve out niches of comparative advantage in the international economy. Analysis also demonstrates the functioning of NGOs as economic safety nets through analysis of their provision of temporary employment wages for otherwise desperate rural peoples. Finally, this chapter introduces the efforts of NGOs to promote ecologically sustainable development, an issue of central concern given Guerrero's alarming rates of erosion and deforestation.

Despite a commitment to state-sponsored human rights organizing, Amnesty International (1999) has detected a four year deteriorating trend in compliance with accepted human rights practices in the state. Amnesty International (1999:1) attributes this declining situation to the outbreak of a low intensity conflict between guerrillas of the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) and the Mexican Army in Guerrero, which began in 1996 and continues to this day. Mexican Army units have instigated several major counterinsurgency sweeps in the Chilapa region that resulted in a wave of reported

human rights violations. Chapter Seven provides an overview of this conflict and the implications that the fighting has for the regional human rights situation and further economic development. The chapter also assesses the efficacy, or lack thereof, these armed extralegal NGOs display in promoting an alternative path of development.

Chapter Eight provides a final discussion on patronage, subsidies, and NGOs in rural Guerrero and details the conclusions generated by this study. The chapter provides a broad overview of the impact NGOs have on the regional patterns of life and situates the study in the broader arena of development studies. As the transformation of rural Mexico continues at an accelerating pace, the chapter provides timely analysis of a tumultuous period in Guerrero's history.

CHAPTER 2

STATE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS

Through much of the twentieth century, Chilapa was the center of a quintessential region of refuge (as described by Aguirre Beltrán 1979), replete with Wolf's (1957) closed corporate communities and a regional market place. The region was relatively autonomous from the rest of the nation, with rural villages strung out in a von Thünen-like pattern of concentric production zones orienting their trade to Chilapa's weekly market, or *tianguis* (Kyle 1995). The region was integrated, interdependent, and formed a relatively whole social system. Beginning around 1960, a growing state presence became noticeable in the region, made possible by increases in transport efficiency. Combined with population growth, the widening use of imported fossil fuel based technologies altered regional economic processes to such an extent that both rural and urban communities quickly became dependent upon government agencies and subsidies for their very survival (Kyle 1995). As such, the region no longer fits the model of a traditional regional marketing system. Rural and urban sectors of the population depend on imported fertilizers, fuels, and foodstuffs as much as they rely on each other. However, the municipal cabecera of Chilapa has not become economically disarticulated from its own hinterland, as locally grown maize (*Zay mays*) remains a principle cornerstone of most rural and urban households basic diets. Yet it is increasingly evident that the only thing preventing the near extinction of rural settlements in the Chilapa region are the subsidy programs through which inputs are made available (Kyle 2000).

Unfortunately, much of the classical literature that examines the relationship between the state and rural poor (e.g., Wolf 1966) obscures this growing dependency by focusing instead on the state's "extractive capability" in draining off surpluses produced by villagers. While the study of state mechanisms for accessing agricultural surpluses is an important subject in its own right, currently, rural zones in southern Mexico are characterized by the increasing presence of governmental agencies distributing targeted subsidies. However, there is a lack of anthropological investigation concerning these mechanisms through which the state distributes inputs into the rural sector, a curious state of affairs given the extent to which marginal agrarian communities in neotechnic economies are now reliant on governmental largesse.

This chapter examines the federal agencies most responsible for transferring economic subsidies into rural communities in Chilapa. I begin with a brief overview of development and the agencies that in the past were most actively involved with this process in southern Mexico. I then turn to agencies and programs that currently are most important to this process, especially in the Chilapa region. The resulting discussion reveals an extensive integration of NGOs and the state's development agencies and programs.

Development

The state performs certain self-aggrandizing tasks in the countryside. Chiefly, it must bring rural areas into the national economy so as to increase the tax base, head off regional separatist movements, and compete more effectively with other states. To facilitate this mission, the state initiates programs in marginal areas that ensure political

incorporation and taxation. These programs are varied. Census taking, road construction, police / military presence, and literacy or educational campaigns are all examples of activities that when properly administered, better incorporate targeted regions into the state's sphere of political and economic control.[1]

Resource-rich areas are quickly exploited for their economic assets, be they agricultural lands, raw materials, or other strategic assets. Resource-poor regions are a different case altogether. States exploit whatever areas of comparative advantage these regions may have, even if this amounts to simply utilizing the target population as a cheap labor reserve (Bartra 1979). Therefore, the chief contribution made to the state by residents from peripheral areas is often via poorly remunerated migratory wage labor. Income derived from relatively high-paying wage labor in the US market constitutes another contribution by the rural poor to the maintenance of the marginal area, and ultimately, the state's tax base. However, in order to render them governable, the state must still invest in the agrarian backwaters from which these laborers originate. Maintaining both political stability and a favorable balance between surpluses derived from resource extraction and losses incurred through targeted subsidies then become two of the government's chief developmental concerns.

Since the 1930s there has been a continuing elaboration of linkages between the federal government and rural Mexico. Corbett (1984) describes this phenomenon in terms of two closely related and at times intertwined processes. The first process, defined by Corbett (1984:216) as "control-oriented penetration" has the net effect of

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[1] A very nice example of this process is described in Weber (1976).

transforming "local political institutions into administrative arms of the national government" (Corbett 1984:216). The second process, "development-oriented penetration," has the goal of integrating rural communities into the nation's economy through infrastructure construction, service provisioning, and institutional innovation (Corbett 1984:218). These related processes involve the continuous creation of new organizations that answer to, or become economic dependencies of, powers outside the community. Although I make no such distinctions between control oriented and development oriented penetrations, Corbett's analysis offers pertinent insight into the end results of state development programs: the economic incorporation and political subjugation of rural areas into the state.

It is worth emphasizing that many of the early development programs involved in this process came and went with *sexenios* (presidential terms) or in even shorter periods. The National Solidarity Program is an exception. Although it has been relabelled and modified by the Zedillo administration, its incorporation into SEDESOL confers upon Salinas's pet project a degree of institutional protection not afforded to earlier development efforts. I interpret this as an indication that Mexico's government views subsidies targeted at the rural poor as a more or less permanent feature of the current political economy. Conferring ministry status to a bureaucracy that essentially transfers subsidies via NGOs into rural households indicates the importance which elites attach to this process. The fact that Salinas placed his hand-picked successor, Luis Donaldo Colosio, in charge of the ministry reinforces this view. From my perspective, the government's commitment to SEDESOL and NGOs is indeed a significant phenomenon,

given the quantity of inputs transferred and their centrality to the continuation of the rural economy.

Initial Postrevolutionary Efforts

The earliest development initiatives conducted by the postrevolutionary regime vacillated between multiculturalist and assimilationist strategies of incorporating rural peoples into the state. Manuel Gamio, who became head of the Direction of Anthropology at the Ministry of Agriculture in 1917, initially blamed underdevelopment on archaic cultural artifices and superstitions and advocated incorporation and education as the proper remedies (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:10-11). Gamio's subsequent rural development program was heavily oriented towards changing the local culture through education (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:12). Primary schools were introduced to teach Spanish language and Mexican history, medical personnel made sporadic appearances, beekeeping and new pottery techniques were introduced, and traditional practices of alcohol consumption were restricted (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:12). However, regional monopolies and unequal power relations made improving the livelihood of rural peoples problematic.

The development philosophy that grew concomitantly at this time was *indigenismo* (Indianism), which saw indigenous groups as culturally distinct from other rural peoples and requiring special study prior to the implementation of efforts. The relative merits of cultural assimilation and plurality were left open to debate, yet all indigenistas stood together in the view that programs of rural modernization should not be applied indiscriminately. They should be tailored to the specific needs of indigenous

regions (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:13).

The influential Ministry of Education (established 1921) dismissed this position and instead sought to provide all rural families with uniform elements of national or western culture. Hence, Gamio's Department of Anthropology was disbanded in 1925, as was the Department of Indian Culture within the Ministry of Education. Thereafter, for decades a uniform development agenda was practiced indiscriminately in mestizo and Indian communities alike without the benefit of the organized participation of anthropologists in policy-making (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:13).

Perhaps the earliest and most influential of these assimilationist programs was the Integrated Program of Rural Community Development. Rural schools were opened and Cultural Missions comprised of doctors, nurses, veterinarians, home economists, carpenters, and musicians, worked the countryside. They were tasked with raising living standards and incorporating rural peoples into the nation under the assumption that isolation promoted rural backwardness and education was the best tool for ameliorating contemporary problems. It was not until 1936 that an Autonomous Department of Indian Affairs would tailor development efforts designed for indigenous regions (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:15).

INI

One of the earliest rural support agencies for indigenous regions was the National Indigenist Institute (INI). The INI was created in 1948 and charged with administering the development of indigenous regions of Mexico. As conceived by the prominent INI policy maker Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán (1979), the underdevelopment of

Indian communities was attributable to exploitation by regional *mestizo* (non-Indian) elites and exacerbated by the cultural idiosyncracies of Indian society. Accordingly, the INI disavowed functionalist theories of a peasantry divorced from temporal or spatial context. Rather, Indian farmers were conceived as subordinate rural producers integrated with city-states since pre-conquest times (Aguirre Beltrán 1979; Drucker-Brown 1982). These Indians were organized into closed corporate communities in marginal highland areas (Hunt 1979:1) and bound to nearby urban centers in a caste-like relationship. Visible *costumbres* (ethnic markers) were believed to reinforce this system (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:50). The policy devised by the INI during these early years assumed that cultural assimilation would help breakdown these caste relations. However, the Indian community, at another level of analysis, was thought to be an encapsulated and whole social system existing in a state of Malinowski-like equilibrium (Drucker-Brown 1982:8). Given these assumptions, INI leadership reasoned that social change would have to be introduced in a controlled, deliberate manner to avoid disequilibrium and chaos. Careful study of Indian communities was to serve as a handmaiden to assimilation, by gently facilitating the introduction of "coordinated" (controlled) change. This form of paternalism would shelter the indigenous population while at the same time integrating them into the "modern" Mexican state (Drucker-Brown 1982:8). This policy changed during the 1970s, and currently the INI promotes the manifestation of indigenous ethnic markers.

One of INI's first ventures was the creation of *centros coordinadores* (coordinating centers) that would oversee the various agricultural, educational, and

health programs. "Regions of Refuge"[2] (i.e., isolated regions that displayed this caste relationship between closed rural Indian farmers and urban mestizo elites) were targeted by the INI for development. The coordinating centers were to be located in the major market towns of the refuge regions, such as Chilapa, rather than in indigenous communities themselves. The rationale for this was two-fold. The market center was the major centralizing institution for most indigenous regions, providing neutral ground where diverse and often mutually antagonistic Indian communities could be reached. The placement of coordinating centers in regional marketing towns also enabled the INI easy access to the mestizo political elites and merchant classes. Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, who worked with the INI until 1977, argued that these factions needed to be involved in improving the lot of rural Indians (Drucker-Brown 1982:10). The elites residing in central market towns, that Aguirre Beltrán called *centros dominicales* (centers of domination), would have been much less accessible had INI centers been located in remote Indian villages (Drucker-Brown 1982:10). The centers hired "cultural promoters" to advance "regional integration and development" and "induced culture change" targeted at both mestizos and indígenas (Aguirre Beltrán 1979:146; Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:54-56).

In its early years, INI lacked the financial muscle necessary to achieve its objectives (Hewitt de Alcántara 1982:54-56). It attained greater capability in the 1970s when COPLAMAR began channeling funds into its coffers. By 1991, sixty-four percent

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[2] "We have called these regions regions of refuge because within their bounds the hereditary structure of colonial times and the archaic, clearly preindustrial culture, have found shelter from the forces of modernization" (Aguirre Beltrán 1979:7).

of INI's budget originated from SEDESOL (Fox 1994:189). By the time of my fieldwork in 1999, INI was under the bureaucratic jurisdiction of SEDESOL. This has transformed the INI into a major development agency that is currently working with producer organizations and human rights centers throughout rural Mexico.

Because the INI was an established institution in Chilapa with experience working the hinterland, it was selected as a major base for regional development. The INI coordinating center in Chilapa administers indigenous development programs in fourteen municipio*s*. It is one of four INI coordinating centers state-wide, the others located in Olinala, Ometepec, and Telocoapa. INI currently assists at least four NGOs within the municipio with their various human rights and development projects. Chapter Five provides a case study of the actual mechanics through which one current INI program is implemented in Chilapa.

CONASUPO

The National Basic Foods Company (CONASUPO) was created by President Mariano López Mateo in 1961. The overall goal of CONASUPO was to maintain stable and low retail prices for basic foodstuffs, including maize, beans, cooking oil, and animal products. To abet this process, CONASUPO began constructing a chain of government subsidized rural stores in 1961 that initially were overwhelmingly located on the outskirts of the Federal District. Under the presidency of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) there was a significant increase in the geographic dispersal of the stores. They sold commodities at heavily subsidized prices regardless of location, effectively eliminating transport costs for rural consumers. Support for the stores ebbed dramatically during the

early years of the López Portillo administration (1976-1982), with hundreds closing weekly. Many were revived by later development agencies and currently 18,000 exist nationwide, with ninety-two operating in Chilapa and its hinterland.

CONASUPO also functioned as a wholesale buyer of agricultural products, extending guaranteed prices for basic grains. In conjunction with this CONASUPO oversaw food processing via subsidiary parastatals, most notably Industrialized Maize INC. (MINSA). From 1970 to 1982 CONASUPO doubled the volume of its operations and grew to be one of the largest parastatals in all of Latin America, but suffered from entrenched corruption and waste predicated on substandard accountability. Economic restructuring consigned CONASUPO to a slow process of contraction. From 1982 to 1987 the guaranteed price advanced by CONASUPO to maize producers dropped by thirty percent. By 1989 the number of crops it purchased at guaranteed prices dropped from twelve to two. The agency was effectively dismantled by the Zedillo administration in 1999.

PIDER

During the 1970s, policy makers for rural development programs began to de-emphasize cultural idiosyncracies as explanations for rural poverty and instead emphasize the exploitative relations linking the rural poor and the wider society (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:174). Usury, commercial chicanery, and regional monopolies were singled out as the primary abuses (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984:174). To ameliorate the effects of these abuses, development agencies of the 1970s were to finance crop reception centers, warehouses, credit, fertilizers, and insecticides (Hewitt de Alcántara

1984: 174-175).

The Rural Support Program (PIDER), which began operations in 1973, was but one such example of this type of development initiative. This agency was a large-scale investment program ostensibly targeted at the poorest rural regions. PIDER also served as an umbrella organization for all agriculture related agencies and was backed financially by the World Bank. The program eventually covered over one-hundred microregions[3] encompassing fifty percent of Mexico's rural poor (Cernea 1979:6). PIDER provided redistributive, employment, and productive services for rural peoples while simultaneously undertaking a wide array of initiatives involving education, health, credit, and livestock investment (Goulet 1983). The agency had an eclectic targeting policy, directing resources at times to areas of social unrest only to later target zones that guaranteed high crop yields (Grindle 1981; Rodriguez 1997). Sometimes the communities chosen were those favored by the World Bank (Grindle 1981:37-38). Few mechanisms were developed to promote accountability (Cernea 1983:43; Fox 1992:157), and in terms of poverty relief, PIDER projects had little lasting influence (Fox 1992:57).

COPLAMAR and CONASUPO-COPLAMAR

The National Plan for Depressed Zones and Marginal Groups (COPLAMAR) was founded in 1977, during the early months of the López Portillo administration. Policy makers intended to use COPLAMAR resources for poverty alleviation in marginal areas,

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[3] The World Bank defines a microregion as comprising two to seven municipalities within one state. Within this area PIDER assisted only select communities populated by 300 to 3,000 inhabitants (Cernea 1979:7).

a mission that initially competed with and duplicated PIDER services (Rodriguez 1997:67). The agency expanded in 1979 and subcontracted programs to existing agencies, most notably CONASUPO (Fox 1992). COPLAMAR forged an alliance with CONASUPO to provide food subsidies channeled through rural stores. From 1979 onwards the stores administered CONASUPO-COPLAMAR programs that brought the stores to prominence in the subsidy system. The CONASUPO-COPLAMAR initiative was also noteworthy for its support for democratically elected Community Councils of Supply to administer the stores. Previously, CONASUPO had granted store concessions that often ended up in the hands of local caciques. The democratic community councils were a novel phenomenon at the time, signaling a new direction in state-society relations in rural Mexico by establishing better mechanisms for accountability (Fox 1992). Equally significant was the fact that CONASUPO-COPLAMAR departed from the standard practice of conditioning participation in antipoverty programs on clientelistic political subordination (Fox 1992:205).

Hewitt de Alcántara (1984:176) attributes this shift in policy not to governmental enlightenment, but rather to a recognition among elites that some sort of response was necessary to curtail the increasing crisis of the countryside (urban centers were being saturated with rural migrants and agriculture was in decline, tendencies attributable to both population growth and unequal exchange in the countryside). However, it was not until after 1983 that this type of divergence from classical corporatist organization became a commonly accepted linkage between elites and masses. COPLAMAR was disbanded in 1985, yet today both the Community Councils

of Supply and rural stores continue to thrive under the jurisdiction of Distributor CONASUPO (DICONSA) and SEDESOL.

SAM

This program commenced in the Spring of 1980. The goal was to achieve national self-sufficiency in corn and bean production by 1982. The philosophical framework of the SAM posited an integrated process of agricultural inputs, food production, marketing, processing, and distribution in which grain was conceived as a strategic resource to be protected by the nation (Fox 1992). The SAM evolved into a massive subsidy program advancing credit, fertilizer, insecticides, and improved seeds, all targeted at "surplus producing " farmers (Fox 1992). SAM was the first deliberate effort to target small-scale subsistence agriculturalists (in contrast to large export concerns) with inputs intended to dramatically increase productivity. It also oversaw the expansion of the network of CONASUPO-COPLAMAR warehouses and rural stores in regions deemed "critical nutritional zones." Thousands of these rural stores opened nationwide during this period, providing important nutritional benefits to impoverished families. SAM, like earlier rural initiatives, also sought to increase the regime's legitimacy in rural areas. The SAM was the last of nationalist economic program implemented before Mexico switched to a strategy of comparative advantage.

De la Madrid Initiatives

During this administration, the task of development was hampered by austerity measures that lessened the Mexican state's ability to throw blanket subsidies over wide areas. CONASUPO was the central relief agency, running numerous catch-all welfare

programs. Funding for many other parastatals involved in rural poverty alleviation was reduced and many agencies were disbanded altogether. For example, BANRURAL's budget was slashed by sixty-seven percent while COPLAMAR and SAM were dismantled. Several stop-gap programs did emerge alongside a revamped CONASUPO. Chief among them was the National Food Program (PRONAL), intended as SAM's successor. PRONAL disavowed national self-sufficiency and instead relied on a modest agenda of support for select grains. It disappeared at the end of the de la Madrid sexeno. Integrated Rural Development, a poverty relief program not unlike PIDER and COPLAMAR, likewise came and went with the administration.

The National Solidarity Program

The National Solidarity Program began operating on December 2, 1988, the second day of President Salinas's term of office. The basic outline for PRONASOL grew out of Salinas's Ph.D. dissertation,[4] based on fieldwork conducted in rural Puebla and Tlaxcala during the 1970s. Salinas's dissertation outlines the political motivations guiding his thinking during the development of the PRONASOL program. Fieldwork convinced the future president that existing poverty relief programs were not garnering enough political benefits for the government. He discovered that villages receiving the highest amounts of state development spending remained centers of discontent directed at the government. Salinas (1982) attributed this to corruption that siphoned off funds

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[4] Carlos Salinas de Gortari's *Political Participation, Public Investment, and Support for the System* (1982) along with the subsequent PRONASOL / SEDESOL setup is perhaps the ultimate example of "applied anthropology."

and a lack of local input in the selection of appropriate relief programs. He noted organizational reforms that could presumably remedy this and bolster popular support for the government. These reforms would include greater accountability, transparency, and a greater selection of micro-development projects afforded to communities. The official PRONASOL discourse was to be framed in less Machiavellian terms, using generalities such as "experience in direct democracy" and "social modernization" (Salinas de Gortari 1993).

Regardless of Salinas's initial motivations, analysts have conjured up a bewildering array of interpretations regarding PRONASOL in action. Cornelius et al. (1994:5) note that PRONASOL has been variously characterized as (1) a typical social welfare program; (2) a novel, demand-based, carefully targeted, poverty reduction program; (3) an exercise to reduce class conflict; (4) a state initiative to reestablish legitimacy; (5) clientelism and populism dressed in new garb; (6) centralized presidential rule making an end run around regional PRI elites; (7) pork barrel politics borrowed from the US; and (8) the new mass politics of an increasingly urbanized Mexico. Many of these interpretations are not mutually exclusive. These varying characterizations reflect not only PRONASOL's internal complexity and multiple agendas, they also arise from case studies that examined how PRONASOL has in fact played out in Mexico's vastly different socioeconomic regions.[5]

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[5] "The simple reality is that this sprawling multidimensional public program defies easy categorization" (Cornelius et al. 1994:5). Dresser (1991) and Cornelius, Craig, and Fox (1994) provide extensive analyses of PRONASOL, while Soerderberg (2001) interprets the program from the perspective of historical materialism.

Dresser (1994:144) argues that PRONASOL provided the political conditions necessary to sustain the neoliberal economic model. I concur with her assessment. The strategy deployed combined neoliberal economic policies with neopopulist welfare policies (Dresser 1994:154). Although PRONASOL functioned as a highly targeted palliative to offset the social costs of economic restructuring, it simultaneously fullfilled Salinas's graduate school era dream of serving the regime's political ends. PRONASOL created a discretionary fund that incorporated new patronage networks, thereby reconfiguring the PRI's tattered coalitional base in time for the 1991 mid-term elections (Dresser 1994). The appearance of PRONASOL funds also precipitated surprisingly bitter conflicts within the opposition Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) coalition over the issue of whether or not to be "coopted" by joining the program. Bitter rifts developed within the PRD and some factions left the party to pursue PRONASOL funding unmolested, a situation that may have exceeded Salinas's expectations.

PRONASOL in Action

The original PRONASOL revamped previous federal revenue sharing programs and combined them with innovative rural development efforts inspired not only by Salinas's Ph.D. dissertation but by the success of the CCAs and other NGO examples as well (Hernandez and Fox 1995). PRONASOL directed resources to turbulent zones and for a period in the early 1990s it re-legitimized an unpopular PRI. The projects undertaken generally required the formation of local solidarity committees that in turn selected from a standard menu of possible community improvement projects, such as electrification or road paving. While PRONASOL appeared to decentralize, initially it

centralized massive discretionary funding power in presidential hands, particularly during the late 1980s and early 1990s.[6] NGOs in Chilapa quickly sprang up to access these funds, and a new set of institutions and relationships evolved against the backdrop of a reforming PRI. These semi-autonomous NGOs are currently responsible for implementing government financed programs (i.e. temporary employment public works projects) that in the past would have been the responsibility of the state alone. The recipients of PRONASOL funds included both official and nonpartisan social movements. This deepening relationship between the state and independent social movements became quite noticeable in the mid-1980s. It is variously known in Mexico as *concertación social* or social liberalism and is a characteristic feature of current state-NGO relationships in Chilapa.

PRONASOL recruited many left-wing grassroots activists into positions of responsibility, including high level administrative posts. Many of these PRONASOL functionaries had roots in a 1970s era Maoist movement known as Popular Politics (PP), an organization of urban intellectuals acquainted with Salinas since the early 1970s (Salinas de Gortari 2002:310-311). Like the *Narodniks*[7] (Populists) of nineteenth century Russia, they went to live among the rural poor in order to promote a new social order.

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[6] Estimates for 1991 range between 1.7 billion US (Dresser 1991) and 3 billion US (*El Financiero*, September 23, 1991). However, in 1996, Zedillo agreed to transfer two-thirds of the discretionary welfare fund resources to state and municipal governments. This clearly rolls back the power of the president and his closest economic advisors (Trejo and Jones 1998).

[7] See Turgenev's Fathers and Sons (1981) and Virgin Soil (1977) for historical novels shedding poignant light on the Narodnik movement. The former book anticipates the movement; the latter describes it in more detail.

Others were members of the Mexican Communist Party or the Unified Socialist Party. They were well qualified to further PRONASOL's mission because they had strong ties to the rural poor and were unfazed by working and living in squalor.[8] The incorporation of these social reformers into the bureaucracy also bolstered the PRI's political prospects (Dresser 1994:152). Salinas tapped many of these individuals because they were personal friends of his brother Raul. Because PRONASOL involved an alliance between left-wing grassroots social activists and right-wing neoliberal technocrats, the environment that subsequently evolved was generally tolerant of a wide range of political sensibilities. As PRONASOL gained enough strength in the early 1990s to evolve into a ministry (SEDESOL), this political alliance became deeply institutionalized, leading the ministry to sponsor a wide variety of vaguely populist, but functionally neoliberal, NGOs.

PRONASOL was organizationally complex; nationwide it administered numerous diverse programs including support for basic consumer goods, rural electrification, road and park construction, housing, potable water, and aid to rural producers, indigenous communities, women's organizations, and migratory workers (Bailey and Boone 1994). Most PRONASOL funding was distributed through bloc grants to both state and municipal governments (Fox 1994:181; also see Bailey 1994). NGOs were drawn into this program, in large part because the state found it politically expedient to bring potentially disruptive individuals into the system.

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[8] "These are people who don't mind traveling to the most obscure and inhospitable places, like mountains, the most remote communities...The Harvard or Stanford boys couldn't do that kind of work. Nor are they interested in it." (Emilio Romero Polanco, in Dresser 1994:153).

SEDESOL

SEDESOL originated out of PRONASOL in April of 1992. The new ministry also incorporated several older bureaucracies: Ecology and Urban Development (SEDUE), the government housing branch INFONAVIT, and the bank charged with infrastructure investment, BANOBRAS. Currently, SEDESOL programs fall under the jurisdiction of three of the ministry's major administrative divisions: Branch 26: Social Development and Production in Regions of Poverty; Branch 20: Social Development; and Branch 33: Municipal Funds. A fourth Intersectoral Program (PI) drawing on resources from diverse ministries (SEDESOL, SAGAR, SCT, and SEMARNAP[9]) also operates in Chilapa.

SEDESOL divides Guerrero into seven economic zones: Acapulco, Central Region, Costa Grande, Costa Chica, La Montaña, Region Norte, and the Tierra Caliente. The Central Region, in which Chilapa is located, holds by far the largest amount of SEDESOL development money statewide, followed by the Costa Chica (INEGI 1997). The state government requested a 2.5 percent increase in SEDESOL spending for these regions during 2000. In Guerrero, SEDESOL underwrites 41,000 temporary employees, and finance 13,000 loans without collateral to small producers working an estimated 39,000 hectares (*Diario Guerrero Hoy*, March 15, 2000).

SEDESOL (1999) determined regions in Guerrero in need of immediate poverty relief attention, and supplemented this with a list of municipios that also form priority

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[9] SAGAR is the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, SCT is the Ministry of Communication and Transportation; and SEMARNAP is the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, and Fisheries.

regions. These municipios are graded on the following poverty / marginality scale: Very Low, Low, Medium, High, Very High.[10] The municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez received a Very High rating in terms of poverty and marginality indices. It thus became a priority municipio for SEDESOL poverty relief programs. Also receiving Very High marginality ratings were the neighboring municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Mártir de Cuilapan, and Zitlala. Tixtla was the only nearby municipio that received a Medium marginality rating. SEDESOL describes the Chilapa region in the following manner:

> [Guerrero exhibits] a very high grade of marginality, in that the poor are obligated to leave their communities of origin in search of seasonal work. The peasant economy here is characterized by minifundismo and the erosion of soils, which contribute to deficient agricultural production that in the majority of cases, proves insufficient for subsistence agriculture. There also exists high concentrations of Indians, low levels of services, and little or no economic diversification; agriculture is deteriorating (SEDESOL 1999, author's translation).

As a consequence of this assessment, SEDESOL advanced considerable resource transfers to the Chilapa region. Branch 26 has targeted Chilapa with eleven programs all to be administered, at least in part, by local NGOs. Branch 20 funds five programs involving NGOs operating in Chilapa. Branch 33 and the Intersectoral Program each have one program operating in the municipio, both run by the *ayuntamiento* (municipal government). The following table outlines both SEDESOL programs operating

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[10] The formula to determine the index of municipal marginality was established by CONAPO in 1995 and actualized in 1998, combining 7 variables: 1. Percent of individuals over age 15 who are illiterate, as counted by *Conteo* 1995. 2. Percentage of residents without sewage / drainage. 3. Percentage of residents without electricity. 4. Percentage of residents without running water. 5. Percentage of residents in living in shanties. 6. Percentage of residents with soil for floors. 7. Percentage of PEA that earn less than two minimum salaries. SEDESOL determines other priority regions based on indicators of marginality, infrequency of communications, circuits of distribution, production and consumption, rurality, infrastructure, infant mortality, etc.

nationwide, and those with a presence in Chilapa, during 1999-2000.

Table 2.1

SEDESOL PROGRAMS IN 1999-2000 AND THEIR LINKS TO CHILAPA

Branch 26: Social Development and Production in Regions of Poverty

Program	Links in Chilapa	Comments
1. Temporary Employment Program	SZT, UCNAG others	Large-scale presence, pays 90% of minimum wage, used by SZT artisans in rotating credit that is split 30%-70% between SZT administration and workers. SZT reforestation pays 100% directly to rural workers.
2. Social Enterprises	SZT	Artisan training, focuses on women in poverty
3. Word of Honor	MT, Ayuntamiento SZT	Pays about 500 pesos per farmer annually, underwrites ayuntamiento's fertilizer program
4. Women's Production	TTS	Productive projects, swine raising
5. Regional Indigenous Funds	130 villages, SZT, AN, UCNAG, IRC, others	Large-scale presence, closely tied to INI, selects new villages on a yearly basis
6. Regional Compensatory Funds	None	Inactive in Chilapa
7. Attention to Arid Zones	None	Inactive in Chilapa
8. Agricultural Laborers	Casa de Campesino	Processes over 10,000 agricultural laborers yearly, runs a temporary employment program, provides services in work camps
9. Retired Teachers	n.d.	n.d.
10. Attention to Agricultural Producers	n.d.	n.d.
11. Community Social Service	SZT	Small presence

12. Social Co-investment	**SZT**	**Small presence**
13. Community Training	**SZT**	**Small presence**
14. Planning for Regional Development	**TTS**	**Small presence**
15. Investigation and Development	**TTS**	**Small presence**
Branch 20: Social Development		
1. Social Supply of Milk	**CCA**	**Channeled through rural stores**
2. Rural Supply (DICONSA)	**CCA**	**Major presence since 1980 92 rural stores in region Warehouse in Chilapa**
3. National Commission for Arid Zones	**None**	**Inactive in Chilapa**
4. National Fund for Artisans	**SZT**	**Supports woven palm industry**
5. National Indigenist Institute (INI)	**JMMP, AN, UCNAG TTS**	**Major presence, 100% of funds for human rights NGO JMMP are derived through this program**
6. Tortilla Consumption Subsidy	**None**	**Inactive in Chilapa**
7. Progressive Living Savings	**n.d.**	**n.d.**
Branch 33: Municipal Funds		
1. Municipal Funds	**Ayuntamientos**	**Major Presence**
Intersectoral Programs		
1. PROGRESA	**Ayuntamiento**	**Major Presence**
2. Temporary Employment Program	**n.d.**	**n.d.**

The above table demonstrates an extensive SEDESOL presence in Chilapa. I now turn to a brief discussion of the SEDESOL programs active in Chilapa during the years 1999-2000.

The Temporary Employment Program

The Temporary Employment Program is perhaps the most important Branch 26 initiative operating in Chilapa. It targets unskilled laborers in marginal zones and is designed to reach peak operational levels during those months in which local productive activities are scarce. For Chilapa, this would be the dry season months of November through April, although in practice Temporary Employment funding extends beyond these dates. The program is aided by a technical committee that integrates members from SEDESOL, SAGAR, SCT, SEMARNAP, and the Ministry of Public Credit. Federal, state, and municipal governments, along with NGOs and communities, identify projects. The Temporary Employment Program pays workers ninety percent of the daily legal minimum wage. It allows several local NGOs the role of identifying useful workfare projects and then assigns these NGOs the responsibility of hiring laborers and overseeing the project. Sanzekan Tinemi (SZT) and Union of Nahua Comuneros of Atzacoaloya, Guerrero, A.C. (UCNAG) are the two local NGOs most active with this program. In 1997, the Temporary Employment Program earmarked $270,000.00 for Sanzekan Tinemi artisan work in seven communities; in 1998 $320,000.00 to residents of seven communities; and in 1999 $570,000.00 for eleven communities. Each community had approximately fifteen employees for a total of 161 employees in eleven communities in 1999. Similar payments, amounting to $26.00 per day per individual, were issued to villagers participating in reforestation projects with Sanzekan Tinemi. From July through December of 1999, reforestation laborers were paid six days a week for an average weekly income of $156.00. UCNAG ran SEDESOL temporary

employment projects in the vicinity of Atzacoaloya, paying employees about $25.00 a day. During 1998, there were approximately 300 temporary employees in this UGNAG program working in eight villages. Chapter Six provides further details on how NGOs implement the Temporary Employment Program in Chilapa.

Credit by Word of Honor

Credit by Word of Honor Program is Branch 26's rural financial loans program. It originated in the early 1990s, when Mexico reorganized its rural finance system. According to Myhre (1998:42) borrowers in Mexico were at that time classified by repayment records and prevailing regional economic conditions. This led to a four-tiered system of potential borrowers. At the top are those deemed profitable, and these borrowers receive large scale loans from Mexico's privatized banks. The second tier consists of productive and likely to be profitable commercial farmers serviced by commercial banks. BANRURAL, which has withdrawn from many areas of rural Mexico, attends to the needs of the third tier producers, whose output is lower than the second tier but are potentially profitable. SEDESOL's Credit by Word of Honor attends to the needs of the bottom tier of producers, those deemed unworthy of formal credit from banks (Myhre 1998:42). The program provides collateral-free loans to small-scale agriculturalists (those cultivating twenty hectares or less) in marginal zones. The program is a stimulus for the production of basic grains (maize and frijoles) and targets those without access to bank loans. In 1999, Credit by Word of Honor was lending a maximum of $500.00 to local campesinos. This is obviously not the type of loan that will finance major capital investments (i.e. the purchase of tractors, etc.). It is basically a

stop-gap to finance production systems based on household manual labor. Other anthropologists in southern Mexico report that fund is used as pocket money by cash-strapped families (Collier and Lowery 1994). In Chilapa, this program works with the Savings and Loan NGO SSS *Matotlanejtikan Tomin* (Making Money), which in 1999 administered the transfer of funds to 793 individuals in twenty-seven communities in the municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa, and Zitlala. Local farmers also collaborate with the ayuntamiento of Chilapa by using Credit by Word of Honor Funds to underwrite a fertilizer distribution scheme administered by the municipal government, a program that began in the wake of the dismemberment of the parastatal FERTIMEX. This program is the most important source of fertilizer currently operating in the region. Villagers form solidarity-like committees (viz., PGOs that orient to SEDESOL rather than NGOs) that apply for fertilizer through the ayuntamiento / SEDESOL apparatus. Meza Castillo (1994:44) estimates that seventy-five percent of the region's communities receive fertilizer through this program. Typically, farmers receive their fertilizer in July and are not required to pay for it until the following February, with no interest charged.

The program began in 1993-1994, in the context of the upcoming presidential election. According to Bartra (1996), the state government decided to "fertilize" the vote in Guerrero. To accomplish this, they inundated rural municipalities with 100,000 tons of ammonium sulfate financed via interest free credit, without transport charges, and at a cost twenty-seven percent below market rate (Bartra 1996). Even these numbers understate the magnitude of the subsidy. Bartra (1996:177) reports that in 1993-1994 the program functioned as an outright fertilizer giveaway, as campesino repayment rates

were as little as 0.3 percent in some Guerrero municipios. Because municipal governments have some discretion in determining eligibility among potential beneficiaries and repayment of Word of Honor funds is not strictly enforced, there does appear to be leeway for a tacit quid pro quo exchange of fertilizer for political favors.

In 1994, the ayuntamiento of Chilapa intended to distribute 4,344 tons of ammonium sulfate to 6,438 producers farming 9,656 hectares, although it appears that they fell far short of this goal, perhaps by as much as fifty percent (Meza Castillo 1994:45). Shortly thereafter, the state government retitled fertilizer distribution as the "Program of Aid for Primary Producers" although it is unclear to what extent, if any, this affected the distribution in Chilapa. In 1999, I worked with municipal employees loading the program's fertilizer into trucks for transport to the villages. The fertilizer had been stored along the south wall of the ayuntamiento, which served as a sort of loading dock for the project. According to the workers, there were eighteen tons to be distributed, although this figure is questionable, and other consultants put the number at 6,000 tons. In either case, for at least a week there was a steady stream of laden pickup trucks dispersing into the hinterland. I also observed the program functioning in 2000, when in May, residents of 161 local communities began receiving their share of the fertilizer being distributed. Each individual received 350 kilos of ammonium sulfate, or less commonly, 1846 DAP.[11] The total cost amounts to 160 pesos per person. This

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[11] Fertilizer prices measured in pesos (per 50 kilo bag) at SZT during early June of 2000 were as follows: Ammonium Sulfate 64; Pure Granulated 160; Mixed Fisica 145; Urea 112; Superphosphate Simple 60; Potassium Chloride 125; Agribon 440.

quantity of fertilizer is sufficient to fertilize one hectare of soil.[12] This fertilizer is still a heavily subsidized product; 350 kilos of ammonium sulfate purchased at Sanzekan Tinemi or other businesses would cost the buyer 420 pesos. Furthermore, it is still unclear as to what extend the government expects, or collects, payment on these deliveries. Hence, the ayuntamiento dominates the fertilizer market during the planting season, far surpassing in sales the 600 tons sold by Sanzekan Tinemi in that period.

The ayuntamiento also distributed $300,000.00 worth of Credit by Word of Honor funds among 337 campesinos[13] from at least three separate villages[14] (*Expresion Popular*, July 2, 2000). From what I can determine, the ayuntamiento of Chilapa de Alvarez, SZT, and the NGO SSS Matotlanejtikan Tomin are the only channels through which Branch 26 funnels these Word of Honor loans into the municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez.[15] Matotlanejtikan Tomin was also the only local NGO with a presence in Chilapa's southern neighbor, the municipio of Quechultenango, where forty-five residents were

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[12] This is according to the ayuntamiento manager in charge of the subsidized fertilizer program (personal communique June 2, 2000). SZT personnel estimate that it takes 500 kilos of fertilizer to cover one hectare of land. Meza Castillo (1994:44) estimates 570 kilograms per hectarea (11.4 bultos). At the SZT store, sulfato de amonio costs 60 pesos per 50 kilos, or about 600 pesos per hectare. In other words, it requires two months worth of minimum wage to purchase enough fertilizer from Sanzekan Tinemi to cover one hectare of land. To cover this cost, Sanzekan Tinemi has an agreement worked out with many local farmers that basically trades fertilizer for their PROCAMPO checks.

[13] This amount adds up to loans of $890.20 per campesino, well above the official $500.00 allotment. I do not know how to account for this discrepancy.

[14] The villages were El Refugio, Ayahualulco, and El Jaguey.

[15] I was unable to determine if the same SEDESOL / fertilizer program was being administered by the other municipios in the Chilapa area.

members of the Savings and Loan section. However, these forty-five individuals were not receiving Word of Honor credit through this NGO.

Indigenous Regional Funds

According to Fox (1994:181), the Indigenous Regional Funds is the only SEDESOL subprogram that actually tried to transfer resource allocation decision making to nongovernmental organizations. SEDESOL Branch 26 put up the financing and INI became a key administrator. INI and SEDESOL sought to turn local development decision making over to autonomous regional producer counsels, thus bolstering existing organizations. In Chilapa, the Regional Indigenous Council of Central Region serves as an interlocutor between the Regional Funds office and producer organizations. Seventy percent of the funds are destined for villages that have never received regional funds in the past, while the remaining thirty percent go to fund established projects. No one organization can receive more than ten percent of the funds, and the benefiting organization is obligated to finance twenty-five percent of the project. The Regional Funds Center must report monthly to the state SEDESOL delegation all financial transactions. Regional Funds are currently financing at least seven NGOs in Chilapa.[16] The Regional Funds center began in Chilapa in 1990 with a budget of $50,000.00; and by 1999 it was operating with an allotment of $1,274,000.00.[17] These resources underwrote

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[16] Those funded include Altepetl Nahuas A.C., SSS Apicultores de Chilapa, SSS Sanzekan Tinemi, SSS Tepozonal de San Angel, SSS Titekititoke Tajame Sihuame, and Unión of Nahua Comuneros of Atzacoaloya, Guerrero, A.C.

[17] Unless otherwise stated, all Mexican currency figures prior to the time of my fieldwork are converted to 1999 values. The exchange rate between pesos and US dollars during this period averaged $9.65 pesos to the dollar.

120 agricultural and artisan projects with participants from 130 communities in ten municipios. The municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez was the best financed of the ten ($3.9 million since 1990), followed by Ahuacuotzingo ($2.1 million), with Quechultenango a distant third ($579,000.00); (figures are from Regional Funds archives, 2000).

National Program with Migrant and Agricultural Laborers

The National Program with Migrant and Agricultural Laborers (henceforth "Agricultural Laborers") is designed to improve living conditions for migrant workers. This program works with federal, state, and municipal authorities, producers, rural organizations, and beneficiaries. Locally it aids in transporting migrants to and from work camps located primarily in northern Mexico. It also registers names and destinations of workers so that family members may reach them in the event of an emergency. From September of 1998 to February of 1999 this program oversaw the transportation of 9,982 Chilapan migrant agricultural workers, the vast majority of whom were destined for the state of Sinaloa. During the same months in 1999-2000, Agricultural Laborers organized the transport of 7,312 Chilapan migrant workers.[18] It also processes annually a further 3,000 migrant laborers who originate from the nearby

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[18] The number of individuals from Chilapa participating in the SEDESOL Agricultural Laborers program is not stable from year to year. There was a large drop in number of participants during the two years for which I have complete data. This decrease in numbers from 1998 was apparently a state-wide trend. A leading newspaper (*El Sol de Acapulco*, May 2, 2000) reported PROSCAI estimates of only 20,000 Guerrerense seasonal migrants in 1999-2000 heading for northern Mexico. According to the PROSCAI director, these migrant workers originate largely from 9 municipios: Chilapa, Ahuacuotzingo, Alcoazuca, Altimarano del Monte, Tixtla, Metlatonoc, Tlapa, and Xalpatlahuac. The newspaper also mentions that a severe drought in northern Mexico may be behind the decrease in migrant workers.

municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Martir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala. The local Agricultural Laborers office is called the *Casa de Campesino* (Peasant House) and is located in La Cienega, (2 km NE of Chilapa). It serves as both the program's local administrative office and the regional transport hub for migrant workers. Representatives of agribusinesses in northern Mexico will meet with local village leaders at the Casa de Campesino, where they will negotiate labor contracts. Migrant workers will converge, sign contracts, and depart for the labor camps via bussing arranged and financed by the employers. Every November eighteen to twenty buses a day depart loaded with workers. Migrant laborers from Guerrero and Oaxaca constitute the bulk of the workforce in the agricultural work camps of Sinaloa, Sonora, Baja California, and Baja California Sur. Guerrero is also the origin of the majority of laborers sent to the states of Michoacan, Jalisco, and Colima.

In work camps nationwide, Agricultural Laborers helps with stoves, *molinos* (dough mixers), *panaderias* (bakeries), and *tortillerias* (tortilla shops). Agricultural Laborers also operates a temporary employment program in Chilapa with an unknown number of participants. Chilapa is one of four localities in Guerrero (with Atoyac, the Costa Chica, and Tlapa) that has been targeted by Agricultural Laborers.

FONAES

The National Fund for Solidarity Businesses (FONAES) is Branch 26's next major program in Chilapa. It was created in 1991 and focuses on poor women, ensuring that fifty percent of projects include females. In Chilapa, FONAES works primarily with the NGO Sanzekan Tinemi. FONAES is financed fifty percent by federal funds and the rest

by state funds; it has supported various local development projects involving subsidized fertilizer and swine raising. FONAES represents the emerging tendency in SEDESOL to underwrite sustainable development projects, and tends to work most heavily with regional producer organizations (such as Sanzekan Tinemi in Chilapa). Chapter Six provides further details concerning the uses of FONAES funds in local development schemes.

Other Branch 26 Programs

The Women's Productive Development Program works with the woman's NGO SSS Titekititoke Tajome Sihuame (TTS). I have not been able to determine the magnitude of this program in the region. However, TTS itself does have a substantial presence in both Chilapa and neighboring municipios.[19] Both the women's program and TTS finance swine raising and other productive enterprises designed to benefit rural women. Five smaller Branch 26 programs, Program of Community Social Service, Fund of Social Investment, Community Training and Support, Planning for Regional Development, and the Program of Investigation and Development of Regional Projects also provide training and small subsidies to NGOs in Chilapa.

Branch 20 and 33 Programs

Branch 20 oversees poverty relief and development through its Program of Rural Supply (with DICONSA), National Fund for Artisans (FONART), and through the local office of the INI. DICONSA already had an established compound in Chilapa and

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[19] Alemán Mundo (1997) has written a nice ethnography investigating the activities of TTS. The author integrates analysis of gender roles and changing rural livelihoods into a compact and handy study.

longstanding involvement in underwriting rural stores; its fleet of transport vehicles provides logistical support for NGO development projects. It was particularly influential in Chilapa during the 1980s, however, it has lost its relative prominence with the growth of SEDESOL. In fact, in 1995, DICONSA was itself incorporated into SEDESOL as a sub-program. Forty-Seven DICONSA rural stores service Chilapa, and another forty-three service hinterland areas of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, and Zitlala. The stores offer basic foods at prices comparable to those in urban settings as the transport costs are subsidized by the Mexican government. INI is now a dependency of Branch 20 and currently administers programs through the Justice Attorney's Office, the Grants Office, and in coordination with the Regional Funds Center. Through the Justice Attorney's office, SEDESOL / INI funds ten regional NGOs, including four that operate locally: the Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights "José María Morelos y Pavon" ($100,000.00 in 1999); Altepetl Nahuas ($100,000.00); TTS ($75,000.00); and UCNAG ($64,000.00).[20] See Chapter Five for a detailed consideration on how one NGO employs these INI funds in Chilapa.

Branch 33 works mainly with the state government of Guerrero and the local ayuntamiento. In 2000, Branch 33 directed $4.1 million pesos directly to the ayuntamiento of Chilapa de Alvarez for 181 separate public works projects involving potable water, sanitation, urbanization, electrification, housing, education, health, and

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[20] The other six NGOs being funded in 1999 are Council of Pueblos Nahuas Maka Nexchxeclahuacan ($30,000.00); MI en Lucha ($152,000.00); Association for Culture and Development Nikantepuac ($92,500.00); Network Indígena of Community Assistance ($40,000.00); Ziltalteheitzin ($70,000.00); and Center for Human Rights Fenacio Manuel Altimarano ($80,000.00). All are Civil Associations.

road maintenance (Diario Guerrero Hoy, April 27, 2000). The ayuntamiento of Chilapa de Alverez also runs local temporary employment projects, many of which are probably funded by SEDESOL's Branch 33 Municipal Funds, which is a major source of financing for the ayuntamiento.[21] The ayuntamiento tends to conduct infrastructural development projects (potable water, etc.) rather than productive projects. Branch 33 is administered by the government of the state of Guerrero's Committee of Planning and Development, Guerrero (COPLADEG). Fifteen percent of the funds have been allocated for "state priority" and functions as sort of a discretionary fund for the state Governor Rene Juarez Cisneros. The other eighty-five percent of the Municipal Funds are allocated based on a statistical formula that measures resources, population, and municipal rurality. I confirmed that Branch 33 was also working in the municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, and Zitlala, but was unable to determine whether or not it had a presence in Martir de Cuilapan and Tixtla.

Intersectoral Programs in Chilapa

The Intersectoral Branch in Chilapa is also administered directly out of the ayuntamiento. It runs the Program of Education, Health, and Nutrition (PROGRESA), providing direct cash payments to Chilapa's poorest rural families, ostensibly to

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[21] In the late 1980s and early 1990s, PRONASOL was launched with great fanfare; its emblem was painted everywhere and its accomplishments widely publicized. By 1999-2000, in Chilapa at least, the old "built by SEDESOL" slogans were rather faded, and the local ayuntamiento was taking all the credit for many of the SEDESOL financed development projects. The ayuntamiento proudly displays photo boards of projects without mentioning SEDESOL financing.

underwrite health, nutrition, and education.[22] PROGRESA (launched by the Zedillo administration in 1997) had a municipal budget of approximately $42 million in 1999. Direct untargeted transfer of these PROGRESA funds to Chilapa's population would put about $420.00 per capita annually into each resident's hands. Other researchers (Trejo and Jones 1998) suggest that PROGRESA monthly stipends average about $370.00 nationwide. In addition to cash transfers, breakfast is provided to first and second graders, and vaccinations given to needy children. The program covers pregnant women, children under the age of five, and primary school-age children. It is a program uninvolved with capital investment schemes, limiting its activities to direct caloric and financial transfers to the rural poor. I am uncertain as to what leeway the ayuntamiento has with targeting PROGRESA funds, as I had no significant access to the municipality's PROGRESA decision making process. After the 2000 presidential election, PROGRESA was relabelled *Oportunidades* (Opportunities) by the Fox administration and is currently receiving favorable reviews from development specialists.

SEDESOL and NGOs

Most of Chilapa's NGOs receive extensive financial support from SEDESOL, which along with INI and SAGAR, provides one-hundred percent of the financing

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[22] Direct transfer of all PROGRESA funds might be a poor idea; an anonymous team of SEDESOL employees charged with assessing the effectiveness of the PROGRESA program in Chilapa reported to me that the biggest problem was that peasants were squandering the cash payments on alcohol. It is ironic that a program specifically designed to raise nutritional levels among rural families could have such an unintended consequence.

currently earmarked for Chilapa's women's NGO,[23] one-hundred percent for the human rights NGO, and sixty percent for Chilapa's major development NGO.[24] SEDESOL alone provides fifty percent of the finances for the reforestation carried out by NGOs in Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa, and Zitlala (much of the rest comes through the Mexican state via SEMARNAP). It also assists the CCA in maintaining the chain of ninety-two rural stores in Chilapa and its hinterland.

By 2000 there were some concerns about SEDESOL's future related to the upcoming presidential elections. This apprehension was expressed to me by more than one NGO member, though SEDESOL operatives and their NGO allies continued to prepare development activities through the spring and summer of 2000, when my fieldwork was completed. For example, SEDESOL chaired a meeting on February 18, 2000, at the INI Regional Funds complex in Chilapa with the objective of organizing locally the year 2000 accords and projects. The NGOs [25] were presenting a scheme to strengthen the Regional Indigenous Council of the Central Region, an umbrella organization that act as an intermediary with SEDESOL. Virtually all NGOs in Chilapa and some from neighboring municipios are members of the Regional Indigenous Council. The primary objective of the council is to pressure SEDESOL into reclassifying

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[23] Estimate provided by Titekititoke Tajame Sihuame director, January, 2000.

[24] Estimate Provided by Sanzekan Tinemi area director, January, 2000.

[25] These included Tlachichico (from Ahuacuotzingo), Sanzekan Tinemi, National Alliance, Matotlanejtikan Tomin, Titekititoke Tahame Suhuame, Altepetl Nahuas, LARSEZ, OCICI, CCA, JMMP, Democratic Front, Agropicultores, Consaltrape de Ixcatla and Kakiztiz Totlajtol. Government agencies with representatives in attendance were SEDESOL, INI, and Agricultural Laborers.

Chilapa as an Area of Immediate Attention, a classification that would qualify for more SEDESOL funds than can be obtained by municipios classified as Other Priority Regions. The target audience of this lobbying consists of high officials in SEDESOL and reportedly includes the Minister of Social Development himself. The Executive Council of the Regional Indigenous Council, representing some twenty-five organizations, is intended to have more negotiating muscle with the authorities than can be derived by any one organization on its own. This Executive Council is composed of the directors of Sanzekan Tinemi's artisan area; Altepetl Nahuas (AN); Kakiztiz Totlajtol (or KT); and until his untimely death, the director of the Organization of Independent Peasants of Indigenous Communities (OCICI). According to one Executive Council member, if the right-wing National Action Party were to win the July 2, 2000 presidential elections, SEDESOL itself might vanish and NGOs in Chilapa might lose crucial government support. If the then-ruling PRI retained power, funding would continue. If the left of center PRD emerged triumphant, even more policies favoring both NGOs and small-scale agriculturalists would likely be implemented (personal communique, May 25, 2000). It still remains to be seen what the surprising PAN victory in 2000 heralds for SEDESOL and Chilapa.

At the 2000 meetings in Chilapa, problems discussed included poverty, migration, the region's dispersed population, and the diminishing supply of natural resources. Also addressed were issues of credit, support for small producers, democracy, and security. To respond to these concerns, SEDESOL transfers funds to NGOs that are staffed largely by long-time residents of the Chilapa area. Currently, Chilapa's major development

NGO, Sanzekan Tinemi, works directly with the following SEDESOL programs: Temporary Employment, FONAES, Word of Honor, Program of Community Social Service, Social Co-Investment Fund, and Community Training. In early 2000, Sanzekan Tinemi was receiving approximately seventy percent of its SEDESOL funding through the Branch 26 Temporary Employment headquartered in Chilpancingo. Another fifteen percent was coming from SEDESOL's FONAES program, also headquartered in Chilpancingo. In the Spring of 2000, Sanzekan Tinemi was also applying for funding from Branch 33, although at the time of this writing, it had not yet been approved. SEDESOL Branch 26 funds TTS not only through the Women's Productive Program, but through Planning for Regional Development and the Program of Investigation and Development of Regional Projects. SEDESOL Branch 26 funds the CCA through four programs, most notably the Temporary Employment Program and Agricultural Laborers. SEDESOL Branch 20 Funds CCA / DICONSA through the following programs: Program of Social Supply of Milk, the Program of Rural Supply, and INI. SEDESOL funds UCNAG through Temporary Employment Program, Housing, and Productive Employment. One-hundred percent of the funding for the local human rights center JMMP is funded by SEDESOL via INI. Of the major Chilapan development organizations, only OCICI is divorced from the local SEDESOL Regional Funds chain; OCICI is entirely funded by the government of the state of Guerrero. It is unclear where the state government derives its funds to underwrite OCICI. I suspect that the money may indeed originate from SEDESOL, but this of course needs to be investigated.

Other Sources of Development Funding

Apart from SEDESOL channels, the federal government transfers funds for development into Chilapa primarily through the Ministry of Agrarian Reform (SRA); the Direct Rural Support Program (PROCAMPO); the National Reforestation Program (PRONARE); SM, SECOFI, SEMARNAP, and SAGAR. In 2000, SEMARNAP invested $1.4 million in Guerrero to underwrite temporary employment opportunities for seventy-nine civic organizations in twenty-one municipios. For the year 2000 in Chilapa alone, sixteen organizations were allotted a total of $247,500.00 from SEMARNAP's temporary employment program (El Sol de Acapulco, June 3, 2000). SEMARNAP's most important regional NGO beneficiary is Sanzekan Tinemi, especially its reforestation division.

The SRA provided over $300,000.00 for local reforestation projects in 1999. The SRA's daughter organization, the Office of the Attorney General of Agrarian Affairs (PA) is charged with regularizing land titles and overseeing the various reforms in land tenure. This is accomplished through the workings of the PA's PROCEDE program, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

The government of the state of Guerrero also plays a large part in local development. It provides fifty percent of the money needed for rural electrification, construction of roads, bridges, and *comisarias* (town halls), all overseen by a local NGO (OCICI). When SEDESOL began decentralizing in the mid-1990s, state governments received a greater say in resource allocation. In 1998, the state of Guerrero donated $200,000.00 to the NGO Sanzekan Tinemi for various development projects. Through the Trust Fund for Shared Risk (FIRCO), the state of Guerrero has also funneled over

$123,500.00 to underwrite fertilizer distribution in Chilapa.

PROCAMPO is a targeted substitute for rural grain producers that originated in 1994, in response to NAFTA. It is to be phased out in 2009. PROCAMPO remains the most controversial program, many critics, and many of my informants, derisively label it "PRICAMPO" and call it a vote-buying mechanism for the PRI. I initially encountered some difficulties in trying to track down an accurate count of PROCAMPO beneficiaries in Chilapa. Some informants stated that this was due to the politically sensitive nature of the data. However, I soon found the data conveniently listed in INEGI publications (INEGI 1999). Although PROCAMPO and PROGRESA are routinely labeled as vote buying mechanisms, I noticed that the charges currently being reported in newspapers offered contradictory evidence and failed to cite their sources.[26] I suspect that PROCAMPO was indeed abused by the PRI during the 1994 presidential campaign and I do not doubt that such programs can still be manipulated for political ends. Yet the basic features of the subsidy system have evolved to a point at which a direct quid pro quo is no longer required. Partisan subordination to the governing party and outright vote buying no longer constitute the cornerstones of state penetration into rural Mexico.

The data I did obtain suggest that PROCAMPO payments are similar to Word of Honor funds in terms of funds allocated to individuals (about $500.00 each). In the 1997

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[26] Both PROCAMPO and PROGRESA were attacked relentlessly in the press by the PRD and the PAN, while the pro-PRI press lauded their accomplishments. The same polarized pattern was evident in reporting on military affairs. On any given day one newspaper would report that the Army was sowing fear in regional communities, while a second newspaper would report that guerrillas and bandits were terrorizing the back country.

/ 1998 agricultural cycle, these PROCAMPO payments were issued to 6,640 producers in Chilapa; 2,342 in Atlixtac; 1,895 in Ahuacuotzingo; 1,141 in Martir de Cuilapan; 3,700 in Quechultenango; 1,334 in Tixtla; and 1,332 in Zitlala. Sanzekan Tinemi also had an arrangement that allowed local farmers to cede their PROCAMPO payments in exchange for fertilizer.

The Alliance for the Countryside is the major rural welfare project implemented by the Zedillo administration. It supports a variety of development initiatives targeted at rural peoples. On May 5, 2000, the program directed $820,000.00 into twenty Chilapan communities. This money purchased irrigation equipment, an electric molino for making *nixtamal*,[27] manual molinos, and provided credit for craft work production for rural women. SAGAR is the administrative channel through which the program formally works, although the ayuntamiento tends to preside over its project dedications and by my estimation, reaps the political rewards for the program. SAGAR also funds regional NGOs, and on February 24, 2000, it signed an agreement with SSS Sanzekan Tinemi to provide $1,387,000.00 for regional development (El Sol de Acapulco, February 25, 2000).

Conclusions

The reader can see by the preceding discussion that SEDESOL and other state ministries have carefully orchestrated a development regime in Chilapa that effectively incorporates rural peoples and organizations into government programs. State centrality

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[27] Staple foodstuffs in rural Mesoamerica such as tortillas, tamales, and *atole* (corn gruel) are derived from *nixtamal*, a mixture of boiled maize, water, and lime.

waxes strong even while the PRI's fortunes wane. I agree with Bartra's (1996) characterization of the central government as a "persistent rural leviathan." It is not by whim that this has occurred. Population growth in the region has outstripped the resources available locally that in the past did sustain self provisioning (Kyle 1995). This basic demographic fact compels regional residents to access inputs from external sources or suffer an ecological and economic catastrophe. In Chilapa and its hinterland, through SEDESOL and associated ministries, the government has financed craft production, reforestation, credit unions, temporary employment, services for migrant workers, and the creation and maintenance of a human rights center. These inputs taken as a whole constitute a subsidy that is absolutely necessary in sustaining the region's population. State resource transfers now rival locally grown maize as the cornerstone of the regional economy. This process is undoubtedly not limited to the Chilapa region, yet the phenomenon has generally been overlooked in the academic literature inspired by the initial eruption of NGOs or the emergence of PRONASOL.

CHAPTER 3

CHILAPA AND ITS HINTERLAND

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the fieldsite, a region comprised of a small urban settlement and its dependent rural hinterland. Following Smith (1976:9), I define regions, or regional systems, as nodal forms of organization because they define a territory dependent on some particular node (or settlement). Some regions in the highlands of southern Mexico consist of a number of levels of hierarchically organized agricultural communities that orient trade and administrative relations to a single dominant urban center. In other regions periodic markets are more likely to incorporate villages that transcend municipal boundaries. This latter phenomenon is certainly the case in east-central Guerrero, where Chilapa (pop. 22,511),[1] a small urban settlement nestled in the upper Atempa Basin near the crest of the Sierra Madre del Sur mountain range, serves as the region's major central axis. Chilapa is not only the region's primary urban center, it is a municipal cabecera and the site of the major weekly market. These characteristics have enabled Chilapa to function as the administrative center for a dependent territory and as a regional hub for three distinct economic zones. An introduction to this internally differentiated hinterland is necessary in order to understand the patterns of economic development and human rights organizing elucidated in subsequent chapters.

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, all population figures are drawn from INEGI (2001), which gives population figures for the year 2000.

Political Jurisdictions

Pertinent to understanding this hinterland are the administrative boundaries located within. What makes political jurisdictions relevant is merely that they have separate administrative bureaucracies with which NGOs must deal. The most important of these administrative jurisdictions is the municipio. Roughly the equivalent of a US county, the municipio is a basic unit of political organization in Mexico (and Guatemala). Although municipal governments in Mexico are by law uniformly organized, there is real diversity in their actual composition as social units (Rodriguez 1997:28). In the smallest of municipios, such as those common in Oaxaca, residents will often display a considerable sense of shared identity (Dennis 1987), a phenomenon also documented in nearby Guatemala (Tax 1937, 1941; Hunt and Nash 1967). In contrast, larger municipios such as Chilapa often are comprised of a number of ethnically distinct and sociologically heterogenous villages (Kyle 1995). In either case, the recent trend in Mexico towards increasing municipal control over various lines of federal and state development funds has had mixed results in the effort to decentralize and deconcentrate government control over development projects (Rodriguez 1997). Municipal authorities in the Chilapa region do have some input into the approval of NGO projects (particularly those dealing with human rights), but as a general rule municipal boundaries are not major barriers to NGO activity.

The fieldsite covers approximately 1,949 square kilometers of territory and straddles six municipios: Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa de Alvarez, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla de Guerrero, and Zitlala. The most populous of the six (and most

central to my study) is Chilapa de Alvarez (pop. 102,853). The municipality of Chilapa encompasses 556.8 square kilometers of highly dissected mountain terrain and small alluvial valleys that comprise this section of the Sierra Madre del Sur. Approximately fifty-five percent of the territory comprises steep, mountainous landscape, while an additional thirty-five percent has more gently sloping terrain. The remaining ten percent of the municipio consists of alluvial valleys, where Chilapa's largest settlements are located (Meza Castillo 1994).

Those communities located in the high mountain sections of the municipality are often situated in very steep terrain and therefore lack farmland suitable for expansive population growth. Consequently, villages here tend to be small in population, often between 80 and 500 residents apiece. Most of these upland settlements are connected to Chilapa by poorly maintained roads and infrequent passenger service. Daughter settlements in particular often lack roads, and flash flooding during the rainy season periodically halts all travel between these hamlets and Chilapa. It should come as no surprise that NGO development initiatives in these upland areas frequently involve road and bridge building.

Many rural hamlets in the municipio of Chilapa were initially occupied after the 1840s peasant war (Kyle In Press) or are daughter settlements of the local communities that survived a seventeenth-century resettlement program overseen by the Spaniards. These latter settlements were archetypical "closed corporate communities" as described by Wolf (1955, 1957). Originally, their daughter settlements served as outposts for the parent communities, bulwarks heading off the territorial expansion of neighboring

populations. This process of village fissioning is ongoing and generates contentious territorial claims that have attracted the attention of a human rights NGO in Chilapa. Today, daughter settlements in upland areas have multiplied exponentially and now appear as amorphorous batches of house-compounds that contrast vividly with the nucleated settlements from which their residents descend.

The city of Chilapa governs 249 recognized settlements within the municipal boundaries. The population within this territory votes for local office holders and petitions the same ayuntamiento for services. The municipio of Chilapa is governed by the PRI, which since the 1930s has never lost an election for municipal president.[2] This local one-party dominance has persisted even in the face of the PAN victory in the 2000 national presidential election. Chilapa's PRI hegemony exemplifies the continuing dominance of subnational PRI political regimes in central Guerrero. This local PRI ascendancy is a factor influencing the regional patterns of cooptation and patronage to which NGOs are subject. However, although the PRI is in power, almost certainly politics at the local level involves factional disputes that render notions of a monolithic PRI both dated and simplistic.

Ahuacuotzingo, to the north-east of Chilapa, is a sparsely populated municipio with the majority of its residents situated in rural communities. The municipality (pop. 19,388) boasts 388.4 square kilometers of land, 96 rural settlements and a cabecera

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[2] About a decade ago the PRI won a municipal presidential election through massive rural support for its candidate. However, the PAN reportedly out-polled the PRI in the city of Chilapa itself. Serious inter-party urban opposition to the winning PRI candidate led to the unusual decision to have him decline the office in favor of the local PARM candidate, who in turn joined the PRI two years later.

(2000 pop. 2,700) of the same name.[3] Sixty percent of the landscape is comprised of irregular mountain terrain and only fifteen percent of the territory can be described as plains (Meza Castillo 1994). A poor quality road links the cabecera to the city of Chilapa, some forty-four kilometers distant.[4] Fieldwork established that travel time from the cabecera of Ahuacuotzingo to the city of Chilapa is two hours and twenty minutes by bus and costs $20.00, the equivalent of a day's wage in some rural communities.[5] Some villages in Ahuacuotzingo have feeder roads attaching them to their cabecera (and by extension to Chilapa) with occasional passenger service provided by pickup trucks. The major ethnic groups are Spanish speaking mestizos, who form the majority of the population in the cabecera, and bilingual or Nahuatl speaking indígenas, who largely inhabit rural areas. Almost half the population over the age of five is illiterate. Electrical service arrived in Ahuacuotzingo in 1977 and today the cabecera houses telephone services and a post office. The primary economic activity is agriculture, and the PRI dominates both the ayuntamiento and most village-level *comisarios* (mayorships). It is in these villages that the Mexican army has concentrated its

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[3] Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, Tixtla, and Zitlala all have cabeceras that share the same names as their hinterlands. Only Mártir de Cuilapan has a cabecera with a different name, Apango.

[4] Disagreements led to several killings, as some locals believed that the road would not serve their interests. The pro-road faction prevailed and construction began in 1971, although it was not until 1974 that the first vehicle arrived. The journey from the Chilapa border to the cabecera of Ahuacuotzingo was reported to be three hours.

[5] The official minimum wage in 2000 was $30.00 (roughly $3.00 US) a day, although residents from rural areas of Atlixtac reported to me daily wages as low as $20.00 to $25.00. The basic foodstuff, MASECA brand maize, costs 3.6 pesos per kilo. The less common CONTRI brand maize can be purchased for 2.0 pesos per kilo.

counterinsurgency efforts directed at suspected Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) guerrillas. This conflict has drawn the attention of Chilapa's human rights NGO, and it is here in rural Ahuacuotzingo that we find the largest number of human rights cases involving the military.

Atlixtac (pop. 21,407) is a mountainous municipality situated east of Chilapa. The majority of inhabitants are rural peoples who speak dialects of both Nahuatl and Tlapanec. The cabecera (pop. 2,648) is linked to Chilapa (thirty kilometers distant) by a high quality paved highway. Travel time (by bus) between cabeceras is approximately one hour and fifteen minutes and costs $25.00.[6] At least 79 settlements dot the 694 square kilometer landscape (INEGI 2001), supporting agricultural workers cultivating small fields. Few communities have access to large tracks of level farm land. Only seven of these settlements had telephone services in 1995, while only the cabecera had a sewage system. Twelve hamlets, along with the cabecera, have access to electricity (Government of the State of Guerrero, 1995).

Although the overwhelming majority of Atlixtac's residents orient towards Chilapa's weekly market, residents in far eastern and southern Atlixtac are active in both Chilapa's and Tlapa's tianguis. For example, residents from Huitzapula (pop. 917), a village located in eastern Atlixtac near the Tlapa border, report that they participate in both markets. However, bus fare to either center is $50.00, or $100.00 round trip, entailing a major expense. The round trip fare is equivalent to three to five days worth of minimum wage earnings. Residents report similar prices in both market centers, making

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[6] This assertion is based on my fieldwork experiences.

it less likely that they can expect to find favorable prices in either location. Residents from Huitzapula will sell their crops in Chilapa and purchase consumer goods at the same prices paid by rural communities near Chilapa while incurring higher transport costs. Hence, communities such as Huitzapula find themselves in highly unfavorable locational niches. High transport costs compel many poor people to reach Chilapa's tianguis by foot travel or with the assistance of pack animals. Typically, residents will begin the journey to Chilapa on Saturdays, buy and sell on Sundays, and return to Atlixtac on Mondays.

Mártir de Cuilapan, (pop. 13,801) located north-west of Chilapa, is a largely rural municipio as well. The territory extends over an area of 499.8 square kilometers, although only one settlement, La Esperanza, is within the fieldsite. While most residents from Mártir de Cuilapan's eighteen settlements reportedly depend on Tixtla's market, residents from La Esperanza, which borders Zitlala, frequent Chilapa's tianguis. The cabecera, Apango (pop. 3,675) is linked to the municipio of Tixtla de Guerrero (Chilapa's western neighbor) by a road served by both bus and mini-van passenger service.

Tixtla de Guerrero, (pop. 33,620) to the west of Chilapa, is relatively more prosperous (SEDESOL 1999), with its own tianguis and a cabecera (pop. 20,099) thirty-five kilometers distant from Chilapa that provides services of extensive scope and nature. For these reasons, residents in Tixtla's forty rural settlements have less need for involvement in the services found in Chilapa. Perhaps only the border town of Chilicachapa can be properly conceived of as part of the Chilapan marketing system.

In contrast, rural and urban residents in Zitlala (pop. 17,361), an impoverished municipio to the immediate north of Chilapa, are intimately tied to Chilapa's weekly market. The cabecera of Zitlala (pop. 4,731) is located ten kilometers north of Chilapa at 1,345 meters above sea level (masl). Zitlala's twenty-nine villages are largely situated within a fifteen or twenty minute bus ride to the market town of Chilapa.[7] Zitlala boasts 308.2 square kilometers of territory.

The Region's Environment

The Chilapa region is a rugged country with pockets of rich agricultural land, especially in the immediate environs of Chilapa.[8] The cabecera of Chilapa de Alvarez is located at 17 degrees 36 minutes latitude, 99 degrees 11 minutes, at an altitude of 1,420 meters above sea level. This location lies between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator, placing Chilapa (and the entire hinterland) in the tropical highlands of Mesoamerica. The major topographical feature of this area is the rugged Sierra Madre del Sur, an east-west trending range extending throughout the state of Guerrero and beyond. Elevations in the fieldsite range from about 1,200 to 2,400 m. Although this hinterland displays considerable micro regional variation, some generalizations can be made. Three climatic zones, *tierra fria* (cold lands), *tierra templada* (temperate lands), and *tierra caliente* (hot

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[7] Chilapa is technically listed as a city in Mexico. US readers may better equate Chilapa with a town, as its population more closely corresponds with our notion of that settlement type. In the present study, I use the terms "urban settlement," "city," and "market town" interchangeably to describe the cabecera of Chilapa.

[8] The ecology and physical geography of Chilapa and its immediate hinterland have been discussed in detail by Kyle (1995). In the present study I intend only a brief background summary of the local ecology, informed chiefly by Kyle (1995).

lands) are recognized by locals. The tierra fria, a cool upland zone of pine (*Pinus* Sp.) and oak (*Quercus magnolillfolia*) forests, is encountered in mountain terrain and typically confined to the highest elevations (2,000 m. and above). Tierra templada, a temperate and breezy climate, is encountered at elevations between 1,000-1,800 m. Below 1,000 m. one enters the humid tierra caliente.

The Pacific Equatorial Countercurrent influences the region's climate by sending warm tropical air masses over the study area (Kyle 1995). The cabecera of Chilapa (approximately 6.4 square kilometers in size) is itself located on the leeward slope of the Sierra Madre del Sur, in a noticeable rainshadow caused by the twin peaks Tezquitzin (2,130 m.) and Payenaltzin (2,090 m.). Even with this rainshadow, the town of Chilapa is lush and green during the rainy season. Torrential downpours are common, and the streets are inundated with both water and mud. The dry season, conversely, leaves Chilapa semi-arid and dusty. However, precipitation in Chilapa's hinterland varies by location. Rainfall intensity varies with the contours of the landscape, being heavily conditioned by elevation and the prevailing leeward / windward conditions. Average annual rainfall in the cabecera is 834.5 mm per year, most of which is concentrated in the months of May through October. In contrast, Hueycantenango, a settlement situated on the windward slope some thirty-seven kilometers southeast of the cabecera, garners over 1,547 mm of rainfall annually. Average annual rainfall in the neighboring municipalities range from 800 mm (Mártir de Cuilapan) to 1,100 mm in Ahuacuotzingo.

The annual cycle consists of a rainy season, generally lasting from late May or early June to mid-October, with a dry season for the remainder of the year. However,

rainfall is highly unpredictable, and the rainy season can commence any time between early May and early July. December through January can bring colder weather, especially at high elevations. During these months, winter crops are vulnerable to night time temperatures that can drop below freezing. February through May is hot and arid, with a noticeable decline in the resident populations of flies and mosquitos.

The mountainous topography is etched by seasonally torrential streams and severe erosion. Young and azonal soils, mainly Lithosols and Alluviums, are the resulting byproduct of this erosion (Kyle 1995). Typically, soils are deficient in both nitrogen and phosphorus (Kyle 1995) although there are areas of rich alluvial bottom lands, particularly along the banks of the lower Ajolotero and Atempa Rivers. Piedmont soils dominate upland areas. Erosion and deforestation pose challenges to rural communities, with erosion affecting as much as sixty percent of all arable land (Matías Alonso 1997). The region's rising population also strains this tenuous ecosystem, as the cutting of trees for firewood contributes significantly to this vicious cycle of deforestation and erosion. Preliminary evidence also suggests that local streams are increasingly tapped for dry season irrigation, although the effect of this on water tables remains unclear.[9] NGOs in Chilapa are currently involved in monitoring water tables and ameliorating the effects of deforestation and erosion, a campaign that is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six.

Chilapa as an Economic Region

The municipal cabecera of Chilapa is the hub of a poorly articulated regional

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[9] This assertion is based on the preliminary analysis of surface flows and deep wells around Chilapa as measured by Kyle in 1990 and 1991 and myself in 2000.

marketing system, the likes of which are common in highland Mesoamerica. These systems have received considerable scholarly attention (see Beals 1975; Hassig 1985; Malinowski and de la Fuente 1982; Marroquín 1954; Smith 1975, 1977). As described by Kaplan (1965), these regional marketplaces primarily circulate regionally produced foodstuffs and items, and until recently were only loosely integrated into the nation's highly industrialized urban markets. This relative autonomy has been undermined and the regional marketplaces are now increasingly incorporated into both national and international markets (Kyle n.d.). The Mexican state is in fact extending its influence throughout the countryside not only through the activities of NGOs, but by rendering villages dependent on fossil fuel based technologies, fertilizers, and commodities, many of which reach the fieldsite via these hitherto autonomous regional marketplaces.

The city of Chilapa is both an economic and political center of much greater significance than its size would suggest. Chilapa is a market center, transport hub, and nodal point for virtually all government services. The numerous federal and state agencies offer employment opportunities to local residents. The city has experienced a progressive shift away from reliance on locally produced goods and services to imports, a trend that started in the early 1970s and continues to this day. The tianguis is conducted every Sunday, transforming Chilapa's *Zócalo* (central plaza) into a bustling center of economic activity. On market days, thousands of rural residents journey into Chilapa to buy and sell consumer items. Typically, they begin arriving on Saturday, and stalls are immediately erected to provide shelter for some of the more delicate goods. Many of the goods that are sold in the tianguis wind up in the daily market that extends through the

streets surrounding the Zócalo.[10]

The major market centers nearest Chilapa's are situated thirty-five kilometers west in Tixtla, (municipal pop.33,620) and far to the east in Tlapa (municipal pop. 57,346). Zitlala's northern border is the Balsas River, which constitutes a natural barrier between Chilapa's economic hinterland and more distant municipios. Chilapa's southern neighbor, the municipio of Quechultenango, (pop. 32,541) has a rural population that orients its consumer needs towards both its own tianguis (thirty-five kilometers distant from Chilapa) and the nearby state capital of Chilpancingo, and so is better conceived of as a dependency of that marketing system. While it is true that middlemen from distant municipios may come to Chilapa to purchase craft work or other items, the rural people that are dependent on Chilapa come from Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, and Zitlala.

The rural economy is internally differentiated. Distance from Chilapa has historically been the most important factor shaping production strategies, with concentric zonation a la von Thünen disrupted only by a small number of specialties attributable to environmental idiosyncracies rather than distance alone (Kyle 1995). These anomalous specialties include palm harvesting, charcoal and sugar production, and avocado, coffee, and pineapple agriculture (Kyle 1995).

Beginning in the 1960s construction of a rural road network led to a reconfiguration of economic zones, relaxing bulk transport costs almost uniformly

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[10] Construction of a massive edifice to house the daily market was completed in September of 1999. Despite much official propaganda deeming the new building Chilapa's most urgent need, the announced October 1999 grand opening was canceled. By the end of my fieldwork in June of 2000, the new market remained unoccupied.

throughout the region (Kyle 1995; 1996). A subsequent reduction in urban demand for traditional products (owing to influx of imports in Chilapa) resulted in changes in rural production strategies. The most notable shift was a large-scale turn to commercial maize production, a phenomenon that only really started in the 1980s when subsidized fertilizers became readily accessible (Kyle 1995).

However, in sharp contrast to near uniform bulk transport costs now afforded to rural communities, the region developed an irregular distribution of vehicular passenger movement favoring a handful of towns on major roads. Chilapa's economic hinterland can thus be conceptualized as a region comprised of three distinct economic / transportation zones (all of which transcend municipal boundaries). The first zone (Zone One) consists of those settlements with easy passenger access to Chilapa, a zone Kyle (1995) calls the "commuter belt." Residents within this zone can easily commute to Chilapa by foot or via frequent and low cost passenger service. Such positioning allows residents to participate intimately in Chilapa's urban economy. Distance to Chilapa and access to frequent and low cost passenger transportation have been examined by Kyle (1996) who has assessed them to be surprisingly useful indicators of the types of economic relations evident between the municipal cabecera and any given rural community in the region.

Part of Zone One is composed of settlements within a five km radius of the cabecera. Residents from these communities can easily commute by foot to Chilapa's urban labor market. Twelve communities (Chilapa included) fall within this five km radius (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

Settlements Within Five km Radius of Chilapa

Settlements	Distance to Chilapa	Population
1. Chilapa	0.00	22,511
2. Zoyatal	1.20	ukn
3. El Paraíso	1.90	446
4. Los Magueyes	2.50	560
4. El Terrero	2.70	222
5. Acazacatla	2.80	396
6. Zinenezintla	3.50	97
7. Baranca Honda	3.70	115
8. Ajacayan	4.15	365
9. Lodo Grande	4.50	867
10. Atempa	4.80	970
11. La Providencia	4.90	388
12. Ayahualco	5.00	531

Many of these communities are in the Atempa Basin, which contains thirty-one square kilometers of fairly level land situated approximately 1,420 m. This basin is the only major concentration of level alluvial farmland in the fieldsite and is dissected by two rivers, the Rio Atempa and Rio Ajolotero, both of which are tributaries to the mighty Rio Balsas further to the north. Rainy season deposits from flooding rivers and the rain-swept Sierra Madre annually replenish the basin's fertility, and consequently, the plain has developed a number of agricultural settlements ringing the central nucleus of Chilapa. Typically, these commuters flood Chilapa's daily market, selling produce such as garlic and onions, while others work in restaurants or as housemaids for middle-class families.

Other communities in Zone One are situated on strategic transport routes (particularly those with frequent minivan passenger service). These villages are typically

connected to Chilapa by good quality paved or dirt roads serviced by low cost minivan, bus, and truck fleets. For about two or three pesos, one can travel from the city center to any outlying colonias (traveling a distance of perhaps one or two kilometers from city center). Somewhat higher fares are required for the combi service extending from Chilapa to Zitlala (a distance of thirteen km). Mechanized transport allows residents from communities situated 5-14 km away from the cabecera to participate intimately in Chilapa's urban economy as "rural commuters" (Kyle 1995; 1996). Table 3.2 (see below) identifies fifteen communities serviced by frequent and low cost minivan transport to Chilapa.

Table 3.2

Settlements with Regular Minivan Service

Settlement	Distance to Chilapa	Population
1. Chilapa	0.00	22,511
2. Los Magueyes	2.50	560
3. Atempa	4.80	970
4. Amate Amarillo	5.10	919
5. Nejapa	5.80	3,007
6. Chautla	6.40	350
7. Trigamola	7.30	548
8. El Limon	7.40	317
9. Acatlán	7.80	2,885
10. Teomatitlán	8.30	355
11. Cuadrilla Nueva	8.35	512
12. Santa Ana	9.60	645
13. Atzacoaloya	9.80	2,401
14. El Refugio	10.50	379
15. Zitlala	13.80	4,731

By combining the settlements in Table's 3.1 and 3.2 and deleting the repetitions, I

identify twenty-six communities that comprise Chilapa's Zone One (commuter belt). Those communities are listed below in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Settlements in Zone One: Chilapa's Commuter Belt

Settlement	Distance to Chilapa	Population	NGO Project
1. Acatlán	7.80	2,885	Yes
2. Acazacatla	2.80	396	Yes
3. Ajacayan	4.15	365	No
4. Amate Amarillo	5.10	919	Yes
5. Atempa	4.80	970	Yes
6. Atzacoaloya	9.80	2,401	Yes
7. Ayahualco	5.00	531	Yes
8. Barranca Honda	3.70	115	No
9. Chautla	6.40	350	No
10. Chilapa	0.00	22,511	Yes
11. Cuadrilla Nueva	8.35	512	Yes
12. El Limon	7.40	317	Yes
13. El Paraíso	1.90	446	Yes
14. El Refugio	10.50	379	Yes
15. El Terrero	2.70	222	No
16. La Cienega	2.00	112	No
17. La Providencia	4.90	388	Yes
18. Lodo Grande	4.50	867	Yes
19. Los Magueyes	2.50	560	Yes
20. Nejapa	5.80	3,007	Yes
21. Santa Ana	9.60	645	Yes
22. Teomatitlán	8.30	355	Yes
23. Trigamola	7.30	548	Yes
24. Zinenezintla	3.50	97	No
25. Zitlala	13.80	4,731	Yes
26. Zoyatal	1.80	unk.	No

Currently, residents of Chilapa's commuter belt undertake both "traditional" rural economic activities (i.e. maize cultivation) and pursue employment via Chilapa's urban

economy.[11] Most importantly for the issues considered in this study, villages situated in the commuter belt form the loci of major NGO initiatives promoting agricultural specialization involving maguey and palm dependent micro industries. Nineteen of the twenty-six settlements in the commuter belt count on NGO development projects.

The second zone (Zone Two) consists of those communities located alongside major intercabecera highways outside of the commuter belt, up to and including the neighboring cabeceras of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, and Zitlala. As the fieldsite is bisected by the Chilapa-Tlapa highway, which runs through Tixtla, Chilapa, Atlixtac, and Tlapa, and a second road linking Chilapa to Ahuacuotzingo, communities along these routes are in somewhat fortuitous locations, as proximity to the highway has made it convenient for development NGOs (and other state-supported agencies) to operate in these settlements. Yet they cannot be properly conceived of as true commuter belt settlements, and the actual economic portfolios encountered in any given location are varied in nature. Within twelve of the twenty-two communities in Zone Two major NGO development projects are underway. Communities in Zone Two are listed in Table 3.4.

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[11] Chilapa's regional transport system changed drastically in the latter half of the twentieth century, when road construction and the introduction of motor vehicles upset previous patterns of interaction. Kyle (1996:411) who documented this process, observes that current monographs preoccupied with linkages between communities and "world systems" typically neglect serious consideration of the crucial transportation systems that service these relationships, a deficiency not found in an earlier generation of anthropological monographs (i.e., Beals 1946:76-79, Wagley 1941:45-46, Bunzel 1959:67-76) that cover the topic in detail.

Table 3.4

Zone Two Settlements and NGO Projects

Community	Municipio	Population	NGO Project
1. Agua Zarca	Chilapa	329	No
2. La Laguna	Chilapa	4	No
3. Lamanzintla	Chilapa	368	Yes
4. Pantitlán	Chilapa	2,308	Yes
5. Papaxtla	Chilapa	192	Yes
6. Santa Cruz	Chilapa	341	Yes
7. Sulchuchu	Chilapa	536	Yes
8. Tenexatlajco	Chilapa	221	No
9. Tepozcocruz	Chilapa	8	No
10. Teponzonalco	Chilapa	408	Yes
11. Agua Zarca	Ahuacuotzingo	421	Yes
12. Ahuacuotzingo	Ahuacuotzingo	2,700	Yes
13. Oxtoyahualco	Ahuacuotzingo	521	Yes
14. Tezoquite	Ahuacuotzingo	3	No
15. Trapiche Viejo	Ahuacuotzingo	452	Yes
16. Xaxocautla	Ahuacuotzingo	2	No
17. Xocolyoltzintla	Ahuacuotzingo	967	Yes
18. Atlixtac	Atlixtac	2,638	No
19. Petatlán	Atlixtac	844	No
20. San Isaebel	Atlixtac	265	No
21. Zoyapexco	Atlixtac	361	No
22. Zitlala	Zitlala	4,731	Yes

The third zone (Zone Three) consists of Chilapa's marketing hinterland, a somewhat expansive and ill-defined [12] area penetrating over 1,800 square kilometers of territory. I define Chilapa's marketing hinterland as that network of villages outside of Zones One and Two where residents regularly orient their purchase of consumer items to

[12] I am relying on a combination of published sources (Government of the State of Guerrero 1995; Sanchez Andraca 1999), fieldwork, and archival research to delineate the extend of Chilapa's economic hinterland as it existed during the course of my fieldwork in 1999-2000. Both Beals (1975) and Smith (1985) outline more systematic methodologies for documenting regional marketing systems in agrarian societies.

Chilapa's major periodic market, the tianguis. In other words, these villagers consistently shop in Chilapa's weekly market. Until recently, this marketing hinterland was small in scope and largely confined within the municipal boundaries and nearby Zitlala. Before the advent of regular passenger service via mechanized transport in the 1970s, the radius of the hinterland probably did not extend much beyond 20 km from Chilapa as measured from the town's central plaza. However, Chilapa's economic hinterland has expanded enormously in recent years. This hinterland now encompasses approximately 468 settlements, (26 in Zone 1, 22 in Zone 2, and 420 in Zone 3) although these differ vastly in their actual scale of market integration into the Chilapan market system, with gradations heavily conditioned by distance to Chilapa. Still, this is a territory and population far larger than those envisioned by either Skinner (1964-1965) or Tax (1941) in their classical analyses of agrarian marketing systems.

Since the 1960s road construction and the massive growth of low cost mechanized transport have altered economic relationships among communities to an extent hitherto unknown in the region (Kyle 1995). A major trend in this regard is the ever widening range of villages participating in Chilapa's central market. This economic hinterland now includes communities not only in the municipio of Chilapa, but in sections of the neighboring municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala as well. Consequently, Chilapa's Sunday market has become the major centralizing institution for rural peoples throughout the region. Residents from communities in neighboring municipios who in the past may have organized one or two marketing expeditions to Chilapa each year now conduct business there on a weekly

basis, or in exceptional cases, even participate in the daily labor market.

Although many of the rural peoples from this region actively participate in Chilapa's weekly market, both Tixtla de Guerrero and Mártir de Cuilapan are relatively independent from the pull of the Chilapan marketplace. The remaining four municipios, (Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, and Zitlala), are more deeply involved in Chilapa's tianguis, although the actual degree of market integration of rural hamlets in Ahuacuotzingo and Atlixtac is poorly understood. Nevertheless, it is primarily these four municipios that constitute Chilapa's economic hinterland (along with the settlements of La Esperanza in Mártir de Cuilapan and Chilicachapa in Tixtla de Guerrero).[13] These municipios also comprise (along with Atengo del Rio) the District of Alvarez, a judicial jurisdiction that also locates its headquarters in Chilapa (Tejedo de Leon 1999).

Chilapa's hinterland is a highland region of poverty. Five of the six municipalities discussed (all except Tixtla) and all four of the core hinterland municipios are rated by the Mexican government as having "Very High" levels of poverty and marginality (SEDESOL, 1999).[14] Sixty-one percent of the residents live in a state of

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[13] Historically, "La Montaña" referred to a largely indigenous region of eastern Guerrero consisting of twenty municipios including the six under consideration in this chapter. However, the Mexican government adopted a breakdown that divides the study area into two regions: Central Region (Chilapa, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala) and La Montaña (Ahuacuotzingo and Atlixtac). Community leaders in Chilapa often petition the government on behalf of the Central-Montaña Region (i.e., far eastern Central Region. To further confuse matters, the municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, Copalillo, and Zitlala are sometimes referred to as the *Montaña Baja*, or Lower Mountains (Matías Alonso 1997).

[14] The World Bank (1993) reports that sixty percent of the population of Guerrero lives in conditions of extreme poverty. Guerrero and Oaxaca also have the highest rates of infant malnutrition in the nation (El Sol de Acapulco, July 16, 1999). Guerrero is listed by the

"extreme poverty" (Meza Castillo 2000:377). Fifty-five percent of the population are illiterate and seventy-one percent of them live in rural communities comprised of less than 500 inhabitants apiece, the vast majority of whom are living in adobe, palm, or shanty-town dwellings (Meza Castillo 1994).[15] Eighty-two percent of the region's communities lack access to sewage systems (which are found only in the cabeceras and larger communities such as Acatlan and Ayahualulco). Fifty-six percent of all communities lack running water and thirty-five percent are without electricity (Meza Castillo 1994). The minimum wage is approximately US $3.00 a day and because crops will not grow in rainfed lands during the dry season, cyclical migration is a basic component of most rural household survival strategies.

A network of feeder roads, varying in quality, links many Zone Three communities to the cabecera of Chilapa. However, a journey from many villages (i.e., San Gerónimo Palantla, Zelocotitlán) requires travel anywhere from a four to eight kilometer walk to reach the nearest road with passenger service. Throughout the 1990s, an increasing reliance by villagers on vehicular transport has been documented by Kyle

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CNP and CNA (1993) as the third poorest state in the nation, behind Chiapas and Oaxaca. Twenty-six of Guerrero's seventy-five municipios are rated as having very high levels of marginality. This number is all the more striking when one notes that seventeen of Mexico's states lack a single municipio in the Very High category.

[15] The socioeconomic statistics gathered by Meza Castillo (1994) combine data derived from governmental sources with a questionnaire distributed to residents of thirty regional villages. His data can only serve as an approximation of actual conditions in the fieldsite, as his study only included residents from Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa, Mártir de Cuilapan, and Zitlala.

and myself. Traffic surveys conducted by Kyle in 1990 and 1991 demonstrated that at that time only twenty percent of the market-day travelers headed to Chilapa along the Acalco road (which connects a number of both Zone One and Zone Three communities to Chilapa) were arriving in vehicles. Later traffic surveys undertaken by Kyle in 1997 and by myself in 2000 reveal that the percentage of market-day travelers arriving from the Acalco road into Chilapa via motor vehicles had jumped to forty-seven or even fifty percent.[16]

Approximately 420 settlements in the fieldsite are located in Zone Three, 226 of which are in Chilapa de Alvarez; 89 in Ahuacuotzingo; 75 in Atlixtac; 1 in Mártir de Cuilapan; 1 in Tixtla, and 28 in Zitlala. When compared to either Zone One or Zone Two, settlements in Zone Three are statistically less likely to attract a Chilapa-based NGO development project. Of the 226 Chilapan villages in Zone Three, only 27 have major NGO projects. Only ten Zone Three villages (Acatayahualco; Ajuatetla; Ayozinapa; La Esperanza; Rincon de Cosuhapa; San Juan Las Joyas; Tepetlatipa; Tlapahualpa; Topiltepec; Yetlancingo) from outside the municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez have attracted Chilapa-based NGO projects.

Of interest in Zone Three is an area I call the "Empty Quarter." Perhaps more accurately, it should be called the Hueycantenango marketing region, as that town

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[16] While conducting my weekly traffic census on the Acalco road, I was occasionally approached by foot travelers heading towards Chilapa. Some reported walking from as far away as Ayahualulco, sixteen kilometers to the south. The fact that they recalled my attendance at an ejido assembly meeting held the previous July in Ayahualulco lends credibility to the claim that they were from that community. Sixteen kilometers appears to be the maximum extent foot travelers can cover within the parameters of the diurnal cycle, although this needs to be investigated further.

appears to be the area's central hub. This territory comprises the southern third of the municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez, an area with poor access to the municipal cabecera. The Empty Quarter is currently in the process of achieving the status of an independent municipio and already supports a small periodic market in the cabecera-to-be, Hueycantenango. None of the 72 settlements in the Empty Quarter have attracted development projects from Chilapa-based NGOs.

Agriculture and Related Economic Portfolios

Mexican agricultural is highly bipolar with most producers falling into one of two distinct categories. The first category consists of large and medium scale farmers, often organized as export agribusiness, working irrigated land and utilizing sophisticated mechanization, such as tractors. The second category consists of impoverished small holders, typically working non-irrigated plots with family labor and simple technologies such as hoe or ox team, and with less land than needed to provide the equivalent of a full year's employment at minimum wage (CEPAL 1982; Fox 1995:23). It is this second category of producers that makes up virtually one-hundred percent of Chilapa's agriculturalists.

Studies conducted during the early 1980s by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) ascertained that the Montaña Region of Guerrero contained within it four distinct agricultural zones. The first zone comprises the irrigated valleys of La Canada de Huamuxtitlán, where maíze, rice, and tropical fruits are grown. The second zone, located in the lower and middle Montaña, consists of primarily of *barbechoa* (plow) agriculture practiced on rainfed lands with ox teams. A third zone in

the high sierra is characterized by hoe agriculture (known locally as *tlacolole*), marked by long fallow periods. Finally, a fourth zone centered in the municipios of Malinaltepec, Tlacoapa, and Metlatonoc, specializes in the production of coffee beans (Matías Alonso 1997:30). The Chilapan agrarian economy corresponds most closely with the second agricultural zone distinguished by the UNAM typology, although in highland areas coffee production is present and some tlacolol horticulture persists.

Subsistence maize farming, the cornerstone of many Mesoamerican agrarian communities, remains a common activity in Chilapa. Sanchez Andraca (1999) reports that maize and legumes constitute ninety percent of Chilapa's agricultural output. Intercropped maize is promoted locally by at least one development organization, Altepetl Nahuas. Meza Castillo (2000) found that ninety percent of the regionally grown maize is raised for the producing household's subsistence needs while the remaining ten percent of the crop supplies the urban market of Chilapa, and perhaps Chilpancingo and Acapulco as well.

Chilapa has two agricultural seasons. By far the most important is during the rainy season that lasts from June through November. Farmers cultivate small plots of land (a practice known as *minifundismo*) producing a crop used for subsistence needs, with a portion of varying size earmarked for sale in the local market. These families have come to rely on fertilizers and other inputs obtained from state (or other outside) agencies. These subsidized fertilizers first appeared under the auspices of the SAM, and now arrive through programs administered by the local ayuntamientos and NGOs. Chilapa's agricultural hinterland, especially in upland areas, is largely dependent on

direct precipitation for hydration. The end of the rainy season thus signifies the end of agriculture for the vast majority of rural communities. Some communities located near Chilapa's major rivers (the Atempa and the Ajolotero rivers) and streams (Barranca Coapala) have access to irrigated winter farmlands, that permits a small winter crop season lasting from December through April.[17] Irrigated lands tend to produce a larger variety of crops, including maize, tomatoes, sugarcane, and tropical fruits.

Since the 1980s, the widespread availability of fertilizers has placed more land under permanent cultivation. However, agriculturalists are dependent on ox teams and family labor. Few tractors exist in the municipio; earlier efforts to introduce them ended in failure while incurring large debts in regional communities (Matías Alonso 1997). Although maize is the primary crop, and is often intercropped along with legumes, some communities also specialize in tomato, onion, garlic, squash, or sugarcane. Planting begins with the onset of consistent rain, and the harvest usually commences in late October or early November. During the 1980s, government subsidized fertilizers led to a four-fold increase in maize yields, transforming Chilapa into a major exporter of maize to national markets (Kyle 1995). After the harvest, large numbers of farmers leave the hinterland to work in agricultural fields in northern Mexico or elsewhere. Chilapa's tianguis is noticeably less crowded during the dry season, reflecting the departure of

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[17] Ethnographic fieldwork by Matías Alonso (1997:40-41) indicates that 178 hectares of irrigated agricultural land exists in Chilapa. This is situated mostly around Acatlán, Ahuehueytic, Atenxoxola, Macuixcatlan, Pantitlán, Teponzonalco, and Zompeltepec. Zitlala contains 259 hectares of irrigated land, mainly in Pochahuisco and Topiltepec.

these seasonal migrant laborers.[18]

Pastoralism is also commonly practiced in regional communities. Mestizo cattle herders dominate a micro-region called Las Joyas, which encompasses the northwestern section of Ahuacuotzingo and eastern Zitlala (Matías Alonso 1997). In rural communities, cattle raising and maize farming are practiced side by side, although this sometimes leads to crop loss due to foraging bovines. Goats and pigs are raised as a low cost supply of protein; locally, goat meat is a favorite meal. However, local meat production does not meet demand and so livestock and poultry are imported from Puebla and Morelos. In Chilapa, a very active animal market is present, selling cattle, horses, mules, burros, pigs, goats, turkeys, roosters, chickens, and ducks. Middlemen purchase livestock in Puebla and sell them each week in the local tianguis, while local rural people raise and sell pigs, goats, turkeys, and chickens.[19]

The informal sector represents a significant arena of economic activity. First described by Comitas (1973) under the label of "occupational multiplicity" (also see White 1973; Ellis 1998; and Hart 1973), rural livelihood diversification has been documented as a deliberate adaptive strategy for households (Stark 1991), and as a more or less involuntary, ad hoc response to crisis (Ellis 1998; Davies 1996). In some cases it has clearly accentuated social stratification in rural areas (Ellis 1998; Evans and Ngua

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[18] Malinowski and de la Fuente (1982:90) reported that the largest crowds in Oaxaca's central market occurred during the dry season, exactly the opposite of what I observed in Chilapa's market during the same months.

[19] My weekly census of animals for sale in Chilapa's livestock tianguis determined that goats and pigs were in greatest abundance (per head). However, in terms of actual biomass (determined by weight) available in the marketplace, cattle took first place.

1991) while in others it has contributed to a more equitable distribution of income (Adams 1994; Ellis 1998). It has functioned as a safety net for impoverished rural peoples and as a lucrative means of accumulation for other, richer, families (Ellis 1998; Hart 1996). It can benefit farm investment and productivity or worsen agriculture by withdrawing critical labor resources (Ellis 1998).

The importance of occupational multiplicity in the rural zones of the world is well documented. Beals (1975:15) in his study of rural peoples in Oaxaca[20] concluded that "farming is neither their primary occupation nor is it their main source of income. The ways of making a living are numerous and varied" (Beals 1975:15). Chilapa's farmers rely heavily on a diversification strategy that incorporates subsistence maize farming, migratory wage labor, petty commerce, craft production, swine and poultry production, and participation in government sponsored employment projects, for survival. This matrix of occupational diversification also includes seeking employment opportunities in Chilapa's urban market. Locally, SEDESOL finances a wide range of temporary employment projects. Some of these activities are overseen by the ayuntamiento; many are administered by local nongovernmental organizations. Various other government agencies also underwrite funding for low paying temporary employment. The jobs typically include road construction, bridge building, and the financing of micro-industries centered on reforestation projects, mescal production, and the production and marketing of woven palm goods. The daily minimum wage paid by these projects was $26.00 in 1999, or about US $2.60 daily. Approximately 2,162

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[20] However, the Oaxaca region Beals alludes to is more commercialized than Chilapa.

individuals were temporarily employed by local NGOs in 1999.[21] At least 972 of them were employed 52 weeks per year working 6 days a week for a total weekly salary of 180 pesos. At least another 186 were employed for six months at a similar wage. If we estimate that each of the 2,162 NGO employees heads a family of five, we account for 10,810 municipal residents benefiting from government financed employment projects. Other projects administered by the ayuntamiento, the Ministry of Natural Resources (SEMARNAP), and the Ministry of Women (SM), would drive that number higher still.

Migration in Chilapa

Both rural and urban dwellers in the region are deeply involved in both seasonal and long-term migratory wage labor. For example, between November and May of 1999-2000, I can document approximately ten percent of the municipio of Chilapa's population migrating to northern Mexico to work for agri-businesses. I suspect that the actual percentage is higher still. Long-term migrant communities can be found in Chicago, California, Acapulco, and Mexico City. It is unknown how many seasonal migrants originate from the region; neither the ayuntamientos nor INEGI keep records of this activity.[22] SEDESOL's program for seasonal migratory agricultural workers,

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[21] I am counting 1,262 Sanzekan Tinemi temporary employees, 300 UGNAG, 150 Altepetl Nahuas, 150 OCICI, 150 TTS, and 150 employees from other nongovernmental organizations in my total of Chilapans benefiting from temporary employment projects generated by or with the help of the Mexican government, primarily through SEDESOL.

[22] PROSOM lists 1,012 migrant workers for 1991 from three unspecified regional municipios, and 1,562 in 1992 (Meza Castillo 1994). SEDESOL lists 2,362 in 1994. I have labor contracts for 3,443 in 1995, and was able to copy SEDESOL archives (2000) that listed 9,892 migrant laborers from the municipio of Chilapa in 1998-1999, and 7,448 in 1999-2000. All of these numbers surely represent only a portion of the rural migrant laborers.

Agricultural Laborers, lists 9,892 Chilapan (municipio) participants in 1998-99, and 7,448 in 1999-2000. I was also able to obtain work contracts for 3,443 Chilapan migrant workers and their dependents for the agricultural cycle 1995-1996. The local office director of Agricultural Laborers, who has worked in Chilapa since 1993, states that the number of individuals (from the municipio of Chilapa) passing through his office has hovered consistently around 8,000 per year (personal communication, May 17, 2000). An additional 4,000 seasonal workers consistently originate from the other municipios under consideration (Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, and Zitlala).

Yet all of these numbers reflect only those people participating in SEDESOL's program. Those heading for the US certainly are not involved with Agricultural Laborers, and I suspect that a great many working in Acapulco or other nearby regions likewise do not participate. The National Population Council (CONAPO) estimates that 60,000 (twenty percent) of the 300,000 Mexican seasonal migrants who head to the USA each year originate from Guerrero (El Sol de Acapulco, March 17, 2000). It is certainly risky to speculate how many of those 60,000 migrants are Chilapeños. One admittedly crude measure involves the observation that Guerrero has a total population of 2,620,637 residents (INEGI 1997) of which 3.7 percent (102,353) reside in Chilapa municipio. We could then estimate that 3.7 percent (2,220) of the 60,000 Guerrerenses migrating to the US each year are Chilapeños. Combining the 9,892 participants in SEDESOL's Agricultural Laborers program with the 2,220 international migrants gives us a figure of 13,012 seasonal migrants from the municipio of Chilapa alone, and long-term migrants would add even more.

Yet there are undoubtedly still more migrants. Community leaders from Atzacoaloya estimate that between forty percent to sixty percent of their residents leave the municipio from November to April of each year to work as wage laborers in northern Mexico. A scholar who lived in that community for twelve months in 1995-1996 estimated a fifty percent seasonal migration rate. A reliable informant from Topiltepec estimates that fifty percent of that community migrates during winter months. Table 3.5 (see below) provides some evidence of commensurate migration rates from select regional villages as measured by participation in SEDESOL's Agricultural Laborers program for the 1999-2000 dry season.

Table 3.5

Communities with the Highest Documented Rates of Seasonal Migration, 1999-2000

Community	Population	Seasonal Migration	Percentage Migrating	Zone
Yetlancingo	483	448	92%	3
El Duraznal	502	428	85%	3
Zoquitipa	672	528	78%	2
Tlaxinga	1,183	698	59%	3
Zinantla	352	193	54%	3
S. Caterina	1,259	679	53%	1
Xocolyezintla	868	416	47%	2
Tlacoaxtla	769	364	47%	3
Ayahualulco	2,426	602	40%	3
Alpoyetcingo	1,121	282	25%	3
Pantitlán	1,463	362	24%	3
Tlamixtlahuacan	2,380	372	15%	3

I have heard knowledgeable informants speak of rates as high as seventy percent for San Gerónimo Palantla. Other informants have estimated eighty percent seasonal

migration rates for some local villages. Many of these laborers (especially from San Gerónimo Palantla) are not participating in Agricultural Laborers, and I doubt that they are in the US either.

Assuming that community leaders and government officials estimates are accurate, participants from the two towns of Atzacoaloya and San Gerónimo Palantla combined would add another 1,250 seasonal migrants (giving us a total of 14,262). Residents from many rural communities with whom I conversed spoke of high rates of seasonal migration.[23] When I met with twenty-four Ahuacuotzingo village comisarios in May of 2000, in response to my inquiries, they reported seasonal village migration rates as high as eighty percent. Through records kept by the local Agricultural Laborers office, I can document high rates of seasonal migration for a number of villages in Chilapa. Hence, although I can only document a maximum ten percent seasonal migration rate (9,982 migrants in 1998-1999 out of a municipal population of approximately 100,000), I suspect that the actual number is far larger, perhaps closer to fifteen percent (15,000 migrants).

I would not be surprised if the rate actually surpassed even twenty percent (20,000 migrants). A local DICONSA worker familiar with the countryside speaks of a sixty percent seasonal decline in the rural population, although I have no way of confirming that staggering figure (personal communication, May 16, 2000).[24] Yet during

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[23] Both Ek (1977) and Meza Castillo (1994) report limited seasonal migration occurring after the planting while the crop matures.

[24] As part of my fieldwork, I collected monthly sales figures for each of DICONSA's 93 regional rural stores, provided by the main DICONSA office in Chilapa. Sales figures

the course of my fieldwork, I was struck by the large numbers of friends, neighbors, and acquaintances who had previously worked in the US and spoke some rudimentary English.[25] The family that I boarded with alone had five sons participating in long-term migration to the US. Four of these sons were living in the states of California, Nevada, and Washington, while the fifth was in Chilapa preparing for his return to the US. The sons in the US regularly visited and sent remittances to the family in Chilapa. De Janvrey et al. (1997:51) observe that the region of Mexico where US-bound migration has accelerated the most is the South Pacific (Chiapas, Guerrero, and Oaxaca). In Guerrero the percentage of adults who have migrated increased by eighty-six percent between those under and those over thirty-five years of age (de Janvrey et al. 1997:51). DeWalt et al. (1994) note that Guerrero, along with Chiapas and Oaxaca, has long had the highest rates of economic marginality and out-migration to other regions of Mexico.

I do not have sufficient data to determine if the municipio's seasonal migration has increased, decreased, or remained level over the last decade. The municipio's documented population growth suggests a corresponding increase in seasonal migration as well, in absolute numbers at least. Long term migration to the US may also be on the rise. Meza Castillo (1994:59) reports an increase in the number of seasonal migrant

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dropped significantly during the dry season of 1999-2000. Although I cannot rule out a spurious correlation (factors other than seasonal migration affect rural purchasing patterns) the sales data is consistent with a process of large scale cyclical migration.

[25] I was also struck by the seasonal patterning of public drunkenness in Chilapa. During the rainy season, drunks were common in town, accosting pedestrians, sleeping in the streets, and falling into puddles. By their dress, the majority appeared to be rural peoples. In the dry season, public intoxication was noticeably diminished. I attribute this pattern to the seasonal migration of Chilapa's rural poor.

workers during the years 1991-1994. The restructured subsidy programs are in my view sufficient to keep the percentage of the municipio's population participating in seasonal migration more or less constant. I base this judgement partially on the statements of the local Agricultural Laborers director, who reports that although the number of seasonal migration participants fluctuates over the years, the number originating from the municipio of Chilapa does not vary too far above or below 8,000 per year (personal communication, February 15, 2000).

Chilapa's rural population is thus demonstrated to be deeply inserted into both migratory wage labor markets and local government financed temporary employment projects. A Chayanovian [26] or autarkic interpretation of Chilapa's agriculturalists would be inappropriate because the labor market integration and occupational multiplicity undertaken by contemporary rural peoples is too extensive (also see de Janvrey et al. 1997). Local employment opportunities along with long-term and short-term national and transnational migration all blend into the matrix of occupational multiplicity and are best viewed as complementary activities. Participants in seasonal migration rely on ejidos and comunidades agrarias as refuge subsistence centers and temporary residences

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[26] Chayanov analyzed peasant economic behavior in Tsarist Russia and found that households had a high degree of economic autonomy from the wider society. He intended for his analysis to apply to regions where agriculturalists were isolated from the labor market, lived with low population densities, and could easily buy, sell, and rent land. The analysis is therefore inapplicable to Chilapa, where farmers are intimately tied to labor markets and dependent on external subsidies. Chilapa's rural peoples are better described by reference to Wolf's classic articles (1955, 1957) and more current research by de Janvrey et al. (1997). However, the current Chilapan economy suggests that Chayanov was correct in noting that under permissive market conditions, allocating labor to crafts and trades is the response undertaken by households with agricultural resources insufficient to optimally utilize the family labor force (Chayanov 1966:113).

(de Janvrey et al. 1997). The risks and uncertainties associated with the migratory labor market are ameliorated by the predictable remittances generated through the maintenance of these collective agrarian communities (Fan and Stretton 1980, de Janvrey et al. 1997). The main source of financial remittances for these rural households, however, derives from wage labor, particularly those fortunate enough to participate in the US market (de Janvrey et al. 1997). Stuart and Kearney (1981) estimated that in their fieldsite (situated in rural Oaxaca) the yearly harvest will support a typical household for no more than two and a half months. Ortiz Gabriel (n.d: 28) reports that the value of remittances received from migrants exceeds the total value of agriculture produced in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca and Guerrero. In these circumstances, migration becomes essential for survival. Migration assets have been documented also by both de Janvrey et al. (1997) and Cornelius (1998) as being key elements for escaping poverty in rural Mexico.

Initial expectations regarding the 1992 amendments to Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution was that these modifications would provoke a significant increase in migration from ejido communities. Cornelius (1998) who studied migratory patterns in Mexican ejidos, argues that the Article 27 ejido reforms are likely neither a stimulus to additional migration nor a viable alternative to emigration. Cornelius notes that the reforms in the land tenure system fail to address the underlying causes of most emigration from rural Mexico, especially international migration to the United States. Migration is caused by a lack of local employment opportunities in rural Mexico combined with and the availability of relatively high-wage jobs in the US. The salient

point is that surplus labor (or more specifically, massive unemployment) exists in the rural hinterland and is the driving force behind both seasonal and long term migration. Ejidos in areas such as Chilapa lack significant endowments, particularly irrigation and major capital investments, so that the potential benefits of ejido reform remain irrelevant. Instead, demographic and market pressures reinforce continued rural emigration (Cornelius 1998). Cornelius (1998:229-230) goes so far as to describe the land tenure reforms as being "epiphenomenal." After viewing the Chilapan hinterland, this is an assessment with which I concur.

Members of urban households in Chilapa are also increasingly participating in long-term migration to the United States. Remittances sent by family members to urban households in Chilapa significantly increase local living standards. For example, the family that took me in as a boarder regularly received not only money but luxury items from the four brothers in the US. When I first arrived in the household in August of 1998, laundry was done by hand on a stone washboard and the home's second level was unfinished. When I returned in May of 1999 to undertake the bulk of my fieldwork, the upstairs was finished, and soon a washer and dryer arrived with visiting sons. Two expensive American Staffordshire Terriers were purchased; a computer was added to the home in 2000; and tuition for a younger daughter's enrollment in medical school was available. As the father in the house did not contribute to the family budget and the mother only derived a small irregular income by providing injections to neighbors, the only major sources of income were from the US brothers, my room and board, and perhaps a little from a brother and two sisters residing in Chilapa and Mexico City.

To conclude, migration and occupational multiplicity are common adaptive responses to poverty practiced by both rural and urban households in the fieldsite. However, actual patterns and levels of migration are poorly documented and warrant further investigation. Although cyclical migration rates may be on the rise, SEDESOL's dry season public works projects have provided local employment opportunities that undoubtedly checks further increases.

Conclusions

Chilapa is a central market town and municipal cabecera that provides administrative and economic services to a rural hinterland with high indices of poverty and marginality. The poor rainfed lands are drought stricken for much of the year. This compels large numbers of rural peoples to search for work via seasonal migration or through employment in low paying public works projects. Illiteracy throughout the region is high and the PRI has a virtual monopoly on regional political offices. Living conditions are affected by erosion and deforestation, which pose real challenges to rural communities in particular. Internal differentiation in rural areas is evident not only in microecological anomalies, but most noticeably in regards to access to vehicular transport. This latter phenomenon enables one to view the hinterland as delineated into three distinct transport zones, each with their own unique patterns of economic development. Yet regardless of transport zones, the flood of consumer items, fossil fuel based technologies, and agricultural inputs that entered Chilapa since the 1960s has so altered previously existing economic relationships that the entire region has become dependent on these external supplies (Kyle 1995). The control that the state now wields

over access to these basic resources grants that institution real power over the region's population (Kyle 1995; 2000). It is in this regional marketing hinterland that a local network of NGOs, headquartered in Chilapa, concentrates developmental efforts that effectively extend initiatives of the state. The next chapter introduces these NGOs and their programs.

CHAPTER 4

NGOS IN CHILAPA

I have intentionally limited my definition of NGOs to MSOs and GSOs involved in economic development and human rights. Yet this definition fails to convey the diversity of producer organizations, rural credit unions, human rights centers, and other development entities that are central to this study. During the course of my fieldwork, I came to be acquainted with twenty such local NGOs that varied considerably in organization and mission. In spite of this diversity, the NGOs shared some notable characteristics. These NGOs were not only politically functional to neoliberal development, they were very well attuned to the circumstances of occupational multiplicity in which the rural poor make a living. In Chilapa, NGOs blend in with or otherwise augment the various manifestations of occupational multiplicity: subsistence agriculture, migratory wage labor, petty commodity production, and government financed public works projects, the cornerstones of the regional economy. In this sense, NGOs do not represent some sort of revolutionary and novel force in the countryside. Rather, they complement common economic adaptations employed by the rural poor during periods of structural adjustment. Furthermore, NGOs are also sensitive to the transport constraints, locational considerations, and pre-existing economic agendas that affect economic development, a theme that will be developed in this chapter.

What follows is a brief overview of these NGOs and their activities in the Chilapa region. The chapter is intended as a broad introduction to the organizations, whereas

subsequent chapters will break down their operations in greater detail.

Overview of NGOs

Local NGOs range from small "one-man shows" to large, complex bureaucracies. In Chilapa, the largest NGO is SSS Sanzekan Tinemi with over 1,200 members. It was at one time larger, although it has recently fissioned into several smaller independent NGOs. The Sanzekan Tinemi (SZT) daughter organizations continue to work together quite closely and can mobilize fairly large numbers of people for a given meeting. Johnson (personal communication, July 1, 1999) cites up to 600 participants for an SZT meeting while I myself attended one meeting with 672 registered participants. Indeed, for the year 2000 Sanzekan Tinemi General Assembly meeting held in April of 2000, the organization prepared to host all 1,262 registered members.

Meanwhile, Altepetl Nahuas and Union of Nahua Comuneros of Atzacoaloya, Guerrero, A.C. remain very small organizations. The largest mobilization of members I witnessed from them involved a gathering of approximately seventy individuals for an Altepetl Nahuas meeting. The two NGOs have staffs of three to eight individuals and run small productive projects, or in the case of UCNAG, temporary employment programs funded by SEDESOL.

NGOs most often come under the legal organizational framework of Civil Associations (A.C.s), or Societies of Social Solidarity (SSS). Both types of legal configuration may solicit the government for funding, yet in practice the SSS obtains stronger backing from the state. The SSS is a legal configuration created specifically for interaction with SEDESOL. In Chilapa, Societies of Social Solidarity tended to function

as MSOs and Civil Associations tended to operate as GSOs. During the course of my fieldwork, at least seven Chilapan Societies of Social Solidarity and twelve Civil Associations geared to development and human rights organizing operated locally. Table 3.1 provides an overview of these NGOs and their activities.

Table 4.1

NGOS IN CHILAPA

NGO	Type	Comments
Altepetl Nahuas	AC / GSO	Directed by former INI member / anthropologist Indigenous autonomy, development Wider array of foreign financial sources than most groups Funded by Canadian and German embassies, World Council of Churches, Kellogg Foundation, SEDESOL, INI. Presence in about 8 villages in Chilapa, Copalillo, Zitlala
Apicultores de Chilapa	SSS	Small-scale producer organization funded by SEDESOL
CCA	AC	Originated in 1980 under auspices of COPLAMAR / CONASUPO. Oversees 93 DICONSA rural village stores in Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, Martir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, Zitlala
CGSOOARI	AC	No local office but at times has been linked to UCNAG
Grupo Cultural Ecatal	AC	Small group led by prominent PANista from one of Chilapa's oldest elite families. Promotes cultural events.
JMMP	AC / GSO	Human rights organization, financially dependent on INI / SEDESOL, fearless in confronting military, police, powerful politicians, other NGOs, works in Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, Tixtla, Martir de Cuilapan, Zitlala.
KT	AC	Based in Huecantenango. Builds roads, small-scale development. Director is a member of the Executive Council of the Regional Indigenous Council.
LARSEZ	AC	Involved in land seizures in southern Mexico. Has a

		reputation for radicalism.
Mantis Religiosa	SSS	Not well documented. Based in Tlapa, part of SZT artisan PGO network.
Migro	AC	Not well documented.
MT	SSS	A savings and loan type rural credit bank. Fissioned off from SZT in mid-1990s, operates in Chilapa, Quechultenango.
OCICI	GSO	Strong ties to PRI and funded by state government of Guerrero, undertakes bridge building, road construction, builds comisarias, obtains musical instruments for poor villages, operates throughout Chilapa.
Productores de Escoba	SSS	Small producer organization in Zitlala.
Sanzekan Tinemi	SSS / MSO	Largest regional development organization with 1,262 members, involved in reforestation, artisan network, fertilizer sales, funded largely by SEDESOL, SEMARNAP, Interamerican Bank, operates in Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa, Martir de Cuilapan, Zitlala.
Teponzanai San Angel	SSS	Small producer organization.
TTS	SSS / MSO	Women's Development NGO. Fissioned off from SZT in mid-1990's. Funded largely by SEDESOL, Ministry of Women. Operates in Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa, Martir de Cuilapan.
UCH	AC	Mostly works in the "Empty Quarter" near Huecantenango. Conducts road construction.
UCNAG	AC / GSO	Small development NGO, runs SEDESOL temporary employment projects, promotes indigenous autonomy. Most active in Atzacoaloya and her daughter settlements.
UNEMAC	AC	Headquartered in Zitlala. Small organization involved with widows, orphans, etc.
UTE	AC	Involved with bicitaxi operations.

NGOs may either explicitly or implicitly target certain sectors of society for aid.

These targeted sectors include specific ethnic groups,[1] linguistic groups, corporate groups, communities, women, and campesinos. Both Altepetl Nahuas and UCNAG identify themselves as indigenous NGOs, helping indigenous communities. JMMP aids needy individuals regardless of ethnic background, yet is careful to pay special attention to communities that struggle to speak fluent Spanish. *Unión de Transportistas* (Transport Union) works with these sectoral employees. SZT calls itself a peasant organization, and supplements its image with some indigenous rhetoric. Titekititoke Tajome Sihuame is a women's NGO engaged in administering small-scale development projects that directly involve and benefit females from rural areas. UCNAG targets the communities and anexos of comunidad agraria Atzacoaloya.

Locational and Logistical Characteristics of NGOs

NGOs have areas of operations that are sensitive to the friction of distance and other logistical constraints. Chilapan NGOs typically range no further than that area which may be traveled round-trip during the course of the diurnal cycle. With few exceptions, NGO cadre return to their mother villages or to the city of Chilapa every night.[2] When I inquired about this NGO members often responded that it was unsafe to travel in Guerrero after dark, especially to areas far from Chilapa. Indeed, the US State

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[1] Here I follow the view that ethnicity functions as a means to separate a sympatric population into two or more segments through the creation of some type of boundary. See Barth (1969) for a fuller presentation of this idea.

[2] JMMP cadre were the notable exception, often staying overnight in distant communities such as Hueycantenango in order to conduct two-day long workshops. AN personnel resided in Acatlán, and UCNAG's staff derived from Atzacoaloya, Chilapa, and nearby villages. SZT cadre lived in Chilapa, Topiltepec, Ahuacuotzingo, Ayahualco, and Ayahualulco.

Department issues night-time travel advisories for US citizens traveling through Guerrero. Banditry is not unknown, and guerrillas do operate in Guerrero. Maximum travel distance to any one site for a Chilapan NGO is approximately three and a half hours away from Chilapa. This particular community is visited one to four times a month, and the NGO staff is generally able to return home before dark. This community was in part accepted for affiliation due to its fortuitous location, being situated midway between Acatlán and a family home of the founder of Altepetl Nahuas in Morelos, Mexico. Another rather distant community (for a Chilapan NGO) was situated in a municipio (Copalillo) in which the director of the NGO involved had a politically important close friend.

Virtually all major economic initiatives (those involving the woven palm industry, reforestation, and mescal production) within the municipio of Chilapa tend to take place near the cabecera or alongside strategic transportation arteries. Most communities involved in such projects were often only a five, ten, or fifteen minute truck ride away from Chilapa. For instance, most Sanzekan Tinemi municipal artisan communities (thirteen out of fourteen) were grouped together near Chilapa, either along the highway that links Chilapa to the state capital of Chilpancingo or off feeder roads with easy access to this route. The only outlying community was Xuloxuchicán, a village south of Chilapa visited perhaps one time a year; even it is only an hour away by truck. This situation was facilitated by the fact that Xuloxuchicán was producing crafts for Christmas sale and would typically only need to deliver its products to Chilapa in December.

The women's organization TTS works in twenty-seven communities, almost half of which are situated in a tight circle around Chilapa. Five of the six Sanzekan Tinemi reforestation projects in the municipio are similarly located. The four reforestation projects in the municipio of Ahuacuotzingo are all located in communities along the major Chilapa-Ahuacuotzingo road that links the cabeceras. Other projects outside of the municipio of Chilapa tended to be within close proximity to similarly major transport corridors. Development activities undertaken in the remote areas of the municipio tended to involve electrification projects, road building, and bridge construction. Communities located within the municipio boundaries with poor access to the cabecera of Chilapa tended to have much lesser contact with the major development NGOs. This was particularly noticeable in the mountainous southern portion of the municipio, particularly around comunidad agraria Hueycantenago and communities south of that settlement. In 1999, none of the four major development NGOs headquartered in Chilapa (AN, OCICI, SZT, and TTS) were conducting development activities in the southern third of the municipio's territory. AN initiated a limited presence in Hueycantenango in 2000, with human rights workshops and support for Hueycantenango's drive for independent municipality status. Yet this consisted of advice rather than remunerative projects for the rural poor of Hueycantenango. OCICI performed some construction in Zelocotitlán and JMMP conducted some workshops, particularly in Hueycantenango itself; yet still, the intensity of Chilapa-based NGO activity here was minor compared to that in Chilapa's immediate hinterland. Two Hueycantenago-based NGOs (Kakiztiz Totlajtol and Union of Comuneros of

Hueycantenango) also conducted road building and small-scale development projects, yet difficult access to the cabecera (Chilapa) contributed to the drive in that region to create an independent municipio altogether. Hueycantenango is a two hour and fifteen minute ride to Chilapa by truck over difficult roads. Indeed, the plane ride from Dallas, Texas, to Mexico City took one hour and fifty-seven minutes, involving a shorter duration of time than a trip from the cabecera of Chilapa to Hueycantenango, some twenty miles distant.

Other communities in this part of the back-country, particularly those south of Hueycantenango, lacked roads and bus service to Chilapa, or were left isolated by rainy-season flooding. Recall that I refer to this sector of the municipio as "The Empty Quarter" not due to its lack of communities or population, but due to its inability to attract Chilapa-based NGO projects. How residents from these rural settlements access state subsidies for survival is unclear. It seems likely that communities in the far southern reaches of the municipio (particularly those south of Hueycantenango) form solidarity committees that bypass NGO involvement and directly orient towards SEDESOL. It is also possible that they work with NGOs based in Quechultenango or Hueycantenango. A third possibility is that they do experience hampered access not only to NGOs, but even to SEDESOL development projects. *Yet the fact remains that none of these distant communities are serviced by any development NGOs headquartered in the municipal cabecera.* Conversely, all four of Chilapa's major development NGOs have productive projects operating within the cabecera itself. The development pattern is clear: major NGOs develop the cabecera, its commuter belt, and easily accessible rural

communities. This fairly predictable development pattern finds ideological justification in Aguirre Beltrán's (and the INI's) promotion of economic projects in "demonstration areas" (Aguirre Beltrán 1979:146). These were areas in refuge regions where the "physical and social conditions allow such vigorous action" (Aguirre Beltrán 1979:146). Neither the "diffusion areas" that bordered these demonstration areas nor the terminal loci of seasonal migrant laborers received INI development projects themselves (Aguirre Beltrán 1979:146). In any event, the extent of SEDESOL and INI involvement with the Empty Quarter remains undocumented.

NGOs work in communities with all types of land tenure (ejidos, comunidades agrarias, and pequeños propiadades). I found that NGO activity was not bolstering one form of land tenure at the expense of the others. I originally suspected that NGOs may find it easier to work with residents of open farming communities because project approval would not be subject to ejido bureaucracy politics. Yet this was not the case. Even if PROCEDE was not busy parceling out titles to individual ejidatarios and comuneros it would be quite easy for NGOs to work with small membership organizations from their communities without having to go through a full ejido-meeting vote. In regard to small-scale agricultural economic activity around Chilapa, formal land tenure differences in fact appeared to be epiphenomenal.

I could find no evidence that NGOs avoided zones that may evidence endemic disease regimes. Although scourges such as Chagas disease, cholera, dengue fever,

hemorrhagic dengue fever, and malaria reportedly exist in Chilapa and its hinterland,[3] I could find no data relating to where these diseases were most prevalent. I never heard NGO members express concern about these potential health hazards; there is simply no evidence to suggest that they affect the behavior of NGO members at all.

Administrative Boundaries

NGO operations crossed municipio boundaries quite freely. These administrative jurisdictions were not particularly important barriers to NGO activity. Chilapa-based NGOs worked in not only Chilapa, but in Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala as well. The cabecera of Zitlala, for instance, is within a fifteen minute bus ride to Chilapa. Tixtla is situated between Chilapa and Chilpancingo, transected by an important highway. These municipios tended to draw a lot of projects overseen by Chilapan NGOs. Some NGOs under special circumstances had relationships with individuals or communities in Quecheltenango, Coapala, Olinala, and other municipios. Delineating a precise boundary of NGO activity involves certain difficulties.[4] Very strange idiosyncratic circumstances tend to make it impossible to state that there is an area outside of which they might operate. However, it is fair to say that

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[3] This assertion is based on my discussions with a rural health worker, who reported two cases of Chagas disease, one case of hemorrhagic dengue fever, and isolated cases of malaria and dengue fever in Chilapa in 1999. However, it is conceivable that these illnesses were contracted by migratory workers who spent time in Acapulco, where these disease are better documented. Kyle (personal communication, November 24, 1999) reports a cholera outbreak around Ayahualulco in 1994, which the government denies took place. Curiously, the authorities soon sunk money into a potable water system for that community.

[4] The Human Rights NGO was for example, overseeing a case involving a man from the community of Acatlán who had been imprisoned in Rochester, Minnesota.

the core area of operations of Chilapan NGOs involved communities situated in the municipios of Chilapa, Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala. These municipios straddle the wider economic regions known as Central Region and La Montaña. Locally, this region comprised of the above mentioned municipios is often referred to as the Montaña Baja or Montaña Centro. However some patterns here need to be noted. Development NGOs were only working in those municipios that form part of Central Region (Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla and Zitlala) and not the municipio (Atlixtac) from La Montaña. Conversely, the human rights NGO was frequently involved with individuals from Atlixtac, and only rarely dealt with cases from Region Centro outside of Chilapa and Ahuacuotzingo. I have not yet clarified the causes of this patterning of NGO activity, yet I suspect it has to deal with administrative jurisdictions of SEDESOL programs such as the Temporary Employment Program, which I suspect has a regional mandate for Central Region. I did find archival records of SEDESOL's Regional Funds being utilized in Atlixtac, but no records of Chilapan development NGOs operating in that municipio. The human rights center that works in Atlixtac receives its SEDESOL funds through INI's Justice Attorney channels, which in all likelihood, administers programs in its own unique administrative area.[5] Other locational factors undoubtedly influence patterns of NGO activity. For instance, the

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[5] Curiously, in their literature produced for public audiences, some of Chilapa's more left-wing NGOs acknowledge and thank INI for financial assistance, while never mentioning SEDESOL. Although INI is supervised by SEDESOL, I suspect that the distaste that the cadre of these NGOs hold for former President Salinas, and a desire to disassociate themselves from his pet project, leads them to dislike mentioning SEDESOL by name.

maximum extent of major Chilapan NGOs activity tends to roughly replicate the zone of communities most intimately associated with Chilapa's tianguis. Skinner (1964-1965) noted that the endogamous unit in Chinese peasant society was the regional marketing system, and I think that in broad outline, the range of NGOs in Chilapa tends to show sensitivity to the same locational dynamics.

Indigenous Communities

NGOs, even those that are self-styled indigenous organizations, often in practice work in both indigenous and mestizo communities. Yet the ideology of indigenous development is quite a common theme in Chilapan NGOs, even those that are more properly described as peasant or farmer organizations. Most take indigenous (Nahuatl) names, e.g., Sanzekan Tinemi, Titekititoke Tahome Sihuame, Matotlanejtikan Tomin. Yet those groups that do invoke ethnic labels and tout their "indigenous" identity do so primarily as a part of their fund-raising efforts. There is not, to my knowledge, a constituency for distinctly "indigenous" organizations; rather, the target audience for such claims lie outside the region, either within international funding agencies or within particular branches of the Mexican government. SEDESOL's Indigenous Regional Funds specifically targets indigenous communities, and I suspect, but cannot confirm, that NGOs are careful to position themselves by incorporating indigenous themes so as to better tap into these funds. An example of this is the fact that JMMP, TTS, SZT, and MT all form part of the Indigenous Regional Council of Central Region, even though these groups conduct development activities indiscriminately in both mestizo and indigenous villages.

It appears that most NGOs leaders are mindful of the hand that feeds them, as the best funded organizations tended to have fairly moderate literature available for the public. Strident Marxism and militant Zapatismo were themes that did not anchor NGO public discourse, although among the left-leaning NGO cadre members Che Guevara was by all appearances a popular icon. (One member decorated his office with Che posters while another commonly walked around town in a t-shirt bearing the guerrilla leader's image). However, those NGOs that were most openly pro-Zapatista or consistently radical were relatively small organizations. Yet the important point is that they did indeed receive enough government funding from SEDESOL to keep both their cadre members living comfortably and resources or services flowing to the rural poor. Some of these more radical NGOs were in one way or another associated with the Guerrero Council of 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance (CG500ARI) a group with chapters nationwide and throughout Latin America that has successfully accessed substantial sums of money at the national level. The state appears to tolerate political dissent in funded NGOs such as these, so long as it is of a legal and non-violent nature. The NGOs in Chilapa such as LARSEZ that participate in illegal or violent land seizures appear to face serious challenges in accessing SEDESOL funds.

Several of Chilapa's NGOs (most notably Sanzekan Tinemi and Altepetl Nahuas) are members of National Union of Autonomous Regional Peasant Organizations (UNORCA) while a third (UCNAG) has ties to CG500ARI and the National Indigenous Association for Autonomy (ANIPA). UNORCA is an autonomous organization lobbying on behalf of small-scale producers with state affiliates ranging from the PRI to PRD. A

high ranking Sanzekan Tinemi cadre member is also a UNORCA spokesman and in 2000, he organized a national UNORCA meeting in Chilapa itself. UNEMAC has ties to a national organization bearing the same name.

NGO Leadership

NGO leadership and staff ran the gamut from those with little formal education to those well-schooled. One held a Ph.D. in anthropology and was a former director of the local INI [16] office while his secretary held a bachelor's degree in psychology. Sanzekan Tinemi's Executive Committee came from more modest formal educational backgrounds, although their technical staff consisted of individuals who were often graduates of regional or national universities. Leadership positions were held by both self-identified Nahuatl speaking Indians and mestizos. Of the six NGOs that I worked most closely with, all had literate leaders. Only one leader, the director of TTS, was female. Sanzekan Tinemi had at least one high ranking female cadre member from the community of Trapiche Viejo in Ahuacuotzingo. She had not received an education as a child, but learned to read and write as an adult. Her husband had a leadership position in the reforestation area of Sanzekan Tinemi. Sanzekan Tinemi's Artisans division counted a university educated director; a high ranking cadre member with a Masters Degree in Science, and a cadre member with a *Licenciatura* (Bachelor's Degree) in Public Administration from the Autonomous University of Guerrero (UAG). JMMP had two advanced law students on staff, both from the UAG, and the office was directed by a

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[16] In fact, this individual was recently selected by the Fox administration to become the national director of the INI.

Priest. One case worker was a teacher and another was a nurse.

These leaders and cadre came from a variety of political backgrounds. The smaller NGOs tended to be the most left-wing. One small NGO leader was a former Workers Party (PT) activist who had leveled kidnaping accusations at the military in 1997. He later joined the then ruling PRI and was elected as a *suplente* (a municipal-level official) in November of 1999. Another was a *regidor* (councilman) for the leftist PRD while a third reportedly had been an advisor to Subcommander Marcos of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), although I am unable to confirm this story. One cadre member had a background in liberation theology.

The large development organization Sanzekan Tinemi had a rather interesting leadership alliance between local campesinos and individuals who I describe as neoliberal technocrats, (university graduates in public administration, science, etc.). My impression was that the technocrat faction held considerable power. Most of the technocrats were monolingual mestizos, some from out of state. Smaller groups like UCNAG were meanwhile staffed by leaders immersed in the ideology of indigenous autonomy, fluent in both Nahuatl and Spanish and inspired by events in Chiapas. Cadre members of some of the more leftist organizations were highly critical of the Mexican Army, and at least one member gave quite charitable characterizations of the insurgent Revolutionary People's Army, one of two local guerrilla groups that was sporadically active during the course of my fieldwork.

In Chilapa, NGOs work in both pro-PRI and pro-PRD communities, although it is the PRI that tends to dominate Chilapa's hinterland. An anonymous SEMARNAP

employee with much regional experience stated that Chilapa's major development NGO, Sanzekan Tinemi, was relatively apolitical, especially when compared to farmer leagues from other municipios, such as the Counsel of Fioles Mayores. During elections the political rallies for the director of OCICI (who was also a PRI candidate) appeared to be attended en masse by mobilized OCICI beneficiaries. The JMMP and Sanzekan Tinemi conducted election day monitoring in association with the Civic Alliance and the Citizen's Movement for Democracy, both non-partisan monitoring organizations. Curiously, "left-wing" NGOs tended to downplay their ties to SEDESOL while "right-wing" groups like Sanzekan Tinemi felt no need to toy with this issue. (This right-wing characterization is a bit of a stereotype; Sanzekan Tinemi is affiliated with UNORCA; some of its leaders are PRD sympathizers; and they often promote new campesino movement agendas).

Most of the leadership and cadre of NGOs were uninvolved in any major public controversies. There were exceptions however. One leader from a Triple S in San Angel was accused of misappropriating the group's funds. Another NGO director was accused of rape, an event that if true, is certainly at variance with the phrase "*defensa de los derechos indígenas*" (defense of Indiginous rights) posted above his office door. Both these events made their way into the local and state newspapers. A third director's name occasionally popped up in the newspapers with fraud or incompetence accusations listed next to it. This individual had a fairly wide-spread reputation for corruption, although to my knowledge he managed to avoid any legal entanglements.

In terms of leadership selection, the MSO / SSS type of organization often met

conventionally accepted norms of democratic practice. Periodic elections were held that allowed even the poorest PGO members to vote their conscience. Conversely, GSOs / ACs were never designed to be formally accountable to beneficiaries, and among them there were major differences in how they interacted with the rural poor that they represented. The leadership and cadre of the GSO JMMP clearly demonstrated ethical behavior that in any conventional terms was beyond reproach. GSOs like OCICI maintained patron-client relations linking self (or government) appointed caciques and the rural poor. The leader of one such cacique-type GSO / AC had, to the best of my knowledge, about half the population of his home village wishing him dead.[6]

Inter-NGO Relationships

Relations between Chilapan NGOs ranged from friendly to frosty. The human rights NGO JMMP was placed in an awkward position when a primary grassroots organization from the community of Papaxtla approached them with a human rights complaint directed against their parent organization, a major development NGO. Sixty-three thousand pesos earmarked for an artisan project in Papaxtla had been subsequently redirected by the NGO to another community. The Papaxtla PGO protested; the parent development NGO found itself with a formal human rights complaint directed against it by its own daughter PGO, which in turn was being championed by JMMP. The director of a small development NGO was brought in to mediate. He proved to be ineffective in this capacity, and eventually the SEDESOL bureaucracy was dragged into the issue as

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[6] This assertion is based on the testimonies of several long term residents of the community in question. I found these informants to be reliable and credible.

well. The whole episode created tension between, on one hand, the two development NGOs, and on the other hand, JMMP.[7]

Another common spat among groups centered on the issue of who legitimately represented the Indian communities. One NGO director called the leader of another local NGO a "traitor to the cause in Chiapas."[8] He in turn was said by members of a third NGO to have "approached the Zapatistas and asked for permission to work with them, but they refused because he is too corrupt."[9] Another NGO leader called a nearby development NGO "mestizos waiving an indigenous banner, but we can take the flag back at any time."[10] One NGO was said by the director of another to "lack a social base in the villages."[11] Finally, another NGO leader who had claimed to have been kidnaped and tortured by the army was dismissed as "lacking credibility" by a member of another NGO.[12] Still, by and large the NGOs cooperated amicably and were united together through their membership in the Regional Indigenous Council. These leaders attended

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[7] JMMP reports that at least seven communities had their SEDESOL Temporary Employment Program checks canceled. I obtained a photocopy of Papaxtla's check, made out to its comisario, from JMMP's archives. The development NGO maintains that the money was redirected to another unspecified community. According to JMMP, SEDESOL (probably through its FONAES branch) resolved the issue by issuing a new check for 65,000 pesos to Papaxtla, and also paid the other communities as well.

[8] Personal communication, anonymous NGO leader, July 15, 1999.

[9] Personal communication, anonymous NGO member, August 6, 1999.

[10] Personal communication, anonymous NGO director, July 18, 1999.

[11] Personal communication, anonymous NGO director, October 2, 1999.

[12] Personal communication, anonymous NGO member, October 17, 1999.

each others public events and ceremonies, and disputes were not advertised in public.

Chilapa's Major NGOs: SSS Sanzekan Tinemi

The local NGOs themselves vary a great deal in terms of size and mission. Sanzekan Tinemi along with its daughter organizations and membership organizations, is the largest regional NGO. Sanzekan Tinemi can trace its roots back to 1980, when the Community Counsel of Supply first originated in Chilapa. During the 1980s, rural supply and access to fertilizer were the main objectives of the SZT antecedent organization. Through partnership with DICONSA, which provided infrastructural support, this organization gradually evolved into the Triple S Sanzekan Tinemi in 1990. It was functionally divided into "areas": (1) an artisans network; (2) reforestation; (3) rural women's organization; (4) a savings and loan program; (5) aid to producers, primarily through fertilizer sales; (6) technical assistance; and (7) rural stores. By 1995 some of these areas (i.e. the women's organization, the savings and loan) had fissioned off into independent Social Solidarity Societies. By the time of my fieldwork, (1998-2000) Sanzekan Tinemi consisted of an Artisans Area, Reforestation, and Aid to Producers. By 1998 the artisans area boasted 35 primary grassroots organizations comprised of 522 members representing 386 families. These PGOs were dispersed primarily in the municipio of Chilapa, but some existed in Olinala, Taxco, and at one time even in the state of Puebla. The artisans area had been receiving heavy financial backing from both SEDESOL and the Interamerican Development Bank.

Table 4.2

SANZEKAN TINEMI ARTISAN AREA 1998

Name of PGO	Location	Members	Families	Zone
1. Camino y La Esp.	Chilapa	15	10	1
2. Ocuituco	Ocutuico	15	15	1
3. Amate Amarillo	Amate Amarillo	22	17	1
4. Ayahualulco Xochilt	Ayahualulco	35	30	3
5. Trapiche Viejo	Trapiche Viejo	15	15	2
6. Dos Arroyos	Amate Amarillo	20	20	3
7. La Providencia	La Providencia	20	15	1
8. Santa Ana	Santa Ana	20	15	1
9. Acaquila	Acaquila	30	20	3
10. Grupo Juveniles	Topiltepec	17	10	3
11. Acatlán	Acatlán	13	8	1
12. Lodo Grande	Lodo Grande	15	10	1
13. Xalitla	Xalitla	10	10	3
14. Carpinteros de Taxco	Taxco	24	22	-
15. Alternativas	Chilapa	10	10	1
16. Tetitlán	Tetitlán	15	12	3
17. Ahuihuiyuco	Ahuihuiyuco	20	15	3
18. Ayahualulco 2	Ayahualulco	15	12	3
19. Zompeltepec	Zompeltepec	25	25	3
20. La Esperanza	La Esperanza	30	20	3
21. Zitlalli	Chilapa	15	8	1
22. Mujeres en Busca	Topiltepec	17	16	3
23. Luz y Alegria	Chilapa	15	10	1
24. El Limon	El Limon	11	10	1
25. Artesanos de Olinala	Olinala	15	15	-
26. Xiloxuchicán	Xiloxuchicán	16	16	3
27. Cuahetenango	Cuahetenango	10	10	1
28. Ayahualco	Ayahualco	10	10	1
29. Xochimilco	Xochimilco	10	10	1
30. Cuadrilla Nueva	Cuadrilla Nueva	10	10	1
31. El Refugio	El Refugio	10	8	1
		Total Members 525	Total Families 386	

DICONSA and the Community Council of Supply (not technically part of Sanzekan Tinemi, but located in the same compound) were overseeing rural stores and counted on ninety-one retail outlets located in Chilapa, Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Mártir de Cuilapan, Quechultenango, Tixtla, and Zitlala. The savings and loan area (now and independent SSS) was drawing clients from forty-four communities from several municipios (Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa de Alvarez, Mártir de Cuilapan, Quechultenango, and Zitlala) and financing itself through FONAES, INI, and in the past, SEDESOL's Program of Aid to Production, Storage, and Distribution of Maize. Sanzekan Tinemi Reforestation has planted over 660,000 trees in fourteen communities in four municipios. In addition it has planted 1,050,000 maguey plants in seven communities located in four municipios. Aid to Producers was by 1995 working in twenty-two communities, being financed primarily through SEDESOL and FONAES. SZT is heavily financed by numerous government agencies, particularly SEMARNAP, SEDESOL, ST, and SM. Chapter Five examines Sanzekan Tinemi in greater detail.

Table 4.3

SANZEKAN TINEMI REFORESTATION PROJECTS 1999

Community	Municipio	Families Involved	Hectares	Number of Plants	Pesos Allotted	Zone
1. Topiltepec	Zitlala	288	44	88,667	146,300	3
2. La Esperanza	Mártir de Cuilapan	300	44	88,667	146,300	2
3. Oxtoyahualco	Ahuacuotzingo	107	22	44,000	72,600	2
4. Trapiche Viejo	Ahuacuotzingo	95	44	88,667	146,300	2
5. Agua Zarca	Ahuacuotzingo	100	17	34,000	56,100	2
6. Xocoyezintla	Ahuacuotzingo	30	17	34,000	56,100	2
7. Tlalixtlahuacan	Chilapa	100	22	44,000	72,600	3

8. La Providencia	Chilapa	70	12	24,000	39,600	1
9. Santa Ana	Chilapa	35	20	40,000	66,000	1
10. Ayahualco	Chilapa	15	20	40,000	66,000	1
11. Santa Ana	Chilapa	35	20	40,000	66,000	1
12. El Peral	Chilapa	35	20	40,000	66,000	3
13. Xicotlan	Chilapa	28	12	24,000	39,600	3
14. Pantitlán	Chilapa	25	12	24,000	39,600	3

Altepetl Nahuas

Altepetl Nahuas A.C., (AN) headquartered in Acatlán, conducts small-scale development projects in Chilapa and nearby municipios. These projects include the construction of water tanks, irrigation projects, beekeeping, and the raising of chickens, pigs and rabbits. It receives funding from foreign embassies, private corporations, and the state, particularly SEDESOL via INI (at least 100,000 pesos from SEDESOL / INI in 1999). Altepetl Nahuas originated in 1991, under the auspices of a former INI coordinating center director, who obtained a Civil Association licence in 1993. AN defines itself as an "OSING" (Nongovernmental Indigenous Social Organization) that bases its work on local participation with community forces on a small-scale and promotes alternative forms of social action in indigenous regions. It is a small organization with about four or five full-time employees, aiding between 30 and 150 community members from five or six villages in various projects at any given time. Its leadership is quite involved in the international movement for indigenous autonomy and rights. They have participated in forums sponsored by the Rigoberta Menchu Tum foundation and in meetings overseen by the United Nations. Although the leadership produces literature regarding these issues and promotes political consciousness-raising,

its base membership appears to be more interested in credit for beekeeping and other less politicized matters.[13] Altepetl Nahuas has been quite successful at attracting foreign funding, its blend of nongovernmental and state funding gives it a relative degree of financial independence from the state, a trait lacking in many other local NGOs. Table 4.4 outlines the activities of Altepetl Nahuas as determined by fieldwork and Matías Alonso (1995).

Table 4.4

ALTEPETL NAHUAS ACTIVITIES 1992-2000

Project	Year	Community	Municipio	Funding	Zone
Installation of tortilla mill and tortilla store	1992	Atlaca	Tixtla	?	3
Construction of commissary municipal	1993	Zempeltepec	Chilapa	?	3
Purchase of a candle making machine	1994	Acatlán	Chilapa	?	1
Construction of a water storage tank	1994	Xochitempa	Chilapa	?	3
Installation of a tortilla mill	1994	Zempeltepec	Chilapa	?	3
Agricultural work	1994	Xochitempa	Chilapa	?	3
Legal aid	1993 1994	15 villages in 3 municipios	Chilapa Zitlala	?	?

[13] One AN cadre member explained to me that he was against SEDESOL's temporary employment program, because it undermined reciprocal communal labor by replacing it with a wage-labor work ethic. Indeed, although AN received SEDESOL financing, it was not working with the temporary employment program.

			Tixtla	?	
Purchase of musical instruments	1994	Zompeltepec	Chilapa	?	3
Water tanks	1999	Tuleman	Huitzuco de los Figueroa	Hands United	Exterior to region
Nopal farming	1999	Nejapa	Chilapa	SEMARNAP Germany	1
Bee keeping	1999	Acatlán	Chilapa	Alianza para al Campo Canadian Embassy Germany	1
Bread store	1999	Apango	Martir de Cuilapan	Germany	2
Rabbit husbandry pigs, chickens escoba, fertilizer	1999	Zitlala	Zitlala	SEDESOL	1
Maguey cultivation	1999	Zitlala	Zitlala	SEMARNAP	1
Irrigation	1999	Teponzanalco	Chilapa	?	2
Water tank	1999	Zicapa	Copalillo	?	Exterior to Region
Legal aid	2000	Hueycan.	Chilapa	?	3

UCNAG

Union of Nahua Comuneros of Atzacoaloya, Guerrero, A.C. (UCNAG) is likewise a small-scale NGO providing temporary employment opportunities funded by SEDESOL (at least 64,000 pesos from SEDESOL / INI in 1999 earmarked for somewhere between five and 22 villages; some UCNAG reports state 20,000 pesos for

twenty-two villages). Its main office is in the cabecera of Chilapa rather than in Atzacoaloya proper. UGNAG has ties to ANIPA and the National Indigenous Congress. At one time UCNAG was a part of CG500ARI, although there current links with this organization are unclear. In 1998, UCNAG negotiated directly with CG500ARI and obtained 150 thousand pesos to underwrite temporary employment projects in nine Chilapan villages, (Acatlán, Ahuixtla, Atzacoaloya and two of its colonias, San Gerónimio Palantla, Teponzanalco, Xolotepec, and Zacapezco) with five percent of the money being kept by UCNAG for administrative costs. In this case, CG500ARI acted as an interlocutor between UCNAG and state authorities, adding a new level of non-governmental resource allocation decision-making into the matrix. UCNAG claims that its work centers on indigenous human rights, economic development, and self-determination. Cadre often refer to "our Chiapas brothers" and are clearly inspired by events in that state. UCNAG supports recognition of indigenous customs in the Constitution and claims no official ties to political parties, although it is well known that the director is a PRD regidor. Their director notes that they have differences with other NGOs because "some are with the government and others are not."[14] UCNAG began functioning in 1986, and became an A.C. in 1995.

OCICI

OCICI, headquartered in Chilapa, is charged with the construction of roads, bridges, comisarias, basketball courts, and rural electrification. OCICI has also purchased musical instruments for seventy regional communities. It works throughout

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[14] Personal communication July 10, 1999.

several municipios, even in difficult to access zones. Its director, who was killed in an automobile accident during the course of my fieldwork, was at various points in his career an activist for any number of mutually antagonistic political parties (the PARM, PT, PRD, PRI, and CG 500 ARI). In 1997 he disappeared for a week only to emerge with the sensational claim that he had been kidnaped and tortured by the army. This incident was reported widely by both the national and international press, although locally I met a number of informants who questioned the veracity of this leader's story. In 1999, he joined the government party (PRI) and later became a suplente. OCICI has very close ties to the government of the state of Guerrero and best resembles an old style patron-client network.

OCICI is tasked with administering the types of infrastructural projects designed to better connect the distant areas of the municipio with the cabecera. A cursory examination of OCICI's area of operations reveals a plethora of projects throughout the northern half of Zone Three. However, no OCICI projects have been conducted in the "Empty Quarter. "

Table 4.5

OCICI PROJECTS (Economic Zones in Parentheses)

Comisarias Built	Road Maintenance or Construction	Bridges Built	Electrical Service
1. Ahuejhuetec (3)	Ahuacuotzingo (2)	Cuaquimixco (3)	Ahuejhuetec (3)
2. Cuahetenango (3)	Alcazacatlán (3)	Teomatitlán (1)	Ahuixtla (3)
3. Calhuaxtitlán (3)	Axopilco (3)	Zinantla (3)	Bella Vista del Rio (3)
4. Centzingo (3)	Celotepec (3)		Cuomontepec (3)
5. El Paraíso (1)	Cuadrilla Nueva (1)		Papaxtla (2)
6. La Manzanilla (1)	Maquisetlán (3)		Zompeltepec (3)

7. Los Amates (1)	**Mezcala (3)**
8. Mira Flores (3)	**Ocuituco (3)**
9. San Geronimo (3)	**Tlaxinga (3)**
10. Sulchuchu (3)	**Trigamola (2)**
11. Tlaxinga (3)	**Xiloxuchicán (3)**
12. Trigamola (1)	**Xolotepec (3)**
13. Vista Hermosa (3)	**Zelocotitlán (3)**
14. Xiloxuchicán (3)	**Zacapezco (3)**
15. Xochitempa (3)	
16. Xolotepec (3)	
17. Zacapezco (3)	
18. Zinantla (3)	
19. Zinzintitlán (3)	
20. Zoquitipa (2)	

JMMP

The Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights José María Morelos y Pavon, A.C., headquartered in Chilapa, is a human rights center that provides free legal services to individuals suffering from human rights abuses, and especially attempts to reach the poor. It is run by a local Catholic priest and maintains two advanced law students in the office along with several other case workers. It monitors government security agencies, assists communities in coping with the legal technicalities of agrarian reform, and promotes human rights through community workshops. JMMP's activities sometimes place the center into conflicts of interest with the Mexican army, police, government agencies such as the *Procuraduria Agraria* (Agrarian Attorney General) and PROCEDE, and even other NGOs, yet none the less, funding continues year after year. Although the source of their financing ultimately originates from SEDESOL, the decision-making organ for the approval of JMMP funding appears to be the National INI office in Mexico City, which reviews JMMP bi-annual reports to assess the worthiness of

continued financial support. JMMP will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six.

TTS

This SZT daughter organization continues to grow in size and scope of operations. Funding for this rural women's organization appears to be more secure since it became an independent SSS. It recently underwent a change in leadership, yet continues to work closely with Sanzekan Tinemi.

Table 4.6

1999 TTS AREA OF OPERATIONS

Location	Municipio	Enterprises	Zone
1. Acateyahualco	Ahuacuotzingo	Training	3
2. Agua Zarca	Ahuacuotzingo	Training	2
3. Ahuacuotzingo	Ahuacuotzingo	Training	2
4. Rincon de Cosahuapa	Ahuacuotzingo	Training	3
5. San Juan Las Joyas	Ahuacuotzingo	Training	3
6. Tecomapa	Ahuacuotzingo	Training	3
7. Tepetlatipa	Ahuacuotzingo	Store, Molino	3
8. Ahuihuiyuco	Chilapa	Training	2
9. Atzacoaloya	Chilapa	Training	1
10. Cuadrilla Nueva	Chilapa	Swine	1
11. El Limon	Chilapa	Swine, Store, Molino	1
12. El Paraíso	Chilapa	Credit, Store, Housing	1
13. La Providencia	Chilapa	Swine, Store	1
14. Los Amates	Chilapa	Swine	1
15. Los Pinos	Chilapa	Credit, Store, Housing	1
16. Nuevo Amanecer	Chilapa	Swine	1
17. San Juan	Chilapa	Training	1
18. Teomatitlán	Chilapa	Training	1
19. Tepotzcantla	Chilapa	Training	1
20. Zinzintitlán	Chilapa	Training	1
21. Apango	Mártir	Swine	2
22. Omeapa	Tixtla	Training	3
23. Plan de Guerrero	Tixtla	Training	2
24. Ayozinapa	Zitlala	Training	3
25. Tlapahualpa	Zitlala	Training	3

26. Topiltepec	**Zitlala**	**Swine**	**3**
27. Zitlala	**Zitlala**	**Swine**	**1**

Primary Grassroots Organizations and Local Communities

Primary grassroots organizations (PGOs) exist to further the interests of their own members and are directly accountable to them (Howe 1997:821). Typically, they are small groups of individuals who organize around some activity (i.e. basket weaving) and approach NGOs (MSOs or GSOs) for support and affiliation. The SZT craft work division, for instance, has over 500 members in several dozen primary grassroots organizations spread out in thirty-five communities. PGOs tend to have shorter life spans than NGOs, as members either grow weary of the project or move on to other activities. For instance, one such PGO consisting of teenagers associated with SZT in Topiltepec recently collapsed. However, Topiltepec soon organized another PGO consisting of older individuals who were soon affiliated with SZT again. SEDESOL funding for these groups must be approved on a yearly basis, and from a look at Sanzekan Tinemi's archives, there appears to be a good deal of paperwork involved. Depending on the PGO's relationship to SEDESOL, it may formally be constituted as a solidarity-style committee, with a president, secretary, and treasurer forming the organizational nuclei. SZT's artisan area had yearly fluctuations in the number of PGOs to which they were affiliated. In 1996, SZT artisans boasted 26 PGOs with 510 members; this rose to 32 PGOs in 1997 with 662 members, and then dropped to 31 PGOs with 525 members in 1998. These PGOs were also classified as either "active" or "in consolidation"

depending on their current activity levels. The fluctuating fortunes of PGOs are in all likelihood indicative of the underlying strategy of occupational multiplicity that households employ to survive. Since no single source of employment provides a reliable and adequate income, rural families typically expand or contract their portfolio of remunerative activities depending on the perceived costs and benefits associated with each activity. Some PGOs, for instance, will operate only seasonally. Members from other PGOs may seasonally migrate to other areas of the state or nation, yet part of the organization may remain in the village and still continue craft production (see Aleman Mundo 1997). One development NGO leader (personal communication, February 5, 2000) informed me that perhaps thirty-five percent of her base membership (roughly 300 individuals) migrated seasonally to other regions of Mexico or the US each year, while a high ranking cadre member of another NGO estimated that only four percent to five percent of the base membership in his area of responsibility participated in seasonal migration (cadre member, personal communication, February 15, 2000).

Uphoff (1986) found that PGOs are most likely to flourish when required inputs are episodic rather than sustained. This is an indication of how PGO activity blends into the overall strategy of occupational multiplicity practiced by rural households. Predictable profits and readily perceptible benefits accrued over short periods also contribute to the viability of PGOs in any given region. Conditions in which benefits do not flow to individuals who did not contribute to the PGO project also helps sustain these organizations (Howes 1997:821).

PGOs and their communities will seek out funding and other resources through

any and all conceivable channels, so it is generally inappropriate to conceptualize any one community as an "OCICI community," a "Sanzekan Tinemi community." For instance, when OCICI's director died, their was much speculation as to where former beneficiaries would now turn for resources. Unless a new strong-man emerged to direct OCICI, former recipients were likely to drift off to a number of new employment projects, probably those directed by Sanzekan Tinemi, Altepetl Nahuas, or UCNAG. However, a government-appointed lawyer soon was directing OCICI operations and the organization continues to function in its usual style.

PGOs are common in communities with all types of land tenure systems. Membership organizations are typically community-based organizations (CBOs).[15] That is, the members all derive from a common community rather than from a number of independent ones. Aside from PGOs, preliminary research suggests that rural communities typically have development committees working directly with the local village councils. The comisarios of some local villages have traditionally been quite strong, while in other villages the office is rather weak, and office-holders must seek a consensus before any important decisions are made. The degree, if any, to which village councils and development committees may influence the behavior of PGO personnel remains undocumented. I suspect that there is a wide variety of relationships, each dependent on the peculiar local histories of the regional villages.

Inhabitants of rural communities in Chilapa engage in various remunerative

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[15] "Community" is another slippery concept in anthropology. See Redfield (1960) for an essay on communities; see Mulhare (1996) for a literature review of anthropological conceptions of "community."

activities, depending largely on local micro environmental features and their locations relative to Chilapa and major transport arteries (Kyle 1995).[16] In the present case, PGOs located near good roads participate more often in productive development projects than PGOs in distant, inaccessible communities. Communities deep in the hinterland, when they can attract financing, tend to become involved in temporary employment projects geared towards infrastructural improvement (road and bridge building, comisarias etc.). The regional NGOs in particular had more intimate relations with PGOs located close to major transport corridors. The pattern that emerges is one of governmental agencies located in a central market town, overseeing the search for comparative advantage of several selected rural communities situated on strategic transport corridors, coupled with a more distant, rural hinterland whose residents' primary participation in the world market consists in performing as a low-paid labor reserve.

Summary

It is a three-tiered system comprised of (1) the state and its agencies, particularly SEDESOL; (2) NGOs, and (3) PGOs or individual beneficiaries, through which much of the finances for local development flow in Chilapa. Under the auspices of SEDESOL, a defacto alliance has emerged between right-wing technocrats and the leftist grassroots activists who staff NGOs. The programs organized by these groups are augmented by international sources such as the Interamerican Development Bank and various foreign embassies. These funds channeled through NGOs underwrite both economic

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[16] See Chisholm (1962) and Thünen (1966) for essays on the locational factors affecting rural settlement and production.

development and human rights organizing centered in Chilapa, a primate marketing center with market and administrative functions serving as the major centralizing institutions for a population of over 100,000 rural inhabitants dispersed in over 200 separate settlements. These projects represent federal, state, and local government attempts to generate employment projects for this vast hinterland, which is populated by large numbers of unemployed individuals, particularly during the dry season. Chapters Five and Six analyze in greater detail how these resources are deployed by Chilapa's major NGOs in pursuit of developing this region.

CHAPTER 5

HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZING IN CHILAPA

The struggle of rural peoples to maintain economic and political self-determination and even a distinct cultural identity in the face of increased incorporation into national and international economic and political spheres has emerged as an important topic of anthropological and policy discussion. As intermediaries between national and international institutions and local communities, NGOs are frequently placed in a delicate position with regard to issues involving self-determination, human rights, and integration. This is certainly the case in rural Chilapa, where NGOs of all types have proliferated in recent years. This chapter examines the manner in which one particular organization, the Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights José María Morelos Y Pavon has approached these problems in its work with rural communities, including both indigenous and mestizo villages, in the Chilapan hinterland. I argue that despite the stated intent of their leaders and notwithstanding efforts to foster a contrary image, in the final analysis this local human rights group (and, by extension, a multitude of similar organizations) acts in tandem with the Mexican government in furthering the state's economic and political norms at the expense of local custom.

This observation is consistent with the generally accepted view in legal anthropology that within a single society there may exist several legal systems complementing, supplementing, or conflicting with each other (Collier 1973; Durkheim 1933; Nader and Metzger 1963; Pospisil 1971). In the case of southern Mexico, at least

two distinct legal levels stand out. At the village level a customary legal system predominates. Sierra (1995:228) correctly points out that the so called customary law is a product of colonization and cannot be viewed as a cultural trait of autochronous origin. Sierra further contends that continuous state-village interaction renders the concept of legal levels problematic in southern Mexico (Sierra 1995:228). I argue that historically, the state had little in the way of incentive or logistical ability to interfere in purely internal disputes of remote villages, a situation suggesting that the distinction between state and village legal levels remains analytically useful. In the customary village legal arena, both indigenous and mestizo communities have traditionally been granted considerable discretion in adjudicating matters that the state was unable, or unwilling, to investigate. Typically these conflicts are settled through reconciliation, compromise, and mediation (Collier 1973; Ek 1977). These techniques may be complemented by peer pressure or outright coercion. In serious cases, punishments administered by community authorities have been documented to range from torture (Kyle and Yaworsky 2000) to death (Nash 2001:60-61; Sierra 1995:227). Such cases involving death tend to provoke some sort of reaction from the state, and those executed may be buried secretly and the matter concealed (Dennis 1987).

Yet litigants in all types of cases generally have had the option of appealing to the second legal level, the state courts. Although this mechanism for challenging local law is not new to rural Mexico, impoverished residents of remote areas often lacked the financial, legal, linguistic, and logistical resources to effectively mount such an appeal. Many of the purely internal legal disputes of these regions were for all practical purposes

the domain of the common law of the village, not the national law of the state. Yet there has been a long-standing campaign promoted by state officials to further the scope of this national law. I argue that human rights organizations such as the JMMP are best conceived of as pertaining to this second, state-level legal system (that in turn is increasingly influenced by international human rights norms). These organizations are funded and mandated by the state to uphold both Mexican constitutional law and norms consistent with those outlined in the UN Declaration on Human Rights (1948).

Although the members of the JMMP are critics of the economic policies of both the former PRI and current PAN administrations, the human rights center is 100 percent financed by the Mexican government through SEDESOL via INI. The local activities of JMMP have at times placed them at odds with the Mexican Army, various police agencies, the Procuraduria Agraria and its PROCEDE program, and many powerful political, community, and NGO leaders.[1] Yet year after year, SEDESOL and INI approve funds that permit this work to continue. This may be somewhat perplexing to observers who have dismissed much of SEDESOL's other activities as an exercise in the reconcentration of presidential powers, or a reconfiguring of corporatism (e.g., Fox 1995). What does the funding of JMMP tell us about the PRI in the 1990s?

Bailey (1994:101-102) distinguished between liberalization, which PRONASOL was to foster, and democratization, a goal that was irrelevant to the PRI elites under Salinas. Liberalization is "the process of making effective certain rights that protect both

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[1] While discussing the state's funding of the human rights center with one of the JMMP law students, I mentioned that in the US we have a saying: "the dog does not bite the hand that feeds it." "Ah" replied the student, "but we are rabid dogs."

individuals and social groups from arbitrary or illegal acts committed by the state or third parties" (Bailey 1994:101). This deals with basic rights and freedoms such as speech, physical integrity of the person, impartial justice, and so on. For groups it means freedom of communication, assembly, and lawful dissent. I argue that such "liberal" rights are increasingly attractive to nation-states seeking both foreign and domestic aid and investment in the 1990s. From the government's point of view, support for ostensibly independent human rights institutions is good public relations. It should come as no surprise that increases in transport efficiency and the rise of the Internet have contributed to a world-wide spread of universal human rights norms. Behavior defined as human rights abuses can be reported virtually instantaneously by concerned citizens, and states may face economic penalties should they appear lax in defending human rights. In the post Cold War 1990s, virtually all Latin American states seeking to curry favor with potential foreign donors made an effort to at least appear to conform to generally accepted international human rights standards.[2]

Human rights organizations also serve as a useful mechanism through which to impose uniform legal norms that aid in the overall process of economic restructuring. In this regard, human rights workshops educate villagers about the options made available by recent agrarian reform laws. Human rights personnel also mediate some of the contentious intervillage and intravillage land disputes that are often exacerbated by the new agrarian laws.

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[2] The conflict between the U.S. and al-Qaeda may be reversing this trend. It appears to me that human rights issues are now losing ground to national security concerns when viewed from the perspective of wealthy donor states and their constituencies.

Given the geopolitical and economic realities, PRONASOL's liberalization agenda was an astute strategy to follow. It is in this context that I derive my understanding of the Mexican government's campaign to promote human rights. This strategy involves state financial support for a human rights NGOs in Chilapa. SEDESOL / INI has provided JMMP a budget of at least 208,000 pesos from January of 1997 through December of 1999. Other grants from SEDESOL / INI may put the final amount closer to 300,000 pesos and funding has now been extended through early 2000. I now turn to a closer examination of the JMMP and its activities in Chilapa.

JMMP's Preliminary Efforts

The JMMP is a human rights advocacy organization born in the context of counterinsurgency operations by the Mexican military against suspected members of the militant EPR guerrilla movement. It was created by a Catholic priest in Chilapa who successfully solicited funds from the Mexican government (specifically, from SEDESOL and the INI) to create a human rights organization, the JMMP.[3] The center was organized in the barrio of La Villa, in the city of Chilapa, by local activists in the fall of 1996, and opened its doors for human rights organizing on January 25, 1997, shortly after a spectacular series of clashes between the army and EPR guerrillas around Chilapa that left a number of dead and wounded. Directed by Father Bernardo Sanchez Cruz, the JMMP originally had several case workers who had backgrounds as teachers and nurses; later it would add advanced law students to its staff.

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[3] In 1994, INI / SEDESOL initiated a human rights campaign in Mexico spearheaded by the financing of human rights centers in selected localities nation-wide. This process reached Chilapa in 1997, when the local human rights center opened for the public.

Most of these case workers are outspoken advocates of liberation theology. They consider themselves "leftists," are highly critical of the Mexican government, and waste few opportunities to critique or otherwise distance themselves from the government's policies of neoliberal development. Unlike several other NGOs operating in the Chilapa region, the JMMP does not specifically portray itself as an organization devoted to indigenous rights; rather, it is a human rights organization. What most clearly sets the JMMP apart from the other NGOs in the Chilapa region is that its sphere of concern centers on legal and political issues and in this way it has become more than a simple conduit for the delivery of social services or development funds to rural communities. Issues involving self-determination confront the JMMP much more commonly and more directly than is typical among other NGOs operating in the region (Kyle and Yaworsky 2000).

Initially the JMMP sponsored workshops in villages alerting residents to the existence of the JMMP while addressing the basic principles of universal human rights and criminal and civil law. In 1997 a budget of $70,000 pesos was provided to JMMP by SEDESOL / INI to underwrite workshops, travel expenses, and related services. In January of 1997, JMMP began identifying communities to visit with the goal of informing residents about the center and its rationale, and to offer free workshops on human rights.

The initial population centers targeted included twenty-six communities in four

municipios.[4] A quick glance suggests that most of these were comunidades agrarias, ejidos, and other locales with high percentages of Nahuatl speakers or otherwise very poor campesinos. The same communities were revisited in February 1997. JMMP also soon visited Alcoazacan, Aponzanalco, Hueycantenango and Teponzanalco (municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez) and Alpoyecancingo, Pochutla, and San Miguel Ahuilican (municipio of Ahuacuotzingo).

From 1997 through 1999, JMMP approached village comisarios to arrange these workshops. A date for the workshop would be agreed upon, and comisarios would then invite community members to participate. In this manner, JMMP could generally count on an audience of twenty-five or thirty individuals, usually all from the same community. JMMP workshops trained community human rights monitors and taught villagers their political rights as spelled out in the Mexican Constitution. Lectures for the initial workshops were scheduled for 12, 25, 30, and 45 minute blocks of time. Lectures presented included: (1) Define Human Rights, (2) Define Human Rights Violations, (3) Classify Human Rights, (4) Characteristics of Human Rights, and (5) Listen to Denunciations, (6) Get to Know the Articles that Protect Human Rights, and (7) UN

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[4] In Ahuacuotzingo communities visited were Acateyahualco, Agua Zarca, and Tepetlatipa. In Atlixtac, these included Atlixtac, El Duraznal, Mexcaltepec, Mezones, Petatlan, Tepozonalco, and Tlatlahuquitepec. In Chilapa, JMMP targeted Acalco, Acatlán, Ahuixtla, Atzacoaloya, Ayahualtempa, El Jaguey, Hueycantenango, Miraflor, Pantitlan, Papaxtla, Tlaxinga, Zelocotitlán, and Zompeltepec. Finally, in Zitlala we have La Esperanza, Las Trancas, Pochahuisco, Rancho de los Lomas, Tlachimaltepec, Tlatempanapa, Topiltepec, and Zitlala.

Declaration of Human Rights. Classes were taught in both Spanish and Nahuatl.[5]

On April 26, 1997 the human rights workshop was presented in Ahuixtla. Evidence of the marginality of this village is suggested by the scroll of attendance. It contained sixty-seven thumb-prints and fifty-one signatures, suggesting a high degree of village illiteracy.[6] On May 17, 1997 the "Workshop on Basic Human Rights" was presented in Zompeltepec. By the end of 1997, other workshops were conducted in Tepozcautla and Xocoyolzintla. All told, six-hundred and eighteen villagers attended these workshops in 1997. At least eleven of the nineteen communities that hosted workshops in 1997 were comunidades agrarias, emphasizing JMMP's commitment to the most marginal rural communities.

In 1998, eight workshops were held in three municipios (Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, and Chilapa) with participants from twenty communities. In 1999, fourteen workshops were conducted with 350 villagers attending from nineteen different

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[5] Residents from the following communities traveled to JMMP workshops held elsewhere: Tlachimaltepec (93 participants), Ayahualtempa (6), San Marcos Ixtlahuac (11), Buena Vista (5), Temixco (23), Cacalotepec (12), Oxtotitlán (14), Zacaixtlahuacan (4), Zacapezco (13), Tequisca (3), Tepetscautla (3), Zelocotitlán (1), Tlaquiszalapa (1). JMMP billed SEDESOL / INI 210 pesos for the transportation and per diem expenses of the three workshop teachers.

[6] Other indicators of regional illiteracy: San Miguel Ahuelican had 1 signature and 24 thumb-prints on a June 3, 1997, letter to the Governor prepared by JMMP asking for the release of detainees. The June 5, 1997, "Workshop on Basic Human Rights" attendance roster in Papaxtla counted 14 thumb-prints, and 12 signatures. All of this suggests that JMMP is in fact targeting some of society's most disadvantaged communities for human rights organizing.

communities.[7] These 1999 workshops took place in three municipios: Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa de Alvarez, and Mártir de Cuilapan. At least seven of the communities visited were comunidades agrarias. The 1999 workshops included Human, Political, and Civil Rights; Criminal Law; and Agrarian Law. The human rights workshop explained the importance of developing a human rights culture; noted the differences between governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and explained the difference between common crime and a human rights violation.

These workshops were not easy to present. JMMP cadre found themselves translating technical aspects of the Mexican Constitution and legal system as well as explaining human rights concepts from Spanish to both Nahuatl and Tlapanec. The isolation of many of these communities and poor transport corridors also hampered JMMP activity. Still, JMMP persisted and rounded out the year in November of 1999 when they visited a further fourteen communities, all located very near to the cabecera of Chilapa, to promote human rights and negotiate workshop dates.[8]

Political Dimensions of JMMP Workshops

In early 2000, JMMP decided to try and reach a wider audience by approaching presidentes municipales, and having them convene gatherings of their village comisarios (mayors) for the workshops. This in theory would cover a wider number of villages in

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[7] Residents from the following communities attended the workshops: Ahuehuejtic, Alcozacan, Aponzanalco, Chilapa, Cuamenotepec, Ixcatla, Hueycantenango, La Laguna, La Esperanza, Oxtotitlán, Pierdra Colorada, San Gerónimo Palantla, Tepango, Tequixca, Tlaculmulco, Xocoyolzintla, Xolotepec, and Zinzintitlán.

[8] The communities visited were Amate Amarillo, Atempa, Ayahualco, Cuadrilla Nueva, El Limon, El Refugio, La Mohenera, Los Magueyes, Nejapa, Ocuituco, and Santa Ana.

any given meeting. However, since the majority of participants in year 2000 JMMP workshops were indeed priista comisarios, it raises interesting questions as to whether or not these workshops are indeed targeting the poorest, most powerless, and most needy. It may be that year 2000 JMMP workshops were basically training village comisarios on the finer points of the law. However, some of these workshop participants, comisarios or not, appeared to be very poor rural people, at least by judging the condition of their clothing and huaraches. Whatever the case, the year 2000 workshops were plagued by interference from ayuntamiento personnel.

I attended one such workshop run by JMMP in the municipal cabecera of Ahuacuotzingo on May 20, 2000. Although JMMP pronounces itself to be strictly apolitical, one of the three workshop directors lectured while wearing a Che Guevara t-shirt. I certainly interpreted this as a public political act and apparently the *presidente municipal* (municipal president) of Ahuacuotzingo, a member of the then ruling PRI, did so as well. At the closing luncheon to the workshop he gave a dramatic speech outlining the failures of world communism, Mao's stages of revolutionary warfare, and the dangers associated with aiding armed guerrilla movements.

The presidente municipal had previously overseen the opening of the workshop and then left to conduct business. Of the twenty-four workshop participants, most were village comisarios; all of which were priistas. The presentation itself was rather blase, the material straight out of any civics course, yet there was good interaction and many questions from what appeared to be an engaged audience. Basically, they learned that there was a human rights center in Chilapa that provided free legal services. Someone

asked for the JMMP address and phone number, and most recorded this information. Time ran out too soon, and JMMP asked the audience if they could return for the second half of the workshop in June. The comisariados agreed, and JMMP cadre went to seek the municipal presidente's approval, which, to my surprise, he granted.

I also traveled to Atlixtac with JMMP cadre and again attended one of their human rights workshops on May 27, 2000. The opening lecture was quite different from the one given in Ahuacuotzingo. Rather than a basic civics lecture, the JMMP cadre member, this time not wearing his Che Cuevara t-shirt, gave a presentation on the historical materialist theory of history. His lecture covered the theory's conception of primitive society all the way through capitalism, wisely omitting any mention of socialist or communist futures. The audience consisted of both village comisarios and ordinary citizens. Ayuntamiento employees also attended, not sitting in the audience, but standing in front assuming authoritative positions. All were priistas. One in particular, the municipal treasurer, constantly interrupted the class in order to put his spin on the material. Sometimes his interruptions went on for fifteen to twenty minutes. The JMMP cadre were visibly annoyed, as they had been promised the freedom to direct the proceedings. Finally the presidente municipal himself arrived with the state director of Indigenous Affairs. The latter, an elegantly dressed young man, interrupted the meeting to deliver his own presentation concerning the workings of his office. By the time he was through, the comisarios had to depart for their villages, presumably pondering the mysterious ways of primitive, slave, and feudal communities. JMMP cadre left after getting the comisarios to agree to a second date to conclude the workshop.

At another JMMP workshop scheduled in Zitlala (May 13, 2000), the presidente municipal was the point of contact, and again he was a priista. In this case he forgot (or perhaps didn't care) that he had arranged a workshop and asked to reschedule. This of course was accepted by JMMP, and we soon departed as it became clear that no audience of village comisariados was likely to appear any time soon.

Assessing the impact of these educational and consciousness raising activities likewise proves to be problematic. JMMP cadre report that villagers most quickly comprehend the material presented in the agrarian law workshop, because the subject pertains to matters with which they are somewhat familiar. The concepts outlined in both the human rights workshop and the political rights workshop are less well understood, probably because they are less relevant to day to day experiences. This is best illustrated by an incident that occurred in a political rights workshop that I attended in Chilapa on June 3, and 4, 2000. The workshop was attended by residents of rural communities in Atlixtac and Chilapa. I was placed into a discussion group with four campesinos from Huitzapula, Atlixtac, supervised by a JMMP member. When asked what democracy meant, one campesino replied "we have heard of this word but do not know what it means." All four individuals appeared genuinely unfamiliar with its meaning. JMMP cadre broke the word down to its roots *"demos"* and *"kratos"* explaining that these words signified "power to the people." The Huitzapulans, who spoke Tlapanec, were at a further disadvantage in the workshop in that their fluency in Spanish was suspect. The Nahuatl speakers in the audience could at least count on translations from JMMP personnel.

Given that the contemporary anthropological understanding of political phenomena renders it virtually impossible to desegregate political behavior from educational activities, it is perhaps futile to assess at what point JMMP workshops cross the imaginary line separating education from political activism. Be that as it may, at some workshops, PRI corruption was a latent theme. For example, at the June 2000 workshop in Chilapa, JMMP cadre were careful not to tell people who deserves their vote, but somehow or another they managed to gently coax from the audience statements that were damaging to the PRI. The JMMP member who liked to teach while wearing his Che Guevara t-shirt was at it again: the Argentine guerrilla leader's face beamed down upon the audience on both days of the weekend-long workshop. I believe it is no coincidence that this shirt is chosen for lecture days, and the visage along with the "Che Lives" slogan emblazoned on the backside carry identifiable political connotations. However, despite the anti-PRI themes and vaguely socialistic consciousness raising, these workshops basically encouraged rural peoples to solicit mediation in criminal, agrarian, and human rights cases from the JMMP offices in Chilapa.

The Army and Human Rights In Guerrero

JMMP's area of operations in rural Guerrero has a troubled human rights history. The U.S. Department of State (1998) wrote a "Mexico Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998" which expressed concern about extrajudicial killings committed by police, army, and security forces. Guerrero was cited as being the scene some of the more notorious cases. In part, the report read:

The government generally respected the human rights of its citizens, although serious

problems remained in some areas and some states present special concerns. Continued serious abuses included extrajudicial, killings, disappearances, torture, police corruption, poor prison conditions, arbitrary arrest and detention, lengthy pretrial detention, lack of due process, judicial inefficiency and corruption, illegal searches, attacks against journalists, assaults and threats against human rights monitors, (and) violence against women (US Department of State 1998).

Although concerns about the protection of basic human rights are nothing new in the state of Guerrero, the problems became more acute and received more national and international attention with the appearance in the summer of 1996 of the EPR. What followed was a build-up of military and police forces in state. Military checkpoints became commonplace and relatively large formations of heavily armed troops made regular forays into rural areas throughout the state, including the Chilapa region. Accusations of human rights abuses followed in their wake. It was in this milieu that the JMMP conducted their early village workshops.

In the early Spring and Summer of 1997, the Mexican Army conducted significant counterinsurgency operations in Chilapa's hinterland, principally in the municipio of Ahuacuotzingo. These operations affected the villages of Alpoyecancingo, Oxtoyahualco, Pochutla, San Miguel Ahuelican, Tlalcomulco, Tlaquilzingo, and Xocoyahualco. The village of San Miguel Ahuelican, Ahuacuotzingo, was in particular a target of anti-EPR sweeps. In April of 1997 the army moved into the village and began a series of interrogations and detentions. According to records at JMMP, at 5:00 p.m. on April 3, 1997, the community was occupied by approximately 500 soldiers of the Mexican Army. These soldiers were supported by approximately 50 humvees, armored cars, and trucks. All transport arteries in and out of town were blockaded and the

soldiers proceeded with cordon and search activities. Soldiers entered homes in a violent manner, looking for weapons and EPR members. Five residents, including the town comisario, were taken from the town for further interrogation. The town comisario was reportedly beaten and received death threats. By his own account he was later tortured by near asphyxiation while his arms were secured behind his back. Soldiers also frightened the detainees by threatening to kill their families. Later, several detainees were taken to the jail in Yupitepec, where they were tortured. Afterwards they were moved to a military camp near Pachutla and again beaten. They were finally released on April 19, 1997, with instructions not to leave their home community.

On April 6, 1997, the Mexican Army occupied the town of Alpoyetcancingo, municipio of Ahuacuotzingo. The military commander ordered the village comisario to assemble the community's residents in the central court. Homes were searched and a seventy year old man was detained, beaten, and interrogated. Citizens later petitioned both the municipal authorities and the state human rights commission for aid. Their appeals were ignored. JMMP wrote letters to the presidents of both the state and national human rights commissions, and the state governor, seeking their intervention.

The army scaled back its searches and interrogations in the summer of 1997, yet incidents flared up again in the autumn. For example, in the communities of Zopilotepec and Huitzapula in Atlixtac, detentions, interrogations, and torture were reportedly carried out by soldiers from Military Zone 35. Torture included beatings and the submergence of heads into water to produce near suffocation. On November 22, 1997, a group from the village of Xocoyolzintla, Ahuacuotzingo, arrived at JMMP in Chilapa soliciting their

intervention. Military and police units were in town looking for a suspect "to verify his liberty documents" (he had earlier been detained on May 25, 1997 after an Army-EPR clash near Teponzonalco, Chilapa). The soldiers also had a list identifying thirty residents who they wished to interrogate. JMMP contacted the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) on behalf of the villagers asking for an investigation. CNDH did indeed investigate, but could not document much evidence of abuse.

On December 3, 1997, two women from Zompeltepec, Atlixtac, were reportedly raped by army soldiers. Their husbands, who were beaten and then detained in Chilpancingo, witnessed the rapes. On December 31, 1997, the women had to visit Chilapa to identify their assailants, who were brought before them armed and in uniform. JMMP argued that this was wholly inappropriate and contacted the National Human Rights Commission to register a complaint. In January of 1998, the two women were still being sought by the military for questioning, so JMMP sent a team to the village to provide the victims with moral support.

Further human rights cases in Alpoyetcingo, Cuonetcingo, and Papaxtla, were also presented to government authorities. In March 1998, two men in Huitzapula's anexo Colonia Vicente Guerrero were detained by the military on March 6, 1998; this time the accusation was the two were involved in the cultivation and sale of narcotics. One was transported to a military camp in Santa Rosa Zapotitlán where he received death threats.

Police abuses of criminal suspects also were investigated by JMMP in 1997. These occurred in both the municipios of Atlixtac and Chilapa. In Cuonetcingo, Chilapa,

and in Huitzapula, Atlixtac, suspected criminals were reportedly tortured by the State Judicial Police. A man from Amate Amarillo who was accused of committing a double-murder in Acatlán was reportedly ill-treated by the police. JMMP intervened, yet the suspect received an eighteen year prison sentence. In a similar case, a father and his two sons from Huitzapula were charged with murder. JMMP lobbied for and obtained the release of two suspects while the third received a two-year prison sentence.

All told, JMMP lists fifteen cases of army and police abuses in the municipios of Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, and Chilapa from January to June of 1997. In all, fourteen villagers were accused by the Mexican army of being in league with the EPR and detained. All were male campesinos, mostly Nahuatl or Tlapenec speaking indígenas. Two others, from Cotlamaloya, Atlixtac, and one from Pochutla, Ahuacuotzingo, were also questioned by security forces. JMMP reacted to the cases by transporting a commission to San Miguel Ahuelican and to Pachutla to contest the detentions and to record the injuries. They presented their findings before the State Human Rights Commission, the governor, the state congress, the National Human Rights Commission, and other human rights NGOs, soliciting their intervention. A press conference was held in Chilpancingo and a lawyer hired for the detainees. Pressure eventually led the army to withdraw from the villages and to cease the abuse of detainees. The army for its part, seems to have lost interest in Chilapa and Ahuacuotzingo and instead shifted its attention to the Costa Chica, particularly the municipio of Ayutla de los Libres.

While these activities place JMMP in conflict with powerful military authorities, it is important to recognize that Mexican state elites are not a unified and monolithic

force. Among the competing elite factions is an identifiable reformist element that is now ascendent and intent on building a plural and open state with a market based economy. This element funds JMMP's activities via SEDESOL and INI in order to curb abuses by the military and police. These two agencies and the political elite who direct them have initiated reform process that seeks to extend and apply the state's codified laws. Mexican elites are undoubtedly aware that their nation cannot afford to be viewed as another Yugoslavia, Guatemala, or El Salvador. Military abuses differ from routine corruption and repression chiefly in regards to the elevated levels of international attention that these acts precipitate. In response to these concerns, the Mexican military has been kept in check by both its directors, and international pressure, in both Chiapas and Guerrero. JMMP's role as a watchdog organization aids state development by reducing the number of embarrassing abuses committed by the military. The flow of international aid to Mexico would be seriously compromised if an unchecked military was allowed to prosecute total war, regardless of civilian casualties and human rights abuses, against organizations such as the EPR and EZLN.

After 1997 the military presence was less noticeable in the Chilapa region and the incidence of cases involving military and police abuses fell sharply as a result. The JMMP responded by shifting its focus of concern toward issues arising within communities from the implementation of the government's neoliberal land reforms. But the group also agreed to intervene in a number of intervillage and intravillage disputes of a sort that have long been commonplace in rural Mexico. In shifting its area of interest away from more conventional human rights advocacy, the JMMP has increasingly come

to serve as a government subsidized mediation service.

Human Rights and the Autonomy of Indigenous Communities

This transition has created two dilemmas for the JMMP. The first involves questions of how best to balance local customs against the imposition of the uniform legal and political system outlined in the Mexican constitution and codified in the statutes derived from it. The second involves reconciling their deep-seated opposition to the Mexican government's neoliberal reform policies with the realization that they have become implicated in the process (Kyle and Yaworsky 2000).

On the first of these issues, the JMMP has approached questions of local autonomy on an ad hoc basis, at times supporting the self-determination and autonomy of villagers, indigenous and otherwise, but more often not. The determination as to which set of customs to support in any particular case seems to be depend on how well the customary law in question conforms to the JMMP's notions of human rights, especially those rights that find expression in Mexico's constitution. Where the divergence is significant, the JMMP does not hesitate to err on the side of universal human rights as expressed by codified law (Kyle and Yaworsky 2000).

The JMMP personnel in these cases adhered to the statutes laid out in the Mexican Constitution and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There was a gap between the rhetoric of indigenous autonomy and the case by case adherence to a universal, codified, state imposed law. These villagers visited by the JMMP were being increasingly drawn into the state's network of institutions adjudicating legal conflicts. This deepening incorporation is undermining village common law.

Village authorities, particularly indigenous ones, traditionally have had considerable discretion when adjudicating purely internal matters. Historically, both due process guarantees and evidentiary standards used in Chilapa's rural communities have been at variance with the standards operating in municipal, state, and federal courts (Ek 1968; 1977). Internal methods used by indigenous villages for dealing with lawbreakers include the use of torture, summary execution, and the exile of political and religious dissenters, practices incongruent with the JMMP support for the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These declarations guarantee individual rights regardless of circumstance, such as accident of birth into particular ethnic, religious, or caste systems. In other words, individual liberties take priority over group or cultural assertions and claims. This puts these human rights organizations in a direct conflict of interest with indigenous authorities in Mesoamerica (and elsewhere) who assert the primacy of heterogenous village norms of internal justice, and the rights of indigenous authorities to render autonomous legal decisions. Other anthropologists working in southern Mexico (Sierra 2000; Collier 1994) have noted the reluctance of indigenous authorities to accept the application of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights into their village jurisdictions. The increasing appearance of human rights centers (typically located in central market towns) that actively canvass the hinterland with legal advice and aid steeped in notions of a universal human rights law, is rapidly compromising, and indeed overturning, edicts issued by village authorities.

Through the San Andreas accords (the peace negotiations between the government and EZLN), activists sought a settlement that vests indigenous authorities

with a formal role in the legal apparatus based on the internal norms of customary law (generally referred to in Mexico as *usos y costumbres*). In August of 2001, the Law of Indigenous Rights and Culture (a bill that fell far short of the Zapatistas expectations) went into effect after it was passed by Mexico's Congress and ratified by a majority of the states. The bill formally subordinates village law to the strictures of universal human rights discourse and legal norms. Although both the government and the EZLN had accepted human rights guarantees in the negotiations since the original proposal was tentatively introduced, from the beginning of the negotiating process, the accords have produced uncertainty over this very issue. Womack (1999:307) reports that the government representatives did indeed counter assertions of indigenous autonomy with "classic liberal stumpers: national sovereignty, equality, civil rights." The wording that was initially agreed to by both sides at the San Andreas accords reads as follows: "The Mexican government must guarantee peoples' full access to Mexican courts, with recognition and respect for cultural specificities and their internal normative systems, guaranteeing full respect for human rights" (Womack 1999:309-310). By my reading, from the outset this placed the notion of indigenous legal autonomy subordinate to, and constricted by, international human rights law. Reading further, we find that the Mexican government "*will promote a reform* (our emphasis) so that Mexican positive law recognizes the authorities, norms, and procedures for resolving conflicts internal to indigenous peoples and communities, in order to apply justice on the basis of their internal normative systems and so that by simple procedures their judgments and decisions are validated by the government's juridical authorities" (Womack 1999:309-

310). Was this reform to be solely directed towards the Mexican government's existing legal apparatus? This wording gave ample direction for reforming village level legal practices so that they fully conform to established human rights law. Both government and EZLN representatives initially accepted the "COCOPA proposal," which read in Article 4, Clause 2: "To apply their normative systems in the regulation and solution of internal conflicts, respecting individual guarantees, human rights and, in particular, the dignity and integrity of women; their procedures, judgements and decisions will be confirmed by the judicial authorities of the state..."(cited in Rhodes 1999:7). The final bill recognized the application of indigenous "regulatory systems in the regulation and resolution of internal conflicts, *respecting individual guarantees, human rights, and notably, the dignity and safety of women*" (my emphasis; *La Jornada*, May 13, 2001).

The potential incompatibility of state and indigenous community legal practices has not received much public attention (Rhodes 1999:8). Zapatista documents (e.g., Ce-Acatl 1995:44) have recognized the conflict of interest but generally downplayed the issue. Magdalena Gomez, a lawyer with the INI, rejects as discriminatory the criticism that indigenous norms have *in the past* (my emphasis) included lynchings and physical punishment, and cites clauses agreed to by the EZLN that provide human rights guarantees and state validation of judicial procedures. (I emphasize "in the past," as Gomez apparently discounts the notion that such practices persist). Nash, reporting from a EZLN conference, recalls that "the women's session was the only one in which I heard dissent during the discussion of autonomy. They pointed to the subordination and abuse of women in what *masqueraded as tradition* (again my emphasis) in indigenous

communities, and called for autonomy of women as subjects of their own destiny" (Nash 2001:157). Rhodes (1999:8) opines that the right of women to hold office (prohibited in the normative systems of some groups) will presumably be enforced by the legislation coming out of the peace process. Notwithstanding these potential compromises, the friction between universal human rights on the one hand, and indigenous autonomy on the other, has been recognized by anthropologists working in southern Mexico (e.g., Nagengast 1997; Nash 2001:147-148; Sierra 2000).

An example of the JMMP supporting indigenous legal autonomy involved in a case from San Gerónimo Palantla, a predominantly Nahuatl-speaking community in a mountainous area east of Chilapa. Legally, all land held by residents of San Gerónimo is part of a single tract of communally held land, a form of tenure known in Mexico as bienes comunales. In practice, San Gerónimo's arable land is held in usufruct by individual households and large expanses of forest are treated as a communal resource. Communal lands are subdivided, however, with divisions associated with small clusters of households called *anexos* (hamlets) that have thus become recognized (within the confines of the comunidad agraria) as distinct territorial entities.

In a case presented to the JMMP, members of one anexo were accused of cutting firewood in the territory of a neighboring anexo. This was technically legal, since Mexican law recognizes common lands within the boundaries of San Gerónimo's territorial holdings as exploitable by all resident comuneros, regardless of anexo boundaries. When confronted by JMMP cadre, the members of the predatory anexo were quite willing to let the matter be settled in court (i.e., by an Agrarian Tribunal) where

they were confident that they would prevail. Negotiations mediated by JMMP led to this party's (surprise) decision to reverse its position and respect customary law, to cease crossing anexo boundaries to cut firewood. JMMP noted that some members of the predatory anexo (Ahuixtla), perhaps through unique enculturation experiences associated with migration, were much more familiar with the Mexican legal system and how to manipulate it. In any case, the important point here is that the JMMP weighed in on the side of indigenous village's distinctive legal customs even where these conflicted with federal law.

While it was sensitive to the issue of indigenous autonomy, other JMMP projects worked to reconcile customary village laws with standardized state laws. This often is not possible, however. Witness the case of the tortured witch, also from San Gerónimo Palantla. A middle aged woman (50-55 years old) reportedly lost some money ($70.00) and did not know who took it. She went to see a diviner in another village to determine the identity of the thief. Soon after, a man died in San Gerónimo and the assertion quickly spread that the woman had used witchcraft to kill him. She was forcibly brought to the comisariado, on whose order she was detained and tortured (following the lead of the military, they administered shocks with electrical cables). The comisariado was under pressure by villagers to execute her by hanging. The weight of opinion against the woman was so strong that even her husband was reportedly too frightened to aid her. In desperation, her daughter appeared at the JMMP office in Chilapa and appealed for help. The JMMP immediately contacted the *sindico municipal* (a county-level political official) who in turn contacted the comisariado in San Gerónimo and ordered him to

release the woman at once. The comisariado complied and the matter was considered to be resolved (at least from the point of view of the JMMP).

What JMMP effected in this case and others like it is a transition from dispute settlement based on the local norms of an indigenous village to a system of adjudication based on standardized, national laws. This is in keeping with its stated objectives, presented to villagers in workshops that are designed to impart an understanding of uniform conception of human, agrarian, and criminal rights to villagers. Indeed, even the JMMP's early activities to curb abuses by military and police agencies reflect an effort to apply the neoliberal state's codified laws, not to protect or defend specifically indigenous rights and customs.

I questioned JMMP cadre on this matter. They stated that they did indeed support indigenous village autonomy in respect to costumbres and the settlement of disputes involving minor issues. Yet they also reiterated that these legal decisions undertaken by village authorities had to be conducted within a framework that respects the human rights of the individuals involved. Other anthropologists (e.g., Collier and Lowery 1994) have noted this dilemma posed by competing claims of "indigenous rights" vs. "human rights." Local indigenous leaders in Chiapas, for example, are known to expel political dissidents and to cite indigenous rights as a basis for this action (Collier and Lowery 1994). Some human rights activists argue that this amounts to political oppression, and is a means by which powerful local indigenous elites intimidate the powerless (Zechenter 1997).

In Chilapa's hinterland (in this case a mestizo village in Ahuacuotzingo) JMMP

was confronted with a similar case. Protestants were driven out of the community and their lands confiscated by irate Catholic neighbors. JMMP considers this to be a human rights violation and is aiding the Protestant refugees. Because the community in question is mestizo, JMMP has not had to face the indigenous autonomy / universal human rights dilemma, in this case at least. After discussing the hypothetical case of this happening in an indigenous village, JMMP cadre assured me that they would again side with the refugees. From this perspective, human rights must be afforded to those unfortunate enough to have fallen, by accident of birth, under the auspices of caste or cultural institutions that permit torture or degradation.

Human Rights, PROCEDE, and Agrarian Reform

The land redistribution that originated in 1917 included the provision that the state could place restrictions on beneficiaries rights to sell, lease, or rent properties. In January of 1992, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari won congressional approval for sweeping changes to the agrarian codes of the 1917 Constitution. The new agrarian laws had these key features: (1) the government declared an end to the redistribution of land. (2) Land disputes were to be settled by decentralized, autonomous Agrarian Tribunals. (3) Ejidatarios would now have the legal right to sell, rent, sharecrop, or mortgage their land. (4) Ejidatarios would no longer have to work their land to retain legal rights to it, and (5) ejidatarios could enter into joint ventures and contracts with private entrepreneurs, whose participation will be limited to forty-nine percent of equity capital (Cornelius 1992:3-4). The net effect was to "privatize" ejido holdings. Ejidos could also choose to disband and ask that individual titles be granted to each of their members.

Observers of the Mexican countryside diverged greatly in their predictions of what these constitutional changes were likely to herald. Some predicted widespread immiseration and land grabs by the rich and powerful. The ejido, it was argued, was an important defensive mechanism for poor families. Once dissolved, economic crisis would soon drive peasants to sell their lands cheaply, creating a large impoverished mass of landless peons. Others (Cancian 1994) argued that dramatic changes were unlikely. The new laws, Cancian held, were rubber stamping clandestine arrangements that in reality had been practiced for a long time.

On the eve of the constitutional changes in 1992, Chilapa counted forty-five legally recognized ejidos and comunidades agrarias (INEGI 1991; Government of the State of Guerrero 1995; Matías Alonso 1997). This included thirty-three ejidos and twelve comunidades agrarias. After seven years of living with the new reforms, Cancian's prediction seems most accurate, at least in the Chilapa region. As of February 2000, the Chilapan office of the Procuraduria Agraria lists thirty-two ejidos and thirteen comunidades agrarias, while INEGI (1999) listed a combined forty-six ejidos and comunidades agrarias. These numbers are virtually identical to the 1991 ejido census, the main difference being that Zelocotilán is now listed by the Procuraduria Agraria as a comunidad agraria. I suspect that Zelocotitlán's 1991 listing as an ejido is a mistake (according to informants, it has always been a comunidad agraria). Villages with all forms of land tenure continue to operate in the municipio relatively unchanged by the new privatization laws. DeWalt et al. (1994:54-55) predicted that most individual ejidos would vote to disband while the comunidades agrarias would vote to continue as such.

My findings share some consistencies with this prediction, albeit with important qualifications. Thirty of Chilapa's thirty-two ejidos have entered the PROCEDE's land titling process, a participation rate of over ninety percent. Meanwhile, only six of Chilapa's thirteen comunidades agrarias entered the program, less than a fifty percent participation rate. This is consistent with DeWalt's prediction. However, no ejidos or comunidades agrarias have yet taken the final step by voting to disband. Nor is their any guarantee that they will in the future vote to do so. The PROCEDE program is being pitched to farmers as a guarantor of individual property rights and a mechanism for maintaining state aid. Campesinos have yet to regard PROCEDE as the mechanism for the termination of the ejido or comunidad agraria itself.

Chilapan comunidades agrarias are resisting participation in PROCEDE because it would cause internal fighting over land and resources. For example, Zacapezco and Buena Vista are two daughter settlements of comunidad agraria Zelocotitlán and neither wishes to participate in PROCEDE. The Procuraduria Agraria informed Zacapezco's leadership that if they did not participate, they would be cut off from PROCAMPO and *Programa Kilo por Kilo* (Program Kilo for Kilo) funds. Residents of Zacapezco took this as coercion and approached JMMP for assistance. The center concurred with this assessment, and having identified a human rights abuse, they began to champion Zacapezco's cause. This pitted the JMMP against the local office of the Procuraduria Agraria and its handling of the PROCEDE initiative. Zacapezco's residents feared that participation in PROCEDE would signal that communal water supplies could be assigned as private property, which would cause considerable internal conflict. Furthermore, land

in Zacapezco is currently divided by custom, and these parcels are not neatly delineated but follow irregular (and sometimes indistinct) boundaries. PROCEDE's goal of privatizing once common resources has provoked considerable concern over how these new boundaries would alter existing patterns of cooperation. The case is still pending.

At an October 4, 1999 agrarian law workshop in San Gerónimo Palantla, residents of Alcozacan also voiced concerns that PROCEDE was dividing the community. Atzacoaloya's leadership cited similar reasons for not participating in PROCEDE. San Gerónimo Palantla, perhaps the most "closed" of the corporate communities, likewise is not participating; neither is Hueycantenango. Although these represent only six comunidades agrarias, their daughter settlements include over fifty other rural hamlets.

By supporting comunidades agrarias in resisting illegal intimidation, JMMP is insisting that the law be upheld. In this regard, JMMP intervention in cases involving PROCEDE coercion is little different from their activities regarding military violations of law. I suspect that the intimidation originates from either bureaucrats with quotas to meet, or elite factions that would like to see all lands privatized as rapidly as possible in order to better facilitate foreign investment.

Mediating Agrarian Conflicts

Another way that the JMMP has been furthering the interests of the government is by mediating agrarian conflicts. JMMP has intervened on behalf of communities, groups, families, and individuals involved in land disputes. Center personnel will send members to ejido or other community meetings to listen to the plaintiffs in the case. The

center not only analyzes the respective merits of various solutions, they recommend a course of action to follow as well. They then undertake the long and often frustrating task of soliciting funds (if needed) from the government to implement the solution, or seek the intervention of state authorities to decide contentious issues.

Historically, there has been no set adjudicator for resolving these disputes in Mexico. Communities take disputes to various higher levels, depending on personal contacts, appeals, and other factors (Parnell 1978; Dennis 1987; Nader 1990; DeWalt et al. 1994). In some cases, a community takes its case to the governor of the state or to the nation's president. DeWalt et al. (1994:24) note that although these petitions may result in decrees "settling" the issue, implementation and enforcement is another matter. "There are any number of survey teams have been run off the lands at gun-point by groups of men disagreeing with the government's decision" (DeWalt et al. 1994:24). Furthermore, losing parties often return to court and have the decrees overturned or voided. This stay (*amparo*) is a unique aspect of the Mexican judicial system and can effectively stall the execution of any judicial decree (DeWalt et al. 1994:24).

The Case of Ayahualulco

An illustrative case during my fieldwork involved the center petitioning the governor of Guerrero for money to buy materials to construct a fence to keep livestock from damaging crops. This was the crux of the matter in a serious land dispute in Ayahualulco. The land in question had been used as common pasture for the past twenty-five years and in fact had been designated as common land by a presidential resolution. With the advent of agrarian reform, PROCEDE moved in and oversaw the

parceling of land to individual ejidatarios. The *parceleros* (parcel-holders) who benefited from the PROCEDE intervention wanted to grow crops on the disputed piece of land, while the other faction wanted it left free for grazing, as had been custom. In July of 1999, this conflict of interest precipitated a serious fight. Forty-two people suffered damages to their property, or selves. The fight was aggravated by the changing political milieu: the local PRD faction had recently lost power to the local PRI faction. Although PROCEDE was put in charge of regularizing land titles, they were of little help. The Procuraduria Agraria, which legally should adjudicate such disputes, had three times been invited to the community, and three times they failed to appear. According to JMMP cadre, the government hoped that with time the problem would resolve itself away. JMMP members presented themselves as defenders of the rights of all, a moral authority, rather than a legal one with a mandate to impose a decision.

On July 20, 1999, there was an ejido meeting in Ayahualulco that I attended along with a JMMP caseworker and a friend. The meeting was scheduled to begin at 10.00 a.m. When we arrived at 10.25 a.m. they were still waiting for the government authorities (Procuraduria Agraria) to arrive. The government authorities had been invited and had confirmed that they would show up to settle the dispute, but they never came. People were visibly upset and some from the livestock faction got up and left, saying that there was no point to a meeting without the PA present. Two women from the parceleros faction then lobbied the assembly with paperwork until the JMMP representative intervened with an impassioned speech. The audience listened in silence as he was a good orator and commanded their attention. He stated that it was pointless to

hurl insults and accusations against each other. He announced that he would not take sides, as he was neither for nor against anybody and just wanted the conflict settled. The only way to settle the issue, he argued, was to petition the government for help. He observed that if everyone from both factions signed a joint letter to the governor of Guerrero asking for economic help and adjudication, then the problem could be solved. If no letter was signed, then things would get worse. The meeting ended at 2:00 p.m. with no agreement. Afterwards he continued to lobby both factions for the next two hours. He seemed to be leaning towards the parceleros faction, saying that "people are more important than animals." But it appeared that he was slowly making progress with both groups; people were listening and nodding their heads in agreement. However, we left at 5:00 p.m. without arriving at a solution.

On July 21, 1999, the morning following the meeting, both factions visited JMMP in Chilapa. Ejido authorities also came. Both groups had come to an accord to petition the state governor in this case. It was recognized that if they just built fences around the small ejido parcels that are getting trampled this year, the problem will return next year when the animals go to pasture in other sections of the ejido. The solution proposed was to build a large fence around a designated pasture land. For this they needed government money. Hence, both groups would sign a joint letter prepared by JMMP requesting 180,000 pesos in order to build a fence around the pasture lands. In the meantime, JMMP members believed that the current ejido parcels that had been damaged by the animals this year were too far gone to be saved. The animals should pasture there this summer, and the owners should receive some compensation, rent, or at worst, lend out

their land. If not all of the small parcel owners would agree, then maybe some individuals might build small fences around their parcels.

Based on past experiences the JMMP representative was confident he could get the money from the government. He also mentioned that in D. F. there is an old 1931 land title in the agrarian archives that would benefit one faction involved in the case; but right now nobody in the ejido seems to respect that document. A letter was presently drafted and sent to the governor of the state of Guerrero that in part, read "we ask you to hear our demands, we are motivated by the fear of the community running the risk of a violent ending. This would be negligent of those who are able to create a solution." As of September 20, 1999, they were still waiting for a reply from the governor.

A second meeting with Ayahualulco's factions was held in Chilapa on August 6, 1999. There, four parceleros and four agostaderos met with the ejido leadership and JMMP staff. JMMP agreed to conduct an investigation as part of the dispute settlement process. This included verifying the land parcels of each individual, writing a year by year history of land use patterns in Ayahualulco, and ascertaining which cattle herders and crop growers were involved. Yet continued disagreements among both factions led to apparently irreconcilable differences; in November of 1999, JMMP informed the community of Ayahualulco that they were dropping the case due to the unwillingness of both factions to compromise.

Agrarian Conflict in the Hinterland

The main reasons for these conflicts have to do with disputes over natural resources, particularly forests, pasture land, and water. This struggle for resources is

frequently affected by ambiguous ejido boundaries. JMMP is currently involved in settling land conflicts in Ahuacuotzingo, Ayahualulco, Colotepec, Cuonetcingo, Hueycantenango, Huitzapula, Los Amates (vs. Cuautenango), San Gerónimo Palantla, Tepahuisco, Tlahchutla, and Xiloxuchicán. The case of Cuautenango and their conflict with Los Amates provides a useful example of the situations that JMMP has involved itself. Villagers from Cuautenango bought some private parcels of land that were for sale in an area of pequeños propiadades between Cuautenango and Los Amates. They built a church there and the comisario built his home there. Suddenly Los Amates received a presidential resolution (*dotación*) decreeing that the land was part of ejido Los Amates. The people from Cuautenango were angry because although they own the land, Los Amates had administrative jurisdiction over it. These people from Cuautenango were in the eyes of the law, property owners in ejido Los Amates. Hence they had to go through that community's legal system for all services and administrative matters. This they did not like. An accord was finally reached between the two communities giving the settlers from Cuautenango de facto autonomy.

A border dispute exists between Huitzapula and Coalapa in the municipio of Atlixtac. Intervillage communication is hampered by the fact that Huitzapula is comprised of Tlapanec speaking residents while Coalapa is largely comprised of Nahuatl speakers. In 1999, one person was killed in this conflict. The case is pending. Huitzapula also has a case before JMMP involving a man who stole sixty-five goats from another resident of the community. The seriousness of the case was heightened when the thief and four conspirators discharged thirty-five rounds of rifle fire -- both M1 carbines

and AR15 rifles were used -- at the plaintiff, from a distance of approximately seventy-five meters. The plaintiff was plowing a field with a *yunta* (team) of oxen when the attack occurred. The fact that all thirty five rounds missed the near-stationary target at such short range (for a rifle) suggests that the assailants either merely wanted to frighten him or did not know how to properly zero or aim their weapons.[9]

Family feuds over land in indigenous communities are poorly documented and in comparison to intervillage conflicts have drawn less attention from ethnographers (for an important exception see Stoll 1999). Intracommunity land conflicts such as these are commonly brought before the JMMP. These disputes are common and are heavily conditioned by the prevailing system of anticipatory inheritance that is practiced in the hundreds of patrilineal hamlets scattered across Chilapa's countryside. Newlyweds co-reside with the groom's parents for up to two years and then stake out a homestead literally meters away from the parental household. This process over time creates hundreds of petty feuds involving property boundaries, livestock invasions, and sexual liaisons. Brothers are often antagonists in these cases, as are young men and their paternal uncles. In the latter situation, the father's brother will often attempt to gain control of the land claimed by a dead brother's son, especially if the widowed mother has remarried (Ek 1977:37).

The fact that some rural communities, such as Tlaculmulco, have poorly documented land parcels makes these petty intracommunity conflicts difficult to

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[9] AR-15s and M-1 carbines are illegal weapons for ordinary citizens, although they are common on the black market. The weapons sell for around $1,000 US and fifty rounds of ammunition reportedly costs 800 to 1,000 pesos ($80 to $100 US dollars).

mediate. In Tlaculmulco one such land dispute is affecting residents, while in Acajacan, a faction of the community wants to gain control of the property of an individual. In Colonia Loma Linda, one person wants to run drain pipes through his neighbor's property. In Zompeltepec, a man is fighting to retain water rights. There are cases in Colotepec and Atenxoxola, one involving an aunt against her nieces. Another intrafamily dispute exists in Cuonetcingo, where a man divorcing his wife wants to retain all the property. Legally it should be divided between the two, yet enforcement of such laws is another story altogether. Through JMMP mediation these types of petty disputes are increasingly being decided in reference to Mexican law rather than the vagaries of village tradition.

In the course of my fieldwork and through searching INI and Sanzekan Tinemi archives, I also became acquainted with several other regional agrarian conflicts (see Table 5.1 below). In Santa Ana they have problems in a reforested enclosure. The problem lies with people from neighboring communities who allow their animals into the reforested area. People from Chilacachapa are suspected of cutting through the barbed wire to let their animals pass into and through the preserve. In Ajuatetla, the community members of San Juan broke a wire fence to let their animals pass into grazing areas. The animals were reportedly in search of water. Until now, no solution to the problem has been found (Sanzekan Tinemi *Reunion Intercomunitaria* March 21, 1997).

Table 5.1
Intercommunity and Intracommunity Conflicts

Community	Adversary	Conflict
1. Ayahualulco	Internal	Ganaderos vs Parceleros
2. Huizapala	Coapala	Border Dispute
3. Huizapala	Internal	Assault
4. Tepahuisco	Internal	Agrarian Conflict Resolved
5. Xocoyoltzintla	Internal	Agrarian Conflict
6. Hueycantenango	Internal	One person killed in dispute
7. Xiloxuchicán	Internal	Details Unknown
8. Tlachuatla	Internal	Details Unknown
9. Colotepec	Internal	Agrarian Conflict
10. Ayozintla	S.J. Totolzintla	Border Dispute
11. Ayozintla	Xicomulco	Border Dispute
12. S.J. Totolzintla	Xicomulco	Border Dispute
13. S.J. Totolzintla	Tula del Rio	Border Dispute
14. Tolixtitlahuacan	Jocutla	Border Survey
15. Tottitlahuacan	Jocutla	Border Survey
16. Santa Ana	Chilacachapa	Chila cut the barbed wire to let their animals pass
17. Ajuatetla	San Juan	S.J. broke fence to let animals pass
18. La Esperanza	Rancho d. l. Lomas	Intruders steal firewood, guaje
19. Topiltepec	Miramontes	Animals trample crops
20. Pochahuisco	Topiltepec	Animals eat crops
21. Topiltepec	Hueyatalapan	Firewood, palm
22. Topiltepec	Ahuihuiyuco	Firewood, palm
23. Agua Zarca	Acateyahualco	Firewood, palm
24. Trapiche Viejo	Neighbors	Pollute river, kill fish, stole barbed wire fence
25. Zacapezco	Tlanicuilulco	Border Dispute
26. Zelocotitlán	Tlanicuilulco	Border Dispute
27. Atzacoaloya	Neighbors	Border Dispute

Many villages are able to arrive at peaceful accords with neighboring communities, defusing many potential conflicts before they can explode. Ajuatetla has an accord with the community of Santa Catarina to let their animals pass from one side to the other, and there are no real problems with this arrangement. Everything is fine between Ajuatetla and its other neighbor, Cocoyul as well. In La Esperanza, they have good relations with neighbors from Tlachualpa and Tlalcozotitin, with whom they have

long standing accords regulating passage routes. If another community permits La Esperanza to use its resources, La Esperanza will likewise reciprocate. If another community collects fines, they collect fines as well. Difficulties persist between La Esperanza and Rancho de Las Lomas, whose members intrude to cut firewood. Unknown intruders also steal the community's water (Sanzekan Tinemi Reunion Intercomunitaria, March 21, 1997).

JMMP sometimes attempts to solve land problems through the purchase of fencing or other materials. In Xiloxuchicán, JMMP intervened to petition the government for barbed wire.[10] Often they will petition SEDESOL itself for resources, as was the case with Xiloxuchican. JMMP appears to serve the government well in regard to land disputes; they often can organize a reasonable solution for a low cost. The government is in effect, through JMMP, delegating or "privatizing" the business of agrarian conflict settlement. Although the regional Agrarian Tribunals are of course the final arbitrators of such matters, the footwork is done by groups such as JMMP. This leaves the PA, already overworked and understaffed, time to concentrate on PROCEDE. Wood (1997) described a similar arrangement in Bangladesh as a "franchise state" that subcontracts government programs to NGOs. JMMP is but one attenuated example of this currently popular method of deploying NGOs to suit state objectives.

JMMP: a Variety of Cases

I now turn to a brief survey of other various situations associated with rural life in

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[10] One Chilapan community that had used barbed wire to enclose their territory found the wire used in their fences mysteriously stolen at night. This community took to "branding" their barbed wire by spray-painting it bright colors of orange.

which the JMMP has involved itself. The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with a well rounded view of the JMMP's activities. These cases may seem mundane, yet they certainly are of importance to the individuals involved.

In Cuonetcingo, a man was drinking with his friends. They traveled by truck to another town, but on arrival, the man was no longer in the back of the vehicle. He had simply vanished. Three days passed and JMMP was contacted. They organized a search party but could not find him. The locals were convinced that he had been abducted by the devil and taken into a nearby cave that the devil frequently inhabits. He was never found. One JMMP member says he might have been murdered, but is probably working as a migrant laborer in another part of Mexico or the USA. Another missing person case occurred in La Providencia, where three women went to cut wood one day. It was getting late, and by nightfall only two had returned. The third woman had simply vanished. Eight days after her disappearance, JMMP organized a search party that found nothing.[11] The people believe that she too was abducted by the devil.

In Ixcatla, a couple with a teenage daughter got divorced and soon the wife remarried. The stepfather beats the daughter, who wants to live with the biological father. The mother and stepfather had her confined in an Alcoholics Anonymous institution. Under Mexican law alcoholics are considered to be incompetent and can be detained. But this is illegal without the biological father's consent, and in the present case, he had argued that the daughter is neither an alcoholic nor a drug addict. The case

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[11] Bizarro Ujpán and Sexton (2001) describe similar missing person search procedures in the Lake Atitlán region of Guatemala.

was resolved when the biological father reversed his opinion and agreed that the daughter required institutionalization.

In Chilapa, JMMP found itself fighting against the political and economic interests of wealthy elites who refused to issue permits for the operators of bicycle-taxis. Local authorities granted one civil association (Unión de Transportistas Ecologias A.C.) monopoly rights to Chilapa's booming daytime bicitaxi business. Other bicitaxi drivers were told that they could only operate between 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. nightly. JMMP argued that what is not prohibited in the constitution is permitted, and hence the local government had no right to hamper the operation of bicitaxis. JMMP solicited support from the state human rights commission (CODEHUM) but they declined to intervene, stating that the case was not a human rights issue. Eventually, the matter was settled when authorities granted the plaintiff businesses the right to operate from 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily.

JMMP cadre also gave radio interviews and attended human rights workshops in Coyuca de Benitez and Tlapa de Comonfort. During fieldwork I also heard reports that some human rights observers in Guerrero considered daylight savings time to be a human rights violation, as it interrupted the rhythm of life for rural peoples. (I witnessed widespread noncompliance with daylight savings time during fieldwork in Chilapa). Other cases involved aiding victims of rape, defending criminal suspects, and aiding poor people whose doctors or lawyers were charging outrageous fees. For example, in La Esperanza, a young male committed a crime. His brother looked much like him and was mistakenly imprisoned for one month. JMMP had him released. In Mexcaltepec, a

number of campesinos pooled money and gave it to a village authority to buy fertilizer. He pocketed the money until JMMP pressure finally compelled him to make amends. In Tixtla a man and a woman were imprisoned for being EPR guerrillas. Their children were left without parental supervision or economic support. JMMP provides some support for the children's health and well-being.

Not all criminal suspects are considered to be victims of human rights abuses. Four notorious delinquents in Ayahualco approached JMMP for free legal defense. JMMP declined, principally because there was no clear cut violation of human rights; partially because this would pit the human rights center against the community. At least three cases involved Mexican nationals imprisoned in the USA. One case involved a woman from Telocuatla who was fined $500.00 for some unspecified act of negligence committed while grief-stricken over the deaths of her husband and son. JMMP convinced the authorities to drop the fine. Another case featured a man on a hunger strike after being fired from his job in Ahuacuotzingo. JMMP arranged a medical examination for the man. JMMP also aided an elderly woman (said by villagers to be 100 years old) who was raped in Caquixla, Atlixtac, by a heavily intoxicated young man. The alleged assailant fled the community once he realized what he had done, and at the time of this writing was still at large. JMMP is pressing the authorities to bring him to justice; the assailant is said to be living under the protection of indifferent authorities in a neighboring village.

The salient point drawn from the preceding examples is that the human rights center has taken on the role of a dispute settlement service for a variety of cases that

some may consider outside the parameters of traditional human rights organizing. Many of these examples illustrate that the distinction between human rights and conventional criminal cases is a fine one indeed.

A Locational Analysis of Human Rights Activities

JMMP records seventy-five cases attended to from January of 1997 to January of 2000. These cases involved residents from six municipios: Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa de Alvarez, Mártir de Cuiapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala. Of these seventy-five cases, thirty-five involved residents of the municipio of Chilapa, seventeen were from Ahuacuotzingo; sixteen were from Atlixtac, three from Mártir de Cuilapan, three from Zitlala, and one from Tixtla.

Table 5.2

JMMP CASES AGGREGATED BY MUNICIPIO AND PROBLEM

Municipio	Total Cases	Military Cases	Police Cases	Intervillage Land Cases	Intravillage Land Cases	Intrafamily Cases	Other Cases
Chilapa	35	2	7	1	6	2	17
Ahuacuotzingo	17	12	0	0	5	0	0
Atlixtac	16	4	6	1	0	0	5
M. de Cuilapan	3	0	2	0	0	0	1
Zitlala	3	0	2	0	0	1	0
Tixtla	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Regional Total	75	18	17	2	11	3	24

Chilapa, where the human rights center is located and with by far the largest

population of the six municipios, ranked first place in human rights cases. Tixtla had only one case, reflecting that city's status as a marketing center that provides many of the same services as the cabecera of Chilapa. Aggrieved individuals from Tixtla are almost certainly taking their cases to organizations in their own cabecera. Tixtla is also situated on the main highway very near to the state capital of Chilpancingo, so it is unlikely that Chilapa would be drawing much business from that municipio, perhaps only from those communities that were located in far eastern Tixtla. Ahuacuotzingo and Atlixtac, two poverty-ridden municipios on Chilapa's eastern frontier, have economically unimportant cabeceras and are thus more a part of Chilapa's orbit. Chilapa lies between them and Chilpancingo, and there are no nearby competing marketing centers to service western Atlixtac and Ahuacuotzingo, only Tlapa de Comonfort, still further east of Atlixtac. Far eastern Atlixtac and Ahuacuotzingo probably do orient towards the Centro de Derechos Humanos "Tlachinollan" A.C. in Tlapa, although, curiously, the Atlixtac community most involved with JMMP, Huitzapula, is in fact located on the far eastern frontier of that municipio. This community is reportedly working with Tlachinollan as well.

Seventeen cases were registered in Ahuacuotzingo and sixteen in Atlixtac. Combined, these two sparsely populated municipios nearly equal Chilapa itself in number of cases (thirty-five Chilapa, thirty-three Ahuacuotzingo / Atlixtac). The military presence in those municipios tended to concentrate on rather remote villages. Mártir de Cuilapan, like Tixtla, is located close to Chilpancingo and registered only three cases. Zitlala, with a history of rather turbulent agrarian conflicts and well within Chilapa's marketing hinterland, has curiously, only three cases. Of the cases from the municipio of

Chilapa, twelve originated from the cabecera itself and thirty-three from rural communities.

An examination of JMMP's logbook (1999-2000) reveals complementary locational dynamics even further pronounced in Chilapa's favor. Of the 251 individuals who visited the human rights center between August of 1999 and March of 2000 an overwhelming majority (213) were from the municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez. Atlixtac placed second with twenty, Ahuacuotzingo third with seven; Mártir de Cuilapan next with four, Zitlala with three, and finally Tixtla with one.

Table 5.3

VISITORS TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER, JULY 1999 TO JUNE 2000

Municipio of Origin	Population	Visitors
Chilapa de Alvarez	102,863	213
Atlixtac	21,407	20
Ahuacuotzingo	19,388	7
Mártir de Cuilapan	13,801	4
Zitlala	17,361	3
Tixtla	33,620	1

The logbook demonstrates that the center overwhelmingly attracts solicitations for aid from within the municipio itself (213:35 municipio / outsider visitation rate).

Twenty-seven visitors were from the eastern municipios of Ahuacuotzingo and Atlixtac, while only one visitor was from Chilapa's western neighbor, Tixtla.

Cases in 1999

In 1999, JMMP attended forty-two cases in six municipios: Ahuacuotzingo, Atlixtac, Chilapa, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala. Chilapa led with twenty-five cases, while Ahuacuotzingo and Atlixtac tied for second place with six cases each. Those participants from outside the municipio tend to come from a small smattering of communities (i.e., La Esperanza in Mártir de Cuilapan; Huitzapula and its anexos in Atlixtac). La Esperanza had three cases, Zitlala two, and Tixtla one case. All of Atlixtac's cases involved residents of comunidad agraria Huitzapula (although in 2000 another Atlixtac community would be involved in JMMP mediation). In Ahuacuotzingo, residents of three communities were involved in JMMP cases in 1999: Tecocautla, Tepetitla, and Tlalculmulco. The three cases from Mártir de Cuilapan all involved residents of the community of La Esperanza.[12] JMMP organized workshops and word-of-mouth are the media through which news of JMMP is disseminated in regional villages, and this is reflected in the pattern of repeat visits by members of small number

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[12] On workshop sign-up sheets in late 1999, residents from La Esperanza signed with forty signatures and only two thumb-prints; residents from San Gerónimo Palantla registered with 31 signatures and nine thumb-prints; Ixcatla had 16 signatures and 18 thumb-prints; and residents of Hueycantenango enrolled by signing 34 signatures and 16 thumb-prints. This represents a large increase from 1997 in the literacy rate of workshop participants, perhaps reflecting JMMP's expansion from targeting only the most marginal communities. By late 1999, JMMP was targeting largely mestizo villages near Chilapa, recognizing an obligation to meet the needs of all communities.

of specific communities.[13] In Chilapa, human rights cases originated from fifteen communities: Acatlán, Ahuejhuejtic, Ahuacostic, Ahuixtla, Ahuexotitlán, Atenxoxola, Ayahualulco, Chilapa, Colotepec, El Jaguey, Hueycantenango, San Gerónimo Palantla, Teomatitlan, Tepehuisco, and Zompeltepec. Fifteen of these cases involved counseling, fourteen were criminal cases, nine were agrarian conflicts, and six were family disputes, community conflicts, or other matters. At least one community (Ahuacuotzingo) turned down the opportunity to participate in a 1999 JMMP workshop, arguing that they were too busy with the electoral campaigning. In these workshops JMMP personnel emphasized that they were unafraid to stand up to political elites, the military, and the police. This type of independence was until recently unheard of for government funded movements, and I believe that it was difficult for JMMP to convincingly explain to campesinos their novel position. During the course of my fieldwork JMMP was consistently functioning like an independent monitor even while their financial dependency on the government was uncontested.

Conclusions

By the Spring of 2000, some JMMP members were becoming increasingly nervous that if the PRI lost the year 2000 presidential elections, SEDESOL would be disbanded and the center would be shut down. I must add that some of those concerned were long-time volunteers who were not making a living from SEDESOL funds. I joked with them that now they would have to become priistas to save the center. The center's

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[13] One is also struck by the degree to which advertising is conducted by vehicle-mounted loudspeakers in Chilapa, again reflecting the low literacy rates of rural consumers.

future is indeed cloudy and they continue to search for foreign funding. As of August of 2001, the center continued operating despite the PAN victory in the presidential election.

SEDESOL, via INI, has financed all JMMP operations for three years. This funding as demonstrated, has underwritten actions that put JMMP in direct conflicts of interest with the Mexican Army, police forces, PROCEDE, and government financed development NGOs. SEDESOL's commitment to JMMP cannot be described as a conventional example of cooptation of the opposition.[14] JMMP and the various government elites do not have undivided interests and it would be unfair to characterize the human rights organization as having "sold out" to the state. Rather, there is a commingling of interests that warrants continued state financing of the JMMP. Once the fundamental interests of the state and JMMP diverge widely, the former will predictably withdraw funding. Yet that time has not yet arrived, and the state appears willing to put up with the JMMP's occasional opposition to specific policies so long as the organization continues to make substantial contributions to the overall process of legal reform in the countryside. This campaign requires the participation of grassroots activists who have considerable credibility with the poor, activists such as the members of the JMMP. I also note that with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the world-wide trend towards multi-party states, government strategists are fully aware that their ability to monopolize power is no longer what it once was. Hence, the government's

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[14] In fact, the NGO that Chilapeños most widely regard as being "bought-off" by the government is OCICI, which receives its finances from the government of the state of Guerrero and is uninvolved with the local SEDESOL / INI chain of resources. OCICI's founder and director was killed in an automobile accident on March 24, 2000, and being something of a "one-man show" it is unknown what will become of the organization.

commitment to JMMP through SEDESOL funding is better described as a calculated strategy of building institutions that aid in overall legal and economic restructuring. This campaign also includes political maneuvering designed to increase regime legitimacy, combined with a recognition that there are certain other advantages to be gained by financing such centers. JMMP center members tell me that they believe the government funds them for two reasons: propaganda and information. By funding the human rights center, the government can claim a commitment to human rights. It can also keep tabs on the opposition, and because they have access to the center's archives and reports, JMMP is in effect used as a source of information by the government. I note that JMMP sometimes functions as a "privatized wing" of the Agrarian Tribunals by mediating many disputes that the government is unwilling to attend.

This process is being played out nation-wide. Hernandez and Fox (1995:199) report that their were only four human rights NGOs in Mexico in 1984; by 1991 that number had grown to sixty. In this sense, JMMP and similar centers are fundamental role players in the reorganization of the legal apparatus governing local communities. JMMP shares training and instructional strategies with other Guerrero human rights centers such as Tlachinollan in Tlapa. JMMP collaborates with the Democratic Citizens Movement in promoting political rights workshops and coordinates with other national NGOs to standardize human rights instruction. JMMP's work complements the political, economic, and legal restructuring associated with neoliberal development, even while its members are voracious critics of neoliberalism in all of its guises. For all of these reasons, the center appears to serve some purpose for the government, despite the

inevitable conflicts of interest with military forces, counterinsurgency, and PROCEDE.

In the end, the JMMP began as an organization aimed at protecting villagers from military and police abuses. Now they find themselves stuck in the middle of the Mexican government's neoliberal economic policies. The group faces thorny legal and ethical dilemmas that have become commonplace in southern Mexico and that will, I suspect, present rather taxing challenges to those working to promote both human rights and a measure of local political and economic autonomy.

CHAPTER 6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter examines SSS Sanzekan Tinemi (SZT), the major NGO administering economic development projects in the Chilapa area. The chapter assesses the types of resources channeled by Sanzekan Tinemi into regional communities and their impact on rural living standards. I argue that development NGOs like Sanzekan Tinemi bolster the neoliberal reform effort through their promotion of viable micro industries and transfer of subsidies to impoverished rural families. These inputs are indispensable for local production and help underwrite social stability in a region that is potentially explosive. Subsidy programs in Guerrero now require the creation of groups like Sanzekan Tinemi. The subsidies are directed through a network of NGOs and PGOs that keep resources flowing in a more or less orderly manner while reorienting production for competitive open markets. Currently these resource transfers are not enough to lift most households out of poverty, but they are providing real support to some of Chilapa's poorest rural areas.[1]

NGOs in Chilapa provide subsidies, services, and training that enable rural households to reorient production towards national and international markets via a strategy of comparative advantage. Many of Chilapa's rural residents are doing this through mescal production based on the cultivation of *maguey* and craft work based on

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[1] Both Foster (1967) and Friedlander (1975) discuss development projects (subsidized craft work production, etc.) in Tzintzuntzan and Hueyapan that foreshadow the current programs administered by SEDESOL and NGOs around Chilapa.

the woven palm industry.[2] These are the two areas of development that local NGOs such as Sanzekan Tinemi subsidize most heavily. Finally, NGOs subsidize existing rural industries (viz., swinehearding; fruit and vegetable cultivation) and help underwrite the complex system of inputs that sustain maize produced for consumption by the regional population. NGOs, in essence, promote neoliberal reform while augmenting the existing rural industries that have long sustained Chilapa and its hinterland.

Aside from these general considerations, it is appropriate here to view the regional impact of development NGOs such as Sanzekan Tinemi in still greater detail. A closer examination reveals that development NGOs have become part of the survival portfolio of rural households engaged in a strategy of "occupational multiplicity." Often, members of rural households are participating in NGO sponsored projects when it suits them, and then move on to other activities. Hence, local NGOs are not particularly novel in terms of the development alternatives they offer, and merely blend into a survival strategy common in the underdeveloped world.

Regional Economic Development

Crop and product specialization is the development strategy espoused by most US-trained economists, usually under the rubric of economic (or export) base theory, which postulates that the external demand for a region's products is the primary determinant of regional prosperity (Maliza and Feser 1999:51). From this perspective,

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[2] Biologist Catarina Illsey Granich of the Environmental Studies Group has conducted extensive ecological research on Sanzekan Tinemi reforestation projects, particularly those involving maguey and palm in the community of Topiltepec. I refer the reader to her work for a more detailed consideration of the projects discussed in this chapter.

internal demand is considered relatively insignificant as a source of income and growth, and other factors, such as the region's natural resources, are simply not addressed. Recruitment for profitable manufacturing export industries is deemed desirable based on the expectation that growth in local-serving industries will follow (Maliza and Feser 1999:52). Remittances derived from external sales will generate increased spending and standards of living throughout the regional economy (Maliza and Feser 1999:52).

The major development initiatives currently underway in Chilapa reveal both similarities and departures from economic base theory. The Ministry of Social Development is working in association with other federal bureaucracies and regional NGOs to bolster Chilapa's exports geared to the global marketplace. However, the initiatives undertaken in Chilapa go a step further by trying to ensure the sustainability of the natural resources exploited, a theme common in the "sustainable development" literature popular among NGO members. However, contrary to the expectations of both economic base theory and sustainable development, the Chilapa region is heavily dependent on external subsidies in order to keep the entire regional economy afloat. In order to illustrate these processes, I turn now to an examination of Chilapa's largest and most ambitious NGO, SSS Sanzekan Tinemi.

SSS Sanzekan Tinemi: History

SSS Sanzekan Tinemi along with its affiliated primary grassroots organizations is the largest regional NGO with 1,262 members. Sanzekan Tinemi can trace its roots back to 1980, when a COMPLAMAR-CONASUPO initiative led to the creation of the Community Council of Supply (CCA) and associated rural committees in Chilapa. The

objectives of the CCA (Sanzekan Tinemi's immediate antecedent organization) centered on maintaining rural stores and buying fertilizer wholesale. After 1982 the CCA concentrated on fertilizer acquisition and the maintenance of a steady supply of consumer goods to rural communities through association with DICONSA, which provided infrastructural support. Serious power struggles with DICONSA arose in the late 1980s, culminating in a CCA-led occupation of the main DICONSA regional office. This incident provoked enough anxiety in elites to implement local reforms favoring the CCA. This reform strengthened the organization and gradually produced Sanzekan Tinemi in 1990. Simultaneously, a wave of abrupt privatizations in the early 1990s (such as that which occurred to FERTIMEX) coincided with a sudden growth of a regional NGO network. It was against this backdrop of the selling off of public industries and the rise of PRONASOL funding opportunities in which Sanzekan Tinemi was born.

Sanzekan Tinemi was functionally divided into divisions known as "areas." These areas included (1) a crafts production office, that aided regional communities in the development and marketing of palm products; (2) reforestation; (3) a rural women's organization; (4) a savings and loan program; (5) aid to producers, primarily through fertilizer sales; (6) technical assistance; and (7) rural stores, originally organized by DICONSA and the CCA. By 1995 some of these areas (i.e. the women's organization, the savings and loan) had fissioned off into independent Social Solidarity Societies, while the rural stores sector (still known as the CCA) became an independent Civil Association. However, Sanzekan Tinemi and her daughter organizations continued to collaborate, especially in training and workshops. The daughter organizations were all

located in the same complex of warehouses and offices that housed Sanzekan Tinemi proper. DICONSA (now incorporated into SEDESOL) was overseeing the CCA rural stores and counted 93 retail outlets located in Chilapa, Ahuacuotzingo, Mártir de Cuilapan, Tixtla, and Zitlala. The savings and loan area (now an independent SSS known as Matotlanejtikan Tomin) drew clients from forty-four communities in several municipios (Ahuacuotzingo, Chilapa de Alvarez, Mártir de Cuilapan, Quechultenango, and Zitlala) and financed itself through SEDESOL.

By the time of my fieldwork, (1998-2000) Sanzekan Tinemi itself consisted of three areas: a crafts area, reforestation, and fertilizer sales. Membership was on the rise during this period, jumping from 1,096 members in 1999 to 1,262 members in 2000. Sanzekan Tinemi PGOs were dispersed primarily in the municipio of Chilapa, Ahuacuotzingo, Mártir de Cuilapan and Zitlala, but some existed in Olinala, Taxco, and at one time even in the state of Puebla. The artisans area was receiving heavy financial backing from SEDESOL, and in the past, from the Interamerican Development Bank. Sanzekan Tinemi reforestation had planted over 660,000 trees in fourteen communities in four municipios. In addition it had planted 1,050,000 maguey plants in seven communities located in four municipios. The maguey planting was designed not only with the idea of starting up mescal production, but with the idea of lessening erosion and giving local campesinos temporary employment opportunities. This project was financed by SEDESOL. Aid to producers (fertilizer sales) was by 1995 working in twenty-two communities, being financed primarily through SEDESOL and FONAES.

Sanzekan Tinemi is funded by a number of government agencies, particularly

SEDESOL, SM, and SEMARNAP. The Mexican government is in fact Sanzekan Tinemi's largest single source of financial support and other resources. Hence, one can conceptualize Sanzekan Tinemi as a link through which state resources flow into regional communities. Because the projects financed through Sanzekan Tinemi typically must conform to the guidelines established by SEDESOL, the state has considerable influence in the overall direction of regional economic development. The presence of external NGOs and foreign donors in the funding matrix merely reinforces the reality that local communities have become dependent on external subsidies for their very survival (Kyle 1995), a consideration often lost in the rhetoric of autonomy and resistance that is so ubiquitous in NGO studies.

Leadership and Administrative Staff

Sanzekan Tinemi's political framework is democratic and inclusive. This is a sharp departure from some of the other local development NGOs, such as OCICI, that maintained traditional patron-client relations dominated by powerful, cacique-like leaders either appointed by the state or self-selected. For instance, when OCICI's founder and director (who had headed the organization for a decade with typical patronage tactics) died, his replacement was selected by government functionaries. The directors of OCICI and UCNAG were also members of local political parties (the PRI and the PRD respectively) and were holding public offices while leading their NGOs, something completely antithetical to Sanzekan Tinemi's organizational mandates. Active Sanzekan Tinemi members are not allowed to hold public political offices.

The political structure of Sanzekan Tinemi itself entails a power-sharing

arrangement between farmers from local and regional villages, augmented by a staff of university educated technocrats, some from states such as Veracruz or the Federal District. Because Sanzekan Tinemi is governed by formal democratic principles and in theory at least, is directly accountable to its base membership, it falls into Carroll's (1992) definition of a membership support organization (MSO). The General Assembly, which is formed by all active members of the organization, is technically the supreme authority. The General Assembly appoints an Executive Committee by way of periodic elections. The Executive Committee is composed of three local campesinos who perform as president, treasurer, and secretary of the Vigilance Committee. Two are from Topiltepec, Zitlala, a community involved in Sanzekan Tinemi's reforestation program, and the other is from Ayahualulco, which is associated with the artisans section.

None of the Executive Committee members hold university degrees. The offices that they hold are elected positions contested once every other year. However, much of the actual decision making, at least by my impression, originates from the artisan, fertilizer, and reforestation area directors. The artisan direstor is from a village near Taxco, well outside of the municipio. The fertilizer director is from La Providencia, a mestizo community, and the reforestation director is from Topiltepec. The artisan director has some university education although he holds no degrees; the other two have not attended university. These three individuals comprised the original Executive Committee of Sanzekan Tinemi. Area leadership has only vaguely defined procedures for change in personnel. Assessing the balance of power between these individuals and leadership branches is tricky, but my impression was that the Executive Committee was

often rubber-stamping decisions made by the area leaders, although in theory they did have veto power. A financial oversight committee also added checks and balances to Sanzekan Tinemi's power structure. The Executive Committee acted as a sort of collective governor general, while the three area leaders acted as a trio of Prime Ministers. The most immediately apparent difference between the two branches is that the Executive Committee members all dress in a much more rural style: non-descript plain white shirts, blue jeans, cowboy hats, although they do wear shoes in place of sandals. The area leaders all dress in finer and more elegant urban styles.

The current organization is as follows. Artisans is sub divided into two offices: Services; and Sales and Commercialization. The two staff members from Services write up funding proposals directed towards SEDESOL and other ministries. They also develop projects and training. One is from Veracruz, has a Masters degree in sciences from a university in Mexico City. The other, from Chilapa, has a *Licenciatura* degree in public administration from a university in Acapulco. Both are monolingual mestizos.

Sales and Commercialization deals with clients, aids in training, and works with primary grassroots organizations. Three males and one female staff the sales office. The three men are from Chilapa. One holds a Licenciatura degree in economics, the second has some university education, and the third received a technical diploma from a local institute. The woman is from Atzacoaloya, an indigenous village. Other administrative staff members hail from Topiltepec and Tepetlatipa, respectively. Reforestation and fertilizer sales have similarly small staffs. The leadership is primarily mestizo, but includes some representatives from indigenous villages. At the village level, the

Sanzekan Tinemi primary grassroots organizations have a leadership composed of a president, secretary and treasurer. In theory at least, these village level PGOs select their internal leadership through democratic elections held once every two years. PGO members must demonstrate to Sanzekan Tinemi's satisfaction that no group member receives preferential or discriminatory treatment based on sexual, ideological, political, or religious orientation.

Sanzekan Tinemi is in alliance with the national UNORCA organization, that lobbies at both the state and national levels on behalf of small-scale agriculturalists. Through UNORCA, Sanzekan Tinemi has links with *Via Campesina* (the Peasant Way), an international alliance of peasant movements that advocates policies amenable to the continuation of distinctive peasant production systems in the global capitalist economy. It also works very closely with the Environmental Studies Group (GEA), a Mexico City based civil association that specializes in sustainable development. Sanzekan Tinemi is also a member of the Regional Indigenous Council of Central / Montaña, the local umbrella organization that links Chilapan NGOs with SEDESOL, and the State Council for Social Participation in the Women's Productive Development Program, which interacts with both SEDESOL and the Ministry of Women. Sanzekan Tinemi is also a part of the Municipal Development Council, which implements municipal development projects. The organization is also participating in the formation of a network of groups dedicated to development in indigenous villages, under the auspices of the Professional Aid Services for Indigenous Integral Development A.C. (SEPRADI). Finally, Sanzekan Tinemi and its daughter organizations continue to work in unison through the Regional

Peasant Convergence of Region Central / Montaña of Guerrero Sanzekan Tinemi, which is comprised by one representative from each daughter organization, and one representative from each of Sanzekan Tinemi's three areas.

In summary, Sanzekan Tinemi has political structures and practices that are consistent with conventional notions of democratic government and accountability to the base membership. Although Sanzekan's leadership meets contemporary norms of democratic practice, the organization's work itself is essentially limited to aiding communities in adapting to the global marketplace and overseeing temporary employment projects. While it is true that the organization has worked with the *Alianza Civica* (Civic Alliance) in election monitoring, Sanzekan Tinemi generally does not concentrate its efforts in such matters. Rather than promulgating political change, its main efforts are devoted to income generating schemes designed for the rural poor. While one can argue that politics and economics are intimately connected and we must speak of political economies, I propose that it is a matter of degree. Sanzekan Tinemi tends towards administering programs emphasizing the economic, not the political, dimensions of development.

Ideology and Objectives

Sanzekan Tinemi cites as objectives the democratization of the country, and the beginning of sustainable rural development that impacts both local and regional villages; all of which is to be conducted under the principles of democracy and self-determination. Sanzekan Tinemi describes itself as a "non-profit membership organization founded in 1990 to promote economic alternatives with a regional impact for subsistence farmers

facing the challenge of adapting to new free market conditions" (Sanzekan Tinemi marketing brochure, 1999). The artisan area cites as its objective the promotion of "sustainable development of the handicraft sector, generating employment in accord with equitable commercial practices and guaranteeing our customers high quality products and services" (Sanzekan Tinemi marketing brochure, 1999). Sanzekan Tinemi maintains that its projects include collective work in agriculture, craft work, reforestation, and preservation of natural resources. It has written some documents (intended for viewing by government bureaucrats) holding that "the organization has maintained its force in pursuing strategies of survival, and in attending to problems of marginality and poverty in which people are obliged to live under the neoliberal policies" (Sanzekan Tinemi archives 2000). This phrase may be interpreted as a criticism of government economic policies, but if so, it is a mild enough rebuke. Sanzekan Tinemi does not produce radical public rhetoric.[3] Its publications intended for public viewing generally describe Sanzekan Tinemi as a peasant organization, but indigenous themes are occasionally advanced as well. In summary, Sanzekan Tinemi's pronouncements generally conform to their actions: the organization attempts to develop the regional economy and eradicate extreme poverty through the implementation of productive projects.

SSS Sanzekan Tinemi Artisans Division

The Sanzekan Tinemi artisans area is named "*Titetitkite Sanzekan*," Nahuatl for

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[3] Bray (1991) argues that given geopolitical realities, a posture of defiance and resistance is unlikely to empower impoverished rural peoples. He asserts that peasant movements in Latin America have become increasingly moderate based on their realistic assessments of the limitations of revolutionary strategies in a post-Cold War era of budget limitations.

"we continue to work together." Amidst the privatization of parastatals in the early 1990s it had replaced the now defunct FIDEPAL as the major local institution directly supporting Chilapa's woven palm industry. This industry arose in the 1930s when a technique to braid strands of *zoyate* (palm) leaves was perfected by a local entrepreneur (Kyle 1995). The braided strands, known as *cinta*, became the basic component of a variety of products including baskets, handbags, placemats, and sombreros. When decorated with dried zoyate leaves or acrylic yarn these products proved to be marketable in regions external to Chilapa. During the 1940s and 1950s the woven palm complex rapidly expanded throughout the region, effectively replacing Chilapa's collapsing rebozo industry as the most important local export industry (Kyle 1995). Many dispersed villages became enmeshed in separate phases of production. In Chilapa municipio, sombreros, baskets, bags, and dolls were produced in great numbers. Ahuacuotzingo tended to produce more *petates* (sleeping mats) while Zitlala specialized in cinta for sombreros (Meza Castillo 1994). The Mexican government nationalized the industry in 1973 and created a parastatal (FIDEPAL) to coordinate credit and marketing. In 1978 FIDEPAL estimated that 42,154 part-time artisans were present in the municipios of Chilapa, Mártir de Cuilapan, and Zitlala, seventy-two percent (30,455) of whom were residents of Chilapa municipio (Meza Castillo 1994:32). Meza Castillo (1994:32) estimates that thirty-two percent of the regional population participated in the woven palm complex. FIDEPAL managed craft production until 1993, when the agency was disbanded and its local duties transferred over to Sanzekan Tinemi.

The artisans area began in 1992-1993 with four PGOs located in Trapiche Viejo,

Agua Zarca, Amate Amarillo, and Cuadrilla Nueva. Next they expanded into Lodo Grande, La Providencia, Santa Ana, and El Limon. Since then subsidized craft work has expanded to include products based on other materials, such as maize. A very small number of PGOs from outside the region (Taxco, Puebla, Olinala, and Tlapa) were incorporated into the Sanzekan Tinemi network in 1997, specializing in goods such as silver or laquer boxes that are not be produced locally. However, half of these distant PGOs, for reasons unclear, were not participating in the Sanzekan Tinemi network from 1998 through 2000. The number of artisan PGOs affiliated with Sanzekan Tinemi, regardless of their location relative to Chilapa, fluctuates annually. Twenty-six PGOs with 510 members operated in 1996. The number peaked in 1997 when thirty-two PGOs with 662 members were affiliated with Sanzekan Tinemi (see Table 6.1). By 1998, only 32 PGOs with 525 members were listed in Sanzekan Tinemi roles. The numbers rose slightly in 1999 to 32 PGOs with 543 members (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000).

Table 6.1

PGOS, PRODUCTS, AND MEMBERS, 1997

PGO Name	Location	Product	Members	Zone
1. Camino y La Esperanza	Chilapa	Palm	8	1
2. Ocuituco	Ocuituco	Palm	16	1
3. Amate Amarillo	Amate Amarillo	Palm	22	1
4. Ayahualulco Xochilt	Ayahualulco	Hoja de Maiz and Carrizo	17	3
5. Trapiche Viejo	Trapiche Viejo	Palm	24	3
6. Dos Arroyos	Amate Amarillo	Palm	15	1
7. La Providencia	La Providencia	Palm	15	1
8. Santa Ana	Santa Ana	Palm	6	1

9. Acaquila	Acaquila	Palm	17	3
10. Sauce y Palo Dulce	Alpanocan, Pue.	Sauce	18	-
11. Topiltepec	Topiltepec	Palm	17	3
12. Acatlán	Acatlán	Textile	15	1
13. Lodo Grande	Lodo Grande	Palm	15	1
14. Xalitla	Xalitla	Palm	18	-
15. Carpeneros de Taxco	Taxco	Wood	22	-
16. Alternativa de la Mujer	Chilapa	Textile	20	1
17. Llano Perdido	Llano Perdido	Textile	76	3
18. Hamaqueros de Copalillo	Copalillo	Hammocks	15	-
19. Mantis Religiosa	Tlapa	Palm	55	-
20. Zelocotitlán	Zelocotitlán	Palm	22	3
21. Ayahualulco 11	Ayahualulco	Palm	22	3
22. Grupo Medina	Ayahualulco	Hoja de Maiz	25	3
23. Zompeltepec	Zompeltepec	Palm	25	3
24. Papaxtla	Papaxtla	Palm	17	2
25. Zitlali	Chilapa	Macrame	15	1
26. Mujeres en Busca	Topiltepec	Textile	16	3
27. SSS Arci Iris	Tepetzintla, Pue.	Textile	30	-
28. Tepoxcuatla	Chilapa	Palm	12	1
29. Artesanos de Olinala	Olinala	Lacur Boxes	16	-
30. Plateros de Taxco	Taxco	Silver	20	-
31. Xiloxuchicán	Xiloxuchicán	Hoja de Maiz	16	3
32. Prod. De Escobas	Zitlala	Escobas	30	1
		Total	662	

Sanzekan Tinemi artisans were producing a considerable amount of craft work for national and international markets divorced from Chilapa's tianguis. The primary market was Mexico, where 72.75 percent ($512,702.00 in sales) of their products were sold (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000). Luna Descalza was their primary national client, absorbing 78.16 percent ($400,729.98) of the domestic product (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000). Their secondary market was Europe, which was absorbing the other 21.25 percent of the produce. Holland, through the importer Fair Trade Assistance, was the chief foreign buyer with 19.22 percent, ($135,433.30) followed by Belgium (5.95 percent; $41,909.00) and France (2.08 percent; $14,654.60; figures are from Sanzekan

Tinemi Archives, 2000). Craft work was being produced in over twenty regional villages, sold to Sanzekan Tinemi, and through them, to both national and international clients. Village producers were also selling crafts to both middlemen and tourists in regional markets in Acapulco and Oaxaca. SEDESOL and FONAES were the primary government agencies financing the Sanzekan Tinemi artisan area with money provided by the largely through the Temporary Employment Program.

The artisans area has a catalogue of products that they promote. The Sanzekan Tinemi cadre instruct villagers on how to produce these specific designs. Sanzekan Tinemi then has exclusive rights to market these finished products. They will place orders periodically with village producers, with orders depending on the client's seasonal needs. Villagers may sell products that they themselves designed to middlemen other than Sanzekan Tinemi. The overwhelming majority of the rural producer organizations reportedly have diverse clients, selling to Canadian and US tourists in Acapulco and to Mexican clients in Acapulco and Oaxaca.

Funding and Remittances for Artisan PGOs

PGOs working with Sanzekan Tinemi's artisan area are legally constituted as SEDESOL solidarity-style committees, with the tripartite leadership structure (president, secretary, treasurer) common with that organizational type. These small workgroups receive much of their funding through SEDESOL's Temporary Employment Program and FONAES. Seventy percent of the allotted SEDESOL Temporary Employment funds and 100 percent of the FONAES funds (about $30,000 annually per PGO) are placed in a rotating fund for each PGO. The PGO members will purchase raw materials drawing on

money from the fund. The other thirty percent of the SEDESOL Temporary Employment funds go to Sanzekan Tinemi for administrative costs. Sanzekan Tinemi would then purchase the finished products and sell them wholesale to client businesses in both national and international markets.

SEDESOL funding usually commences in the month of July and ceases in late or mid-December. On paper, SEDESOL receives reports indicating that PGO members are allotted $26.00 a day, six days a week, for a hypothetical weekly income of $156.00, as if there were no seventy percent-thirty percent split. The villagers must re-apply each year for funding, and documents finalizing the yearly allotment must be signed by the PGO, Sanzekan Tinemi, SEDESOL, and CODEPLEG. In 1997, there was $270,000 available for artisan support in seven communities. In 1998, $320,000 were allotted to seven communities, and in 1999, $570,000 for craft work in eleven communities from four municipios, directly benefiting 186 families.[4] In 1999 CIMO also paid out $71,994 for craft work in seven communities, benefiting 132 members. In total, 64,500 artisan items were produced through the Sanzekan Tinemi-SEDESOL arrangement in 1999. Total sales in 1999 amounted to $409,897.15. Fifty-seven percent of the product was sold nationally while forty-three percent was destined for international markets (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000).

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[4] Although the bulk of this money came from SEDESOL, in 1999 I can only document SEDESOL's Branch 26 temporary employment program financing $482,014.00 for Sanzekan Tinemi artisan production in nine regional communities: Ahuacuotzingo, Ahuihuiyuco, Amate Amarillo, Cuahetenango, La Esperanza, Santa Ana, Tetitlán, Topiltepec, and Trapiche Viejo (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000). The other two communities probably were funded by SEDESOL as well.

Camino y La Esperanza, a Chilapa based PGO, was by far the most productive supplier to Sanzekan Tinemi. In 1997, eight members divided up $87,210.90 derived from sales to Sanzekan Tinemi, for a yearly income of $10,901.36 apiece. In 1998, the same PGO had fifteen members who earned a combined income of $96,038.87 in sales to Sanzekan Tinemi, or roughly $6,402.59 apiece. In 1999, four members divided up $118,867.06 from Sanzekan Tinemi sales, for an average income of $29,716.76 each. As these four individuals came from two families, each family was earning an annual income of $58,000 from Sanzekan Tinemi, more than enough to keep them well above the poverty line (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000).

Most other PGOs were far less dependent on Sanzekan Tinemi as a client (see Table 6.2). Ayahualulco's PGO holds the second largest volume of sales to Sanzekan Tinemi over the last three years, with a sales total of $70,401.96 over this period. Ayahualulco, a PGO with seventeen members in 1997, had sales to Sanzekan Tinemi that reached $38,511.66 in that year, or $2,265 per person. In 1998, sales to Sanzekan Tinemi dropped to $11,048.50 divided among thirty-five members, or $315.67 apiece. In 1999, the same PGO had thirty-five members selling $20,841.80 to Sanzekan Tinemi, for an average income of $595.48 per person. At the bottom end of the scale, ten PGO members from Cuadrilla Nueva sold nothing to Sanzekan Tinemi in 1997, $22.00 worth of items in 1998, and nothing again in 1999, for an average income of $0.00 in the years 1997 and 1999, and $2.20 in 1998 (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000). The GEA reportedly estimated a monthly income as $6.00 US per artisan, inducing their development specialists towards advocating mescal production as a potentially more

lucrative undertaking (http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/programs/cmc/newsletter/ september01). The wide variance in remittances aggregated by PGO and year warrants further investigation into its causes. At the least, the situation suggests both instability in the market and the widespread practice of occupational multiplicity.

Table 6.2

SELECT PGO SALES (IN PESOS) TO SANZEKAN TINEMI BY YEAR, 1997-1999

Group	1997	1998	1999
1. Camino y La Esperanza	87,210.90	96,038.87	118,867.06
2. Ocuituco	4,654.32	27,563.16	20,508.38
3. Amate Amarillo	41,012.84	1,374.31	18,653.58
4. La Villa	2,512.00	998.00	1,476.00
5. Ayahualulco	38,511.66	11,048.50	20,841.80
6. Ayahualulco	38,511.66	11,048.50	20,841.80
7. Dos Arrolles	19,666.18	2,073.24	18,371.14
8. La Providencia	23,043.96	4,796.46	5,329.74
9. Santa Ana	7,227.87	257.04	0.00
10. Grupo Luz y Alegria	0.00	145.00	0.00
11. Grupo Medina	10,984.34	5,740.71	11,352.43
12. Grupo Xochitl	10,984.34	5,740.71	11,352.43
13. El Limon	0.00	17,280.50	9,378.04
14. Xiloxuchicán	10,302.10	9,484.32	984.41
15. La Esperanza	935.00	2,170.00	4,708.36
16. Lodo Grande	22,452.16	5,452.40	5,884.00
17. Diverse Producers	0.00	0.00	10,566.40
18. Tetitlán de Lima	0.00	0.00	10,566.40
19. Olinalatecos	0.00	0.00	36,605.00
20. Cosmeticos Mazunte	777.50	0.00	0.00
21. El Refugio	0.00	0.00	2,100.00
22. Cuahetenango	0.00	0.00	5,400.00
23. Cuadrilla Nueva	0.00	22.00	0.00

These members do sell products in other markets such as Oaxaca and Acapulco, so it is possible, and indeed probable, that Sanzekan Tinemi credit, training, and support is indirectly aiding these producers with sales in these locations.

Training Producers for Competition in the Global Market

The artisans area was promoting services, training, and strategic alliances to form economies of scale. They are currently concentrating on product diversification and the training of community instructors. The Dutch company Fair Trade Assistance / Fair Trade Organization[5] (FTA) provides counseling in marketing and product design. FTA buys from producer organizations such as Sanzekan Tinemi wholesale once a year, usually between July and September. Every December their shop in Holland sells large volumes of holiday gifts produced in the developing world.

FTA advisors noted that Sanzekan Tinemi faces stiff competition from Asia, especially from Vietnam. Sanzekan Tinemi hired FTA consultants to see if they could reorganize production and reduce costs. In February of 1999, Sanzekan Tinemi committed itself to the design of new products, and the samples were ready by August. The FTA personnel arrived that month to view samples and conduct a workshop attended by both the Sanzekan Tinemi staff and the rural artisans. The purpose of the workshop was to educate the artisan producers about the realities of the Dutch market, especially so that producers would have an idea of Christmas season. The workshop focused on product design and diversification, as the Dutch wanted a new line of products. The Dutch trainers instructed the artisans in techniques for varying color, size, shape, texture, and design of their baskets and other craft work. They told them to work with their

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[5] Fair Trade Organization sold U.S. $17.8 million in 1997, while Fair Trade Assistance is a sister company training producers. It provides information on Western market, product development, and advice on credit. FTA has 20 employees, and spent U.S. $1.2 million worldwide in 1997 on training and counseling.

heads and hearts to beat the competition, showing PGO members what color schemes the Dutch people prefer. The workshop was broken up into lectures on the logic of the market, life in Holland, drawing new designs, and line of products theory. The producers were informed that FTA sells products from all over the developing world and were instructed on how to make new products and why they are necessary. The target audience was analyzed and slides were shown of life in Holland, where people were said to like big vases inside their homes. Then time was allotted for practical exercises in design and FTA critique of samples.

September of 1997 was the last time the Dutch ordered from Sanzekan Tinemi. Over 10,000 "*atrapanovias*"[6] were sold at Christmas of 1997, but sales dropped to about 450 in 1998. In September of 1998 they had declined to place further orders. Sanzekan Tinemi does not have any other really successful products in Europe and the workshop was designed to change this situation. Vietnamese producers, the chief competitors, change colors frequently and make colorful boxes at lower prices that people like and that sell well in Holland. The consultants say that both Peru and Mexico have interesting histories to draw on that could aid in marketing their products. If Sanzekan Tinemi can make reforms, they can compete again with Vietnam. Sanzekan Tinemi was hopeful for 1999, but in September of that year, Fair Trade again declined to purchase.

An analysis of workshops conducted by Sanzekan Tinemi and its daughter

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[6] The gadget is a small palm item placed on the finger of someone whom you romantically desire. When pulled at the tip, it tightens around the finger, and you "trap a *novia*" (girlfriend).

organizations [7] reveals a fairly extensive pattern of planning for the global market. In 1999, Sanzekan Tinemi scheduled 161 workshops to be conducted in thirty-six villages hosting affiliated producer organizations (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000). Workshop themes included conservation of fruit, protection of reforested areas, construction of rural stoves, diagnosis of production, preventive medicine, soil conservation, seed selection, reforestation, design of new products, quality control, administration of artisan products, and care for livestock. The money to finance these workshops was provided by SEDESOL (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000).

These workshops are often conducted in atmospheres that an observer from Canada or the US might find distracting. The FTA meeting was conducted in the Sanzekan Tinemi fertilizer warehouse. I myself was annoyed by noise from drills and pick-up trucks driving in and out. At this particular workshop thirty-seven people were present, twenty-eight adult females, four adult males, and five children. Many workshops are held in the fertilizer warehouse, and I have to conclude that the poor acoustics bothers others as well. Still, regardless of who is giving a speech or lecture, rural women in these situations invariably will talk amongst themselves, weave, or attend to children, sometimes apparently ignoring the presentations. Instructors reported that the workshops were slowly having effect, although continued reinforcement was necessary or artisans lapsed back into producing less marketable items.[8]

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[7] SSS Sanzekan Tinemi's daughter organizations are SSS Matotlanejtikan Tomin, a rural credit institution, and SSS Titekititoke Tajome Sihuame, a rural woman's organization.

[8] Foster (1967) considered that a key to the success of development projects in rural Mexico was continuous training and supervision by experts, especially at key junctures

Another workshop I attended with Sanzekan Tinemi artisans was in the village of Cuahetenango, on October 19, 1999. A class on how to balance a checkbook began at approximately 5:30 p.m. The local producer organization in attendance consisted of nineteen female members of whom eleven were present, ranging from age seventeen to seventy-five. The workshop instructor began with introductions and telling jokes. The people seemed to be relaxed and enjoying themselves. He then asked each one what they remembered from previous meeting, slowly drawing responses from them. He told them to envision themselves as business people and artists. Then he proceeded to teach them how to balance a checkbook, starting with a practical exercise. To conclude, he asked for class evaluations, which members duly produced and signed. A truck retrieved us at 7:40 p.m. and returned us to Chilapa.

I visited Topiltepec and their producer organization on Sunday, October 24, 1999, again with Sanzekan Tinemi's artisans training team. A group there was beginning an artisans organization. Nine men attended the meeting. They were much more difficult to work with than the women of Cuahetenango. They did not want to appoint a committee, and it took the Sanzekan Tinemi representative an hour and a half of begging, cajoling, etc., to get them to agree to a president, secretary, and treasurer. He finally got them to make two nominations and he selected the third. Then he just said "how about this guy for president, this guy for treasurer, this guy for secretary?" No one dissented, and that is how the leadership was chosen. Then they had to name the group. *Unión de Jornaleros*

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of delicate production processes. See Foster (1967) for examples of development projects gone awry because of insufficient training and supervision.

de Topiltepec (Laborer Union of Topiltepec) was selected. There was no other business to discuss, but we waited around an hour for a bus all the while talking with them. The Sanzekan Tinemi representative, who had served as instructor during the previously discussed Cuahetenango visit, had been less joking, less familiar with this group. Possibly this was because he did not know them as well, or because they were older men, forty to fifty years old. Most were literate, of the ten to twelve signatures I saw, only two were thumb prints. Only one individual, an elderly man in his 60s, spoke some Nahuatl. Other Sanzekan Tinemi artisan projects in Topiltepec have failed, specifically a group of teenagers called *Juveniles* (Youth) that reportedly lacked business sense and a good work ethic. Sanzekan Tinemi reforestation does maintain an enclosed nursery on village land that seems to be working out well.

In 2000, it was decided that a more efficient manner to augment this training would be to bring selected members from these villages to Chilapa itself for more extensive training. They in turn would hopefully become proficient enough to return to their villages and be able to provide around the clock expert advice. The artisan and reforestation areas collaborate intimately in these workshops and related projects, as the latter has a project devoted to the study and cultivation of palm, a project that essentially assures a steady supply of raw materials to the artisan PGOs. This has included the development of the Palm Management Plan, a conservation strategy devised in consultation with the GEA. Under the plan, local farmers are taught conservation practices and strong efforts are devoted to forming a consensus among villagers on how best to manage natural resources.

Reforestation

In 2000, Sanzekan Tinemi's reforestation area was probably the single largest consumer of SEDESOL Temporary Employment Program funding in the region. Nine hundred and seventy two (972) individuals were drawing thirty pesos a day, six days a week, ($180.00 a week), fifty-two weeks a year, for a yearly income of $9,360.00 ($930.00 US dollars; Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000).[9] Unlike the artisan division, those in reforestation were receiving the full allotment without the thirty percent deduction for administration, and no rotating fund was operating as an intermediary.

The objectives of reforestation include promoting the creation of micro industries based on the cultivation of maguey for the global marketplace; providing work and remittances for poor households; mitigating the damage effected by erosion; and replenishing the rapidly vanishing supply of regional flora. These reforestation projects are being extended into new villages on an annual basis and those communities that already have reforestation projects are continuing with the program. The reforestation program has taken on a degree of permanence that is often lacking in development projects. Whereas artisan PGOs come and go, reforestation PGOs have displayed greater staying power. Membership in these PGOs shifts over time, and some members reported

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[9] The number of participants from each village were as follows: La Esperanza 179, Topiltepec 114, Trapiche Viejo 145, Agua Zarca 95, Tlalixtlahuacan 80, Oxtoyahualco 57, El Peral 53, Santa Cruz 43, Zocoyolzintla 40, La Providencia 33, Mexcaltepec 30, Pantitlán 30, Xicotlan 30, Santa Ana 28, Ayahualulco 20. In Topiltepec, 30 workers from 30 families divided up $79,200 pesos, or $2,640 apiece. Each worker earned $2,640 pesos in 1997. There were 30 workers apiece from Topiltepec, La Esperanza, and Trapiche Viejo; 20 from Oxtoyahualco; 15 from Ajuatetla; 13 from Tlalixtlahuacan; 10 apiece from Santa Ana, Agua Zarca, Xocolyozintla, and 5 from La Providencia. A total of $469,920 pesos passed from SEDESOL through SZT into the hands of campesinos.

to me that they left the reforestation program because the work was too hard and the remittances too low. Yet the reforestation program continues to operate in the all the original communities targeted, and appears to have established what will be a long term presence throughout the region. I assess the program to be relatively effective. The reforestation program transfers predictable and timely payments from SEDESOL's Temporary Employment Program into rural households and has aided this region in capitalizing on its niche of comparative advantage.

The reforested areas themselves include a wide variety of plants. In La Esperanza, for example, PGO members report the presence of nineteen species.[10] The reforested area in Ajuatetla holds at least fourteen species, those being *causarina* (*Casurina* Family), *chapulixte*, *chirimollo*, *encino amarillo* (*Quercus* Sp.), *encino prieto* (*Quercus* Sp.), *guaje blanco* (Family *Leguminosae*), *guaje rojo* (Family *Leguminosae*), *guamuchil* (*Pithecolumium dulce*), *lima agria* (*Citrus aurantifolia*), *lima real* (*Citrus limonia*), maguey (*Agave* Sp.), *papayo* (*Carica papaya*), *teposcohuite*, and *zopilote* (unknown genus and species, Family *Meliacease*). Topiltepec's array of plants in the reforested areas includes *cubata*, encino amarillo, encino prieto, *fresno* (*Fraxninus uhdei*), guaje rojo, *jacaranda* (*Jacaranda acuitifolia*), *ocotillo* (*Fouquieria splendens*),

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[10] These plants are bugambilla (*Bougainvillea spectabillis*), casuarina, *delfa*, *durazno*, encino amarillo, encino prieto, *eucalipto* (*Eucalyptus globulus*), *ficos*, guaje rojo, *guayabo* (*Psidium guajava*), jacaranda, limon, maguey, *nispero*, *nixtamalxochiti*, *palo dulce*, *papayo*, tepeguaje and *toronjas* (*Citrus maxima*). Trapiche Viejo PGO members also report 19 species, including acacia, *cuartoilolotillo*, encino amarillo, encino prieto, guaje blanco, *guaje de pelisco*, guaje rojo (unknown genus and species, Family *Leguminosae*), guamuchil (*Pithecolumium dulce*), guayabo, *guicon*, maguey, otate, palma, papayo, parota, *pie de cabra*, tamarindo, tlalahuacate, and *tlaxca*.

pochote, *tamarindillo*, *tepeguaje* (*Lyssiloma acapulcensis*), *zapote blanco* (*Casimiroa edulis*), *zacona*, and zopilote. Finally, in the Chilapa enclosure behind Sanzekan Tinemi's headquarters one may encounter guaje rojo, maguey, palo dulce, tlalahuacate, and zopilote. A grand total of forty-five distinct species are known to exist in these five reforested communities (Sanzekan Tinemi, Reunion Intercomunitaria, May 21, 1998).

Table 6.3

REFORESTED SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES

Species Reforested	Community Reforested	Community Collecting Seeds
Encino Negro (*Quercus* Sp.)	Topiltepec	La Esperanza Oxtoyahualco Topiltepec
Maguey (*A. agoutifolia*) (A. cupreata)	Agua Zarca Ayahualco Chilapa El Peral La Esperanza Oxtoyahualco Santa Ana Topiltepec Trapiche Viejo Xicotlan	Ajuatetla El Peral La Esperanza Mazapa
Ocote (*Spondias purpurea*)	Ajuatetla Agua Zarca La Esperanza Oxtoyahualco Trapiche Viejo Xicotlan Xocoyoltzintla	Tlalixtlahuacan
Guaje Rojo / Guaje Blanco (Family *Leguminosae*)	Ajuatetla Santa Ana Xicotlan	Topiltepec Xocoyoltzintla

Palo Dulce **(Unkown)**		**La Esperanza**
Tepeguaje **(*Lyssiloma acapulcensis*)**	**Ajuatetla** **Agua Zarca** **Santa Cruz**	
Cedro **(*Cedrus lusitanica;* ***Cedrella odorata*)**	**Ajuatetla** **Ayahualulco** **Peral**	**La Esperanza**
Encino **(*Quercus* Sp.)**	**Amarillo** **La Esperanza** **Tlalixtlahuacan** **Oxtoyahualco** **El Peral** **Xocoyoltzintla**	**Ajuatetla**
Guamuchil **(*Pithecolumbium dulcis*)**		**Xocoyoltzintla**
Nanche **(*Byrsonima crassifolia*)**		**Xocoyoltzintla**
Tecolhuxtle **(Unknown Sp.)**		**Ajuatetla**
Ahuejote **(Unknown Sp.)**	**Ayahualco**	
Huicon **(Unknown Sp.)**		**Xocoyoltzintla**
Pareta **(Unknown Sp.)**	**Trapiche Viejo** **Oxtoyahualco**	

Members report that the most important plants in their communities are, in descending order of importance, (1) encino amarillo, (2) maguey, (3) encino *negro* or prieto, (4) palma, (5) guaje blanco, (6) cedro, (7) fresno, and (8) guamuchil; (Reunión

Intercomunitaria, May 21, 1998). These plants are used for firewood, soil conservation, mescal production, housing material, and craft work. Other plants are used for medicinal purposes and as dietary supplements (Reunión Intercomuniteria, May 21, 1998).

Some PGOs (Topiltepec, La Esperanza, Trapiche Viejo) are reforesting fairly large areas (forty-four hectares apiece) each with allotments of 88,667 plants for 1999. Other communities (Oxtoyahualco, Tlalixtlahuacan, Santa Ana, Ayahualco, Santa Cruz, El Peral) were reforesting between twenty to twenty-three hectares apiece with an annual input of plants ranging from 40,000 to 46,000 per site. The remaining communities (Pantitlan, Xicotlan, La Providencia, Agua Zarca, Xocoyolzintla) were reforesting between twelve to seventeen hectares apiece each with 24,000 to 34,000 plants. In 1999, SEDESOL's Temporary Employment Program paid out at least $1,089,000.00 to help finance this regional reforestation program. During that year a total of 329 hectares of land was covered with 660,001 plants, benefiting 1,414 families.[11] At least 200,000 trees alone are known to have been replanted in the Sanzekan Tinemi communities (Sanzekan Tinemi Archives, 2000).

The parcels are usually enclosed to deter theft and animal predation. In each of these enclosed gardens experiments are conducted on the flora, directed by personnel from GEA, UNAM, and the Autonomous University of Chapingo, to ascertain optimal cultivation procedures. Botanists have conducted extensive investigations in east-central Guerrero since the mid-1980s, and have worked not only with Sanzekan Tinemi, but with

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[11] I have conflicting numbers here. The actual number of plants may be far larger, with 50,000 plus maguey plants alone in each community.

Altepetl Nahuas as well. These studies have been augmented by systematic surveys documenting the practical experiences of those locals who have farmed the region for decades. Sanzekan Tinemi, for example, holds special bi-monthly meetings with all the members of their reforestation programs. Twelve such intercommunity reunions were held between September of 1996 and February of 2000. Each meeting explored a different theme relating to the project. The first reunion examined the various intravillage and intervillage accords protecting flora, fauna, and water. The next meeting focussed on village level accords to protect forest, firewood, palm, pasture, and livestock. Subsequent meetings focussed on folktales and beliefs that may help preserve natural resources; intervillage conflicts over natural resources; village flora inventories; disappearing species; PGO socioeconomic problems; varieties of maize and their uses; the future of local forests; maguey; and mescal production. These meetings are not training sessions, they do not feature cadre instructing farmers. Rather, they are designed to let each PGO share with other communities the practical problem solving techniques they have worked out to deal with various situations. I attended a number of these intercommunity meetings during my fieldwork. I noted a wealth of data generated by the base membership and the willingness of the Sanzekan Tinemi leadership to record this information and incorporate it into their planning. The meetings survey campesinos on which plants are scarce or disappearing in their communities, which plants they would like to have reforested, and what intercommunity accords, conflicts, and customs impact reforestation. The opinions of the PGO members are collected, organized, and published in small pamphlets to be distributed to area leadership and all PGO members at the

following meeting. In this manner not only can the cadre benefit from base experiences, but PGOs may draw on the knowledge of their associates in other villages.

Maguey and the Production of Mescal

The area of reforestation has begun to produce maguey for use in the burgeoning mescal industry. Despite legal prohibitions that were not repealed until 1986, small-scale mescal production has a long history in the region, but the product's range has been limited to a small circuit serviced by itinerant merchants vending from plastic water jugs.[12] Villages in this circuit specialized in either maguey agriculture or constructed small distilleries for the production of mescal. Today, there are twenty-eight distilleries in the region, six in Chilapa, ten in Zitlala, nine in Ahuacuotzingo and three in Martir de Cuilapan.[13] In these four municipios annual production is estimated to be 11, 473 liters (Meza Castillo 1994:38).

The increasing popularity of tequila consumption in the US combined with expanding local demand were contributing factors to an increased exploitation of wild maguey in central Guerrero, a situation leading to serious depletions of the plants in some regions (Roach 2002). Intermediaries external to farming communities also

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[12] I occasionally hitched rides in the countryside with the itinerant mescal merchants and discussed their circuits with them. My impression was that they had a thriving regional market. Certainly clients were not scarce, no matter what time of day, one could find rural peoples in search of mescal in both the villages and Chilapa.

[13] In Chilapa three distilleries are located in Tepehuisco, while Santa Cruz, Ayahualco and Topiltepec each has one. In Zitlala distilleries are located in Pochahuisco (4), Viramontes (3), Asocapa, Las Trancas and Ocotitlan. Ahuacuotzingo has one in the municipal cabecera and others in Xocoyoltzintla, Oxtotitlan, Mazapa, Acateyahualco, and Tecoanapa; in Mártir de Cuilapan there are three in La Esperanza.

exacerbated the situation by limiting the potential benefits to be accrued by rural families. The involvement of Sanzekan Tinemi and GEA in the mescal industry signaled a shift to a more "just trade" policy favoring impoverished rural producers and policies amenable to the conservation of maguey and soils. The augmentation of mescal production to include the participation in both national and international markets appears to be the major micro-industry being promoted by development specialists in east-central Guerrero.[14] While mescal production is becoming increasingly profitable (in 2000, Americans consumed 18.3 million gallons of maguey-derived products, a fifty percent increase over 1995), I am concerned whether Sanzekan Tinemi can compete successfully with José Cuervo in the global marketplace.

Sanzekan Tinemi first participated in a project to begin distilling at the state level, but that plan collapsed due to continuing shortages on part of the producers. They then decided on establishing a distillery in Chilapa itself, although this project still requires institutional aid for the plant's construction and commercialization. To begin producing mescal, Sanzekan Tinemi anticipates to organize and then form an accord with ninety manufacturers in the region to produce 150,000 liters each season. The communities themselves will be in charge of the process from seeding through bottling.

The maguey species in Guerrero are popularly known as *anchos*, *papalotes*,

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[14] In June 2001 Catarina Illsey Granich began a three year US $30,000.00 Kleinhans Fellowship from Rainforest Alliance to implement a plan for sustainable production and marketing of mescal from the Chilapa region.

criollos or *repolludos.*[15] However, botanical studies have not produced a definitive inventory of species. We know that *Agave angustifoila*, *A. asperrima*, *A. cupreata*, *A. marmaorata*, *A. mezcaliencies*, and *A. potatorum* are present. *A. cupreata* is native to Guerrero and most probably constitutes the major species present. They are well adapted to survival in dry, poor soils, as the plant's tough skin limits the moisture loss caused by evaporation. These agaves are not abundant in some areas and this limits mescal production. The best maguey for mescal generally thrive at altitudes less than 1,000 meters, in semi-arid zones such as the Balsas Depression in the western municipios of Zona Centro (SEDESOL Brochure, 2000). In the municipios of Eduardo Neri, Mártir de Cuilapan, and Ahuacuotzingo, they are produced in nurseries.

In 1993, Sanzekan Tinemi entered an accord with SAGAR and obtained 140,000 maguey (*Agave angustifoila*) plants from Oaxaca and distributed them in twenty-three communities in the region. This species, along with *A. cupreata* and *A. salmiana*, is among the most popular of the ten agave species used for producing mescal. In 1994, another 120,000 Oaxacan magueys were planted, the majority of which did not adapt to the region and thus perished. Those few that survived can be found in Ahuacuotzingo, near the community of Mazatlán. The difficulties associated with maguey reforestation has led Sanzekan Tinemi to a more detailed consideration of maguey production, a topic to which I now turn.

Growth and Harvesting of Maguey

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[15] Other common folk names for maguey include maguey *angosto*, *delgado*, *espada*, *sacatuche*, *berraco*, *sacatoro*, *sacamezcal*, *verde*, *cenizo*, and *ixtlero*.

The reproduction of maguey is augmented through the collection of seeds. The agaves flower in the spring (March through May) with capsules loaded with numerous seeds, some opaque and others transparent. Only the former are fertile. The capsules are collected carefully by hand, as once they are broken the seeds may be lost easily. The seeds are generally sown a few weeks after collection for too lengthy a wait diminishes their fertility. To germinate it is recommended to place the seeds in water, those that float may be discarded due to infertility. Those that are fertile are aided by this exposure to water. The seeds are prepared with a compost derived from both mountain and riverbed soil. Planting begins just before the onset of the rainy season. Farmers cover the seeds with palm or dry *pajo* to mitigate against evaporation and protect against bird predation. A combination of five separate fertilizers including peat-moss from Canada is applied to produce optimal growth. Five days after planting, when the seeds begin to sprout, hydration becomes extremely important. The young plants must also be protected against plagues and termites, and if attacked, one must apply pesticide and hope for the best (Nobel 1994).

The maguey should be kept in the enclosure throughout the entire rainy season and for at least another four months thereafter. There should be periodic irrigation, and it is best to apply pesticides only if absolutely necessary. If maguey is to be transplanted outside of the enclosure, the plants should spend an extra year in a protected area, as the larger ones are more difficult for livestock to eat. Protection is especially crucial during the dry season, when foraging livestock can decimate the plants. Cattle will generally pass maguey by in the rainy season for more attractive succulents (Nobel 1994).

The harvested *cabezas* (heads) are cooked in earthen pits for three to five days and then are crushed by a large burro-driven millstone. Treating the resulting product with a sample from a previous brew induces fermentation. The product is then distilled in a small still heated by a wood fire. The first liquid to condense from the still, a liquid known as the head, often contains considerable amounts of harmful methanol, while the last distillate, the foul-tasting tail, lacks the desired ethanol (Nobel 1994). Consumers may purchase mescal at the point of production, from itinerant merchants, or at retail establishments in Chilapa. Should Sanzekan Tinemi's plan of regional development succeed, these cottages industries will be replaced by modern factories with carefully standardized quality control procedures and recognized name brands.

Ernesto Vega, a biologist from the Ecology Institute of UNAM, asserts that Sanzekan Tinemi has enough maguey to assure production of mescal for almost twelve years (La Jornada, May 10, 2000). The 800,000 magueys produced in 1999 were distributed among forty-seven regional hamlets. This year, production rose to over one million. Each of the three largest *viveros* holds 3,000,000 magueys apiece, and each head of maguey will produce between 1.5 and 2.0 liters of mescal. Wild plants outside of the reforested areas are also collected for production. Most villages (Agua Zarca, Ayahualco, El Peral, La Esperanza, Oxtoyahualco, Santa Cruz, Topiltepec, Trapiche Viejo, Xicotlan) have enclosures in which the maguey is grown. Villages with all three forms of land tenure (ejido, pequeña propiadad, comunidad agraria) participate in these projects. Currently in Ayahualco, El Peral, La Providencia, Mazapa, Pantitlan, Xocoyolzintla, and Yetlancingo, PGO members themselves hold decision-making

authority in regards to most matters involving production, sales, and marketing. In La Esperanza and Trapiche Viejo, ejido authorities have a greater say in these matters. Agua Zarca, Mezcaltepec, and Tlalixtlahuacan have not yet determined clear lines of authority (Reunión Intercomunitaria, November 5, 1999).

In summary, although the long-term viability of mescal production as a micro-industry remains questionable, in the short-term it has taken hold. SEDESOL and Sanzekan Tinemi channel enough subsidies into this enterprise to make the cultivation of maguey an increasingly visible form of agricultural activity around Chilapa. Reforestation PGO members with whom I had the most contact were by all appearances pleased with their work and the project's expansion suggests a relative degree of attractiveness and acceptance. The real test will come five years down the road. The mescal industry faces formidable competition from established name brands in northern Mexico, and the local effort could very well fail to thrive outside the regional market. Yet it is adaptive for the time being, even if it just a stop-gap.

Fertilizer Sales

Although chemical fertilizer use in the fieldsite dates to the 1960s, both supply and demand were limited by high prices and poor transport networks. Chemical fertilizers (primarily urea and ammonium sulfate) had to be accessed at the Iguala railhead, six to eight hours away by vehicle (Kyle 1995). During the 1970s, FERTIMEX established a distribution center in Chilpancingo that halved the distance between the fieldsite and the retail outlet. The government established a fertilizer distribution center in Chilapa in 1980, a feat that eliminated inter-regional transport costs altogether, at least

from the point of view of rural consumers (Kyle 1995). Under the auspices of DICONSA, CONASUPO-COPLAMAR, and SAM, the CCA participated in distributing these subsidized fertilizers throughout the 1980s, an undertaking that generated a fourfold increase in local maize production. Mixed formulas (10-10-0, 20-20-0, and 20-40-0) were introduced on a wide scale at this time (Kyle 1995). Both private speculators and government agencies (the ayuntamiento, INI, SARH) entered this market alongside the CCA. The CCA transferred its responsibility for fertilizer dispersement to Sanzekan Tinemi during the early 1990s.

To compensate for government cutbacks in guaranteed prices and credit targeted at producers of maize, SEDESOL initiated two related programs in 1993 that utilized Sanzekan Tinemi as its front organization in Chilapa. The Program for the Production, Storage, and Distribution of Maize along with the Integral Program for Distribution of Fertilizer (PIADF) channeled fertilizer and credit through Sanzekan Tinemi into rural communities. To cover the cost of providing subsidized fertilizer, Sanzekan Tinemi was aided financially not only by SEDESOL, but FIRCO and INI as well. In 1994 SZT distributed 636 tons, much of it bought by farmers with credit extended by the organization through a revolving fund. Today, Sanzekan Tinemi has an arrangement worked out with local farmers that exchanges fertilizer for PROCAMPO checks. Sanzekan Tinemi sells the fertilizer out of its warehouse / distribution center located in Chilapa. Sanzekan Tinemi fertilizer sales drop to between three and five tons per month for the rest of the year, while the ayuntamiento sells fertilizer only at the onset of the agricultural cycle in late May and early June (Sanzekan Tinemi employee, personal

communication, June 2, 2000).

The significance of the subsidized fertilizer sales run by both the ayuntamiento and the Sanzekan Tinemi / PROCAMPO arrangement is that they represent real state support for the rural economy. As noted earlier, these important fertilizer inputs did not exist before the 1980s and only really consolidated during the era of restructuring, contradicting the common perception that the reform effort constituted an across-the-board cutback in state services.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have documented an economic dependency that goes far beyond the mere transfer of money and transportation subsidies to the Chilapa region. Rural communities in the region are now dependent on the state for the transfer of "natural" resources such as maguey and trees for their very survival. To facilitate this process, the state subsidizes Sanzekan Tinemi's artisan and reforestation areas, which in turn essentially organize Chilapan craft work in all phases: acquisition of raw materials, production, and marketing. Via a strategy compatible with the principles of comparative advantage, economic base theory, and sustainable development, the Sanzekan Tinemi artisan section continues to foster the transformation of a once autonomous regionally oriented economy into one that is an enclave dependent on subsidies derived from the larger industrial economy in which it is increasingly encapsulated.

Southern Mexico contains within it a plethora of regions, each with unique histories. Neoliberal reform played itself out very differently depending on the peculiar variables of each region. In Chilapa, some of the key developments of the 1980s turned

out to be the arrival of subsidized fertilizers and the increases in transport efficiency, events that effectively ameliorated the disruptions experienced elsewhere by the process of economic restructuring, yet rendering the region dependent on external subsidies. By the 1990s this dependency grew to include the subsidization of basic floral resources. However, the region remains impoverished, and recent outbreaks of guerrilla violence have undoubtedly reminded elites that east-central Guerrero will require considerable subsidy transfers in order to remain governable. For this reason, elites have committed themselves to funding NGOs through SEDESOL.[16]

In terms of accessing the global marketplace, Sanzekan Tinemi has had moderate success in promoting woven palm products. On the other hand, mescal and maize production are, for the time being at least, simply geared towards regional consumers, and it would be quite an achievement to further expand these industries. What really emerges from Sanzekan Tinemi participation in the rural economy is a reinforcement of the basic categories of regional occupational multiplicity: petty craft production, subsistence corn farming, animal husbandry, the mescal micro industry, and government public works projects. (Migratory wage labor, the other remunerative stream employed by rural peoples, is bolstered through SEDESOL's Agricultural Laborers program). These economic activities have been documented to be common adaptive strategies in the underdeveloped world. In this context, Sanzekan Tinemi is best viewed as a fairly conventional development organization assisting rural families in adapting to neoliberal reforms.

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[16] See Salinas de Gortari (2002:815; 2002:838-852) for an elaboration of this point.

CHAPTER 7

ARMED LEFTIST MOVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the military activity in the fieldsite and assess how it affects regional development and human rights. Central to this analysis are several key questions. To what extent do armed opposition groups offer development alternatives? Does the guerrilla presence signal greater autonomy from the state for villagers? How does the low intensity conflict affect economic development and the human rights situation?

This research suggests that the armed movements operating in Chilapa (and throughout Guerrero) lack any realistic alternative to the current development paradigm because they are unable to alter the pattern of village reliance on externally controlled industrial technologies (a thesis first introduced by Kyle 2000). In the highly unlikely event of a revolutionary victory in Mexico, it is hard to imagine any agenda that actually reverses the ongoing economic and political processes of incorporation and dependency that are currently associated with the Mexican state's development. Furthermore, research on similar movements operating elsewhere in the world demonstrates that they have had the net effect of reinforcing state power throughout the countryside rather than overturning it. In the words of Eric Wolf, "such revolutions aim, ultimately, at the subjugation and transformation of peasantry into a new kind of social grouping" (Wolf 1966:109). Rather than achieving greater autonomy for villagers, guerrilla movements in Guerrero, one way or another, provoke greater state control.

This control can either take the form of direct military occupation (which is already sporadically practiced) or via an increase in SEDESOL programs aimed at buying off the opposition and incorporating them into subordinate and dependent positions in the subsidy chain. Both of these forms of control have long and well documented histories in the context of modern Mesoamerica. The first strategy, that of a military solution, was widely practiced in the Guatemalan state's recently concluded war against leftist rebels. Numerous studies (Jonas 1991; Manz 1988; Stoll 1993) demonstrated that in Guatemala a virtual "counterinsurgency state" was established that effected greater governmental control throughout the countryside. Although militarization in Guerrero has not achieved that proportion, the deployment of at least eight infantry battalions to the state signifies a projection of government power directly attributable to anti-guerrilla operations.

The second course, buying off the opposition, appears to be the government's preferred strategy for the Chilapa region. SEDESOL funds are widely available throughout the region and as previous chapters have demonstrated, they have been used to coopt potential opponents. The Mexican state has a long and successful history of practicing the art of cooption (Rosen 1996) and it should come as no surprise that they have been able to create constituencies that might otherwise have opted for more radical change. Snyder (2000) reports that the Mexican government is actively trying to preempt guerrilla mobilizations in southern Mexico by pumping development funds into the region. Former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari himself admits to having extensively practiced this strategy (Salinas de Gortari 2002:849-852). Indeed, during fieldwork in

Chilapa, the theme advanced by the NGO sector while lobbying for more state aid was "with a few dollars more we can end the violence." Available evidence (Salinas de Gortari 2002; Snyder 2000) does indicate that during the fund allocation process, policy makers are taking into account the spread of rebel groups and how best to undermine this phenomenon.

Militarization in both southern Mexico and northern Guatemala has attracted considerable attention from anthropologists in recent years (see Collier and Lowery 1996; Carmack 1988; Stoll 1993). Yet some of our currently fashionable understandings of rural rebellions (e.g., Burgos-Debray 1984) are so tinged with romantic and inaccurate stereotypes that they are easily manipulated by political demagogues. As no responsible analyst wishes to see in Guerrero a replay of the human rights catastrophe that not long ago engulfed Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, an examination of the current military situation is warranted on humanitarian grounds alone.

With these considerations in mind, I present in this chapter a discussion of the insurgent armies operating in the Chilapa region. Guerrero has recently experienced the emergence of two active guerrilla movements, the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), and the Revolutionary Army of Insurgent People (ERPI). This chapter begins by presenting an overview of these organizations. I then discuss human rights violations during periods of insurgency / counterinsurgency and draw on illustrations derived from my fieldwork. The chapter concludes with an overall summary of the low intensity conflict in the region and its impact on human rights organizing and economic reform.

A note on sources is warranted. Aside from the military, the police, and the

guerrillas themselves, few individuals have expert knowledge of these groups. My sources are thus confined to my very limited observations of the government's army around Chilapa and what is published in the newspapers and magazines. Although I have discussed the EPR, ERPI, and the military / police response with ordinary citizens and friends in Chilapa, I have no informants, or contacts in any way whatsoever, with either the security forces or the guerrillas. Nonetheless, from the published sources I have been able to put together a rough picture of the leadership, activities, and strategies of the two guerrilla organizations.

One other declaration is necessary at this point. The Mexican government, and particularly the subnational regime in Guerrero, has a long and well documented record of committing human rights abuses, including politically motivated killings, torture, and disappearances (Amnesty International 1999). This treatment has been directed at political opponents and their families, guerrillas, and common criminals. Amnesty International (1999) also notes that many government institutions and security forces continue to operate in a climate of impunity. Therefore, my contention (also supported by Amnesty International 1999) that the appearance of guerrillas in Guerrero heralded a decline in human rights conditions should be evaluated in historical context and is not meant to be taken as a political statement or as an exercise in assigning blame.

Prolonged Popular War in Guerrero

During 1999, the EPR had been relatively quiet in Guerrero, while the ERPI was involved in a number of widely publicized military confrontations with government forces and civilian population centers. This contrast in activity levels I attribute to two

factors. First, the EPR suffered organizational damage and loss of resources when the ERPI fissioned off from it and formed into an independent group in early 1998. The ERPI, in fact, was itself able to take much of the known financial resources of the EPR with them when they became a separate force. Yet that accounts only partially for the EPR's silence.

Here I support a thesis popular in the press (e.g., Proceso, October 10, 1999) that the EPR is a traditional, and fairly conventional, political-military organization conducting insurgency by means of a classical strategy of Maoist-style "prolonged popular war" that places great emphasis on the slow accumulation of forces. Prolonged popular war movements like the EPR often go through lengthy phases of clandestine organizing, with little visible activity. Typically, these movements adopt a three-stage strategy of insurgency. Stage one, the latent phase, is a period of quiet recruitment and political education, all designed to mobilize rural support, entrench the leadership, and slowly organize a guerrilla army. The priority objective in this phase of prolonged popular war is *organizing the party and social base of support*; this support is then converted into a popular revolutionary army. The fighting comes later, even if the revolution must be put off for years. In this sense, the EPR is organizationally and operational very similar to Peru's *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) guerrillas. This latent phase can take up to ten years time, as was the case with Sendero Luminoso, which was founded in 1970 and did not commence military attacks until May of 1980. The second phase commences when guerrillas indeed begin to conduct hit-and-run ambushes against the army, political assassinations, and then attempt to establish certain "liberated

zones" in the country. This is a period of classical guerrilla war. Stage three commences when the military balance of power has shifted to the guerrillas, so that they can now come out and fight the government as a conventional army in open battle, taking the war to the cities and winning by superior military force (e.g., Vietnam 1975; Nicaragua 1979). Prolonged popular wars such as those waged in Guatemala (1975-1996) and Peru (1980-2002) can take decades of fighting without producing decisive results.

The ERPI, in contrast, follows an "insurrectionist" strategy more in line with Che Guevara's original *foco* conception of guerrilla warfare, which seeks to hurry up the pace of revolution by provoking immediate unrest and confrontation. Hence, by the nature of their strategy, they purposely seek out military confrontations, even at the expense of careful preparation or consolidation of a social base of support. They hope that military action will in itself draw supporters to the movement and speed up the pace of revolution. Other practitioners of this insurrectionist strategy of war include Fidel Castro (1958), Peru's MRTA guerrillas (1984), and Che Guevara's Bolivian insurgency (1967). When successful, both prolonged popular wars (in Vietnam) and focos (in Cuba) have produced highly centralized states and little increased autonomy for rural peoples.

Both strategy and resources must be given primacy when assessing current levels of guerrilla activity. The EPR's resources continue to evaporate: sixty percent of its members defected to the ERPI in 1998, and by early 2000, still more members had left to join other breakaway factions, most notably the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People (FARP). The EPR's strategy of prolonged popular war would also be incongruent with launching major military initiatives under these circumstances. By examining the

interplay of these two variables -- military strategy and economic resources -- I argue that we can explain the prime factors underlying the current activity levels of both the EPR and ERPI.

Background

Over the years, Guerrero has been the scene of periodic outbreaks of guerrilla warfare. In the 1840s, a large rebellion eventually encompassing hundreds of villages broke out in Chilapa's hinterland (Guardino 1995a, 1995b; Hart 1988; Kyle in press). During the Mexican Revolution, Guerrero saw fighting between various armed factions; Chilapa itself was sacked several times. Banditry and armed groups continued to plague Chilapa's back country up until about 1935, when indigenous leaders obtained government arms and drove off the remaining bands (Ek 1968). A 1960 massacre in Chilpancingo, followed by increasing social tensions, precipitated the emergence of guerrillas in Guerrero in 1963, when Genaro Vasquez Rojas organized the armed National Civic Revolutionary Association (ACNR). Another massacre of copra producers on August 20, 1967, led to the emergence of the armed Party of the Poor (PDLP). Founded by a teacher, Lucio Cabañas Barrientos, the PDLP waged "war in paradise"[1] throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, culminating in the abduction of Reuben Figueroa Sr., a PRI gubanatorial candidate. The PDLP eventually ceased activity after sustaining heavy losses. After a relatively tranquil decade (the 1980s), the

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[1] For a historical novel depicting the guerrilla movement in Guerrero during the 1970s, see *Guerra en el Paraiso*, by Carlos Montemayor (1994). In English the title translates to "War in Paradise" imparting a certain lyrical irony to a story that traces the final days of Lucio Cabañas's doomed struggle in poverty-ridden Guerrero. Cabañas died in an ambush in December of 1974.

government of the state of Guerrero became aware of renewed guerrilla activity in the state in June of 1993 (*Proceso*, August 7, 1995). By August of 1995, Mexican military intelligence had confirmed that a number of guerrilla organizations were operating in Guerrero, although at that point the insurgents were avoiding military confrontations (Proceso, August 7, 1995). And now again, since July of 1996 when the EPR first took up arms in a spectacular burst of ambushes and attacks, guerrillas again are on the offensive in Guerrero's rural areas.

Guerrero has the reputation in Mexico of being a wild-west zone of bandits, guerrillas, narcotraffickers, and authoritarian political overlords. The police and the army in "the little Columbia" both have reputations for corruption and committing humans rights violations. An American journalist wrote that "Guerrero's recent past seems like a classic slide from squalor and repression into insurgency, resembling Nicaragua in the 1970s" (The New York Times, July 17, 1996).

These characterizations need to be placed in perspective. First, Guerrero certainly has not witnessed large-scale insurgencies like those found in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala in the 1980s, or Columbia of today. Guerrero's reputation for violence is in large part, exaggerated. I would characterize life in the cabecera of Chilapa as in fact being quite safe.[2] Yes, the back-country is affected by low-scale banditry and periodic guerrilla activity, and in areas, concentrations of military counterinsurgency teams or corrupt police. Casualty estimates vary, but the government

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[2] An important qualification: according to Chilapa's Director of Public Security Ernesto Rios Torres, intra-family violence is quite common in Chilapa's hinterland, although it is unclear to what extent this problem affects the cabecera (El Matutino, May 21, 2000).

reported that from the period of July 1996 to October of 1999, fifty-three soldiers, fifteen police and twenty-eight EPR-ERPI guerrillas had been killed in action (KIA) in the state of Guerrero. This would put the in-state casualty rate at less than thirty-five KIA per year. A leading magazine (Proceso, October 31, 1999) asserts that a further 500 extrajudicial disappearances and executions have been committed by state security forces in Guerrero over the past twenty-five years. This information, if accurate, would put the war-related fatality rate at approximately fifty-five individuals per year. This is well below casualty rates from 1980s El Salvador or Columbia.

Yet while we must take care not to exaggerate violence in Guerrero, we cannot altogether dismiss its influence on Guerrero's rural peoples. At a municipio development meeting held in Chilapa on January 16, 2000, residents from Chilapa's rural communities placed at the top of their list of human rights demands institutionalized community police to combat the banditry affecting their communities.[3] The Supreme Council of Nahua Pueblos soon was lobbying for expanding citizens rights to carry arms

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[3] Admittedly, much of this banditry involves the theft of goats, firewood, and other property which does not involve direct physical violence against humans. Yet some of my most reliable informants moved to Chilapa after a harrowing rural home invasion. From June 1, 1998, to May 15, 1999, the Human Rights Center "*Tlachinollan*" A.C. registered eighty-one homicide cases in the seventeen municipios comprising the Montaña region of Guerrero. My informants had been living there in an isolated rural home in Las Ventanas, municipio of Olinala, when the attack occurred. In Chilapa itself, our maid's husband was driving a cab to a rural community one night when he was robbed and murdered, and our next-door neighbors were robbed at gun-point by bandits on the Ayahualulco road. The municipio of Chilapa de Alvarez (1995 pop. 98,983) registered seven homicides in 1996, and twenty-one homicides in 1997.

in six other municipios.[4] During the fall of 1999 and early months of 2000, local newspapers were occasionally carrying reports of armed banditry on the Ayahualulco road and on the transport arteries near Amate Amarillo (El Sol de Acapulco March 25, 2000). On the road between Hueycantenango and Zelocotitlán, a group of six heavily armed bandits terrorized local travelers throughout May and June of 2000 (Pueblo, June 8, 2000).[5] Assailants also were staging attacks on buses operating on the highway connecting Acapulco to Mexico City (Pueblo, June 1, 2000; Pueblo, June 8, 2000). Perhaps even more alarming was the call by Chilpancingo *Alcalde* Jose Luis Peralta Lobato for military intervention in the state capital itself, the objective being to combat a perceived rise in crime (Diario Guerrero Hoy, March 15, 2000). INEGI statistics reveal that Guerrero was the only state in the nation that listed homicide as the leading cause of death in 1998 (INEGI, 1999). A member of the Centro de Derechos Humanos "Agustin Pro Juarez Digna Ochoa" claimed that 291 social activists were assassinated in 1998, and 108 were murdered in 1999, for a two year total of 399 (El Sol de Acapulco, June 5, 2000). If we combine these 291 political murders in 1998 with an estimated thirty-five

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[4] In Mexico it is legal to possess firearms in your home, but in urban areas they are not to be carried in public. Citizens in urban areas may own revolvers in calibers up to .38 Special, or semi-automatic pistols up to the level of .380 Auto. In rural areas it is permitted to own and carry shotguns up to 12 gauge (18.5 mm), so long as the barrel length is at least 635 mm (26 inches) or more. Rifles up to .22 caliber may also be possessed in rural areas (*Armamento*, March, 1998).

[5] Local newspapers also were carrying photographs of village justice: captured bandits were being tortured and lynched to death by angry campesinos in regional villages. At least one such execution took place in Acalco, municipality of Chilapa, in 1998, and another lynching occurred in May of 2000 in Santa Maria Tonaya, municipio of Tlapa. One local paper dubs such killings *"la Ley Indígena"* or Indian Law (*Diario Guerrero Hoy*, May 30, 2000).

guerrillas, police, and soldiers killed in that year, we get a one year total of 326 individuals killed for political motives.

It is perhaps going too far to explain away banditry and guerrilla movements as yet more examples of "occupational multiplicity" or to attribute their existence as being direct effects of neoliberal development. Although the neoliberal reforms are aggravating the plight of many rural producers, primarily through the undermining of the vast subsidy system, both the EPR and ERPI trace their roots to, and draw their leadership cadre from, the pre-neoliberal era PDLP. This cadre is then in turn able to capitalize on the resulting dislocations associated with economic restructuring by recruiting rural people who have been hit hardest by these reforms. It is to the origins of this cadre that I now turn.

Origins

Guerrero's latest wave of guerrillas began forming no later than June of 1993, although the EPR traces its formal origins to 1994, when members of several clandestine leftist organizations, including the Clandestine Revolutionary Workers Party Union of the People (PROCUP) and the remnants of the PDLP joined forces and reactivated a dormant revolutionary guerrilla warfare movement in southern Mexico. The initial alliance forged together cells that had been operating primarily in Chiapas, Guerrero, and Oaxaca, involving an infrastructure that could count on years, if not decades, of clandestine experience. In Guerrero, sightings of guerrillas from 1993-1995 occurred in at least six separate regions: the high mountains, (Metlantonoc, Malinaltepec, Huamixtitlán, Atlixtac, and Olinala); the lower mountains (Igualapa, Xochistlahuacan,

Ometepec); the Costa Chica, the Costa Grande, the Tierra Caliente, and around Iguala (Proceso, August 7, 1995). By 1994 armed columns were appearing in villages. According to military intelligence, at least seven armed clandestine organizations were active in Guerrero during this period, and at least four of these later united under the EPR banner.[6] All save one of these organizations were primarily composed of mestizos. Subsequent government analysis released in 1996 revealed that no less than ten of the eighty identified EPR members known to operate in Guerrero were former members of the PDLP or similar movements from the 1970s. At least one member had traveled to El Salvador in 1987 to receive training in guerrilla warfare from that nation's FMLN guerrillas (*Impacto*, September 22, 1996).

The EPR would wait another two years before it commenced armed attacks. Even this is a remarkably short period of time for a prolonged popular war movement. As noted, Peru's Sendero Luminoso formed in 1970 and did not commence armed activity until 1980. During the EPR's latent period, the guerrillas were indeed preparing for action. Several large caches of AKM rifles were discovered in Guerrero during this period. Surface to surface and surface to air missiles were also obtained by parties unknown in Guerrero during this time (Proceso, August 7, 1995). Meanwhile, on June 28, 1995, townspeople from Atoyaquillo, Guerrero, who were members of the farmer movement Organization of Peasants of the Southern Mountains (OCSS) were being

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[6] The seven insurgent organizations were PROCUP-PDLP; Southern Sierra Liberation Army; Popular Revolutionary Movement; Insurgent Army of Chilpancingo; Clandestine Armed Forces; and the Liberation Army of the South. This last group was composed primarily of indígenas and operated in the Montaña Region (Proceso, August 7, 1995).

transported by truck to a demonstration in Aguas Blancas, Guerrero. They were ambushed by police and seventeen were shot dead in what was to become known as the Aguas Blancas massacre. This massacre would become the rallying cry of the EPR.

Perhaps the most important organizational reform made by the EPR during the latent phase occurred when the political section of the movement, the Popular Revolutionary Democratic Party (PDPR) was formed. This took place no later than May of 1996 (*La Jornada*, June 27, 1997). In prolonged popular war movements, the party and its political objectives are paramount, with the military wing of the organization taking a subordinate role. I do not know enough about the EPR organizational structure to delineate EPR-PDPR areas of responsibility, and this is a subject that warrants further investigation. Yet we do know that differences between the two sections led to a rupture, with many of the EPR base fighters accusing the PDPR of incompetence and leaving the organization to form the ERPI in 1998.

On June 28, 1996, during a ceremony to mark the first anniversary of the massacre, fifty armed and masked individuals burst on stage and read a manifesto (the Manifesto of Aguas Blancas) proclaiming the existence of the EPR, and announcing a war against the Mexican government. Prominent among the EPR's demands were the capture of state power, a restitution of popular sovereignty, punishment of those who abused their authority, and a solution for the nation's poverty problem. On the same day, along the Mexico-Acapulco highway near Zumpango, a column of thirty armed and masked EPR members conducted armed propaganda operations, proclaiming "*muera el neoliberalismo*" (death to neoliberalism) to those travelers halted by the roadblock (La

Jornada, June 27, 1997). They next struck on the outskirts of Chilapa itself. On Tuesday, July 16, 1996, an army truck carrying ten soldiers departed from Chilapa and headed towards Tixtla. The truck was ambushed near El Ahuejote, Tixtla, and during the ensuing gunfight, soldiers, civilians, and at least one EPR guerrilla were either killed or wounded. Eight miles to the east in Chilapa itself, armed and hooded gunmen walked through several outlying neighborhoods (San Rafael and Los Pinos), distributing EPR propaganda leaflets, urging Guerrero's campesinos and workers to rise up in revolt (Pueblo, July 17, 1996; The New York Times, July 18, 1996). The army responded by sending five helicopter gunships, two combat planes, and ten armored vehicles into pursuit of the rebels (The New York Times, July 20, 1996). The Tixtla-Chilapa highway was closed for three hours, and army troops subsequently combed the Guerrero countryside in counterinsurgency operations, initially focusing on the area between Tepetixtla and Atoyaquillo.

EPR Actions

EPR actions were quite frequent in 1996 and 1997. After the split with the ERPI in January of 1998, EPR military attacks virtually ceased. We now know that some of EPR's early actions conducted in 1996 and 1997 were precipitated without high command approval by the faction that would later break away to form the ERPI. After the split, I suggest that the ERPI commenced an insurrectionist campaign of insurgency while the EPR lapsed back into the latent phase of prolonged popular war, probably out of necessity due to a loss of resources. Hence, the organizational strains between two factions with very different ideas on how to conduct an insurgency, to me at least, helps

explain the rather abrupt stop-and-go nature of the fighting to date.

The 1996-1997 EPR campaign, after its initial Chilapa-Tixtla highway attack, continued with a July 24, 1996 confrontation with the army in Ahuacuotzingo, Guerrero. On August 1, 1996, another fight occurred in El Guayabo, municipio of Tecpan, during which an officer was wounded (La Jornada, June 29, 1997). On August 2, 1996, there were confrontations in Papanoa and Guayabo, Guerrero. On August 7, 1996, the army was attacked in Atoyaquillo, Guerrero, during which one soldier was killed. The EPR next conducted armed propaganda on August 9, 1996, in Tixtla, laying flowers at the base of the Vicente Guerrero monument. The army was next attacked five kilometers outside of Zumpango del Rio on August 10, 1996, with two soldiers receiving wounds (La Jornada, June 29, 1997).

On August 27, 1996, the EPR launched strikes in diverse states. The EPR attacked the army in the mountains outside of Chilapa, with conflicting casualty reports. On the same day, six soldiers were wounded by EPR gunfire in Altimirano, Guerrero. Fighting also occurred in the Costa Grande, Petatlán, Acapulco, and Tixtla, where a police officer was killed. On August 28, 1996, the EPR attacked the police in both Acapulco and Tixtla inflicting an unknown number of casualties. Other states that suffered EPR attacks on August 28, 1996, include Oaxaca, where the EPR attacked both Huatulco and Tlaxiaco, killing two police officers and making bomb threats to airports. A sailor was kidnaped during one of the attacks and executed by the EPR, and according to reports, the victim appeared to have been tortured. Police and military personnel were also attacked in Puebla, the state of Mexico, Mexico City, and Tabasco. In Chiapas, the

EPR blocked five transport arteries, including the Pan-American Highway between Tuxtla Gutierez and San Cristobal, and the route between Ocosingo and Palenque. They did not fire on anyone so as not to interfere with the ongoing talks between the government and the EZLN. Witnesses report that they were operating in twelve-man armed columns (Proceso, September 1, 1996).

On August 30, a military convoy was attacked in Michoacan (The New York Times, August 31, 1996). By September 2, 1996, the death toll had reached at least seventeen KIA: one soldier, one sailor, eight police, four guerrillas, and three civilians. Another EPR-army clash occurred on September 16, 1996, near Aguas Blancas, and the police were attacked on October 27, 1996 in Coyuca de Catalan. Shortly thereafter, EPR propaganda appeared in Tlapa de Comonfort, and in November 1996 an EPR guerrilla was captured in that municipio armed with an AKM rifle, eighty rounds of ammunition, military uniform, gear, and three packages of marajuana. In December the EPR stepped up a state-wide campaign of armed propaganda, appearing in villages in all of Guerrero's seven economic zones (La Jornada, June 29, 1997). In February of 1997, an EPR armed propaganda team visited ejido Ayahualulco in the municipio of Chilapa. They called on the people to revolt against the government and distributed propaganda while three or four security elements provided cover along village paths (El Sol de Acapulco, October 28, 1999). Another EPR armed propaganda team was nearly intercepted by the army in Las Mesas, municipio of San Marcos, but managed to retire while avoiding combat (La Jornada, June 29, 1997). In May of 1997, near the village of Teponzanalco, in the municipio of Chilapa, the EPR ambushed a platoon of soldiers, killing three and

wounding twelve; two guerrillas were also killed. Later it was learned that this attack was carried out without authorization by the faction that would later become the ERPI (El Sol de Acapulco, October 30, 1999).

Initial Interpretations of the EPR Uprising

The spectacular wave of EPR attacks in the summer of 1996 provoked a wide range of interpretations as to who was really behind the movement. Some observers saw a positive reception for the masked insurgents among the crowd gathered during the June 28, 1996, Aguas Blancas massacre commemoration,[7] and deduced that the EPR was indeed a guerrilla army with grass roots support (New York Times, July 17, 1996). The government first trivialized the EPR as a "pantomime" with chic revolutionary pretensions, although many others were reluctant to dismiss them so readily. Some declared that the new uniforms and immaculate weapons suggested a "black psyop" operation by security forces and the ruling party, supposedly in order to justify martial law. In particular, fingers were pointed at the unpopular Governor of Guerrero, Reuben Figueroa Jr., who critics claimed had invented the EPR in order to justify repression against his opponents (Wall Street Journal, September 3, 1996). Samuel de Villar, a lawyer who represents widows of the Aguas Blancas massacre, went so far as to assert that the "guerrilla charade was designed to prove Figueroa right" (New York Times, July 17, 1996). Figueroa was forced out of office by President Zedillo in March of 1996, after a videotape of the Aguas Blancas massacre was broadcast on national television.

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[7] I interviewed one witness to this event who reported that he and others in the crowd became terrified when the masked rebels appeared, fearing that another massacre was about to occur.

Figueroa had claimed that the seventeen activists had been killed in a two-way gunfight; the videotape showed police firing on the victims and then planting weapons on their bodies (New York Times, July 17, 1996).

Another theory asserted that wealthy leftist nationalists, who were opponents of the policies undermining their privileged position in the hierarchy, stood behind the guerrillas. Still others, perhaps in light of the known history of the EZLN, considered them to be simple farmers infiltrated by fanatics. Another view maintained that narcotraffickers from northern Mexico were running this as a diversion to shift military personnel from anti-narcotics missions in Sonora to counterinsurgency operations in southern Guerrero. Finally, others suggested that they were simply common delinquents (New York Times, July 17, 1996).

In September 1996, the government announced that the ideological mastermind of the EPR was none other than Felipe Martinez Soriano, a well known personality and a former university dean from Oaxaca, imprisoned since 1990 for his involvement in the murder of two La Jornada security guards in Mexico City. Former guerrillas and communists asserted that Martinez had long been ostracized for his disturbing views and penchant for violence. Arnoldo Martinez Verdugo, the former head of Mexico's Communist Party who himself was kidnaped by Martinez Soriano's organization in a dispute over money, ventured that Martinez Soriano had a "very primitive vision, that all problems are going to be solved through the exercise of violence" and concluded that the EPR must be taken seriously because behind it stood "groups with years of clandestine experience" (New York Times, September 5, 1996).

Again there are parallels here between the leadership of the EPR and that of Peru's Sendero Luminoso.[8] What is known about Martinez Soriano's background, world view, and education, is virtually identical to a profile of the Shining Path's founder, Abimael Guzman. Both Guzman and Martinez were professors at small regional universities located in impoverished indigenous sectors of their respective nations. Both sought to entrench a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist vanguard organization among the local population. Both were noted by colleagues of the legal left as fanatics and ostracized by many. As more documents and guerrillas were captured, the earlier theories slowly gave way to the recognition that the EPR was in fact, a vanguard political-military organization conducting insurgency through a strategy of prolonged popular war.

Emergence of the ERPI

The ERPI was born on January 8, 1998, led by six disenchanted EPR members. They believed that the EPR was moving much too slowly in organizing the revolution. The dissidents emerged out of the EPR's combat elements in Guerrero, who believed that the political directorate of the PDPR was incompetent. The EPR / PDPR was patiently attempting to build up the three pillars of prolonged popular war: the party, the popular army, and the mass front, a slow process that frustrated the ERPI. According to ERPI commander Santiago "we are not only insurrectionists nor fervent adherents of prolonged popular war. We know it is not enough. We want to strike a balance between the two, a combination of both strategies, to be prepared humanly and materially for a possible

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[8] It has been reported that Sendero Luminoso cadre met with clandestine Mexican organizations in both Jalisco and Guadalajara in 1989 (Proceso, August 25, 1996), although EPR leaders deny any ties with the Shining Path (Proceso, March 1, 1998).

social explosion in 2000. We are talking about insurrection, partial or general...if the insurrection can succeed before prolonged popular war, so be it" (Proceso, October 10, 1999). The ERPI high command believed that the year 2000 elections might precipitate violence, and the hit and run tactics were designed to provoke just such a crisis (*El Universal*, October 29, 1999). It should be noted that the ERPI shows certain similarities to the *Tercera* (Third) faction of the Nicaraguan FSLN, that tried to speed-up the prolonged popular war conducted by other factions by means of adopting more sensationalist tactics.[9]

The split between the ERPI and the EPR involved a bitter dispute over resources. ERPI leader Commander Antonio was sentenced to death by the EPR for taking most of the cash and documents with him to the new organization (El Sol de Acapulco, October 30, 1999). The EPR, at one time with a full treasury from kidnaping wealthy businessmen and holding them for ransom, was left virtually bankrupt. They reportedly have expenses of $300,000.00 a month, and by September of 1999, were down to a mere $100,000.00. At the time of the split the ERPI gained seventy percent of the militant guerrillas, arms, uniforms, and half a million dollars derived from the kidnaping of Alfredo Harp Helu and Jorge Lozada (El Sol de Acapulco, October 30, 1999). ERPI's arsenal is reported to consist of 250 AKM rifles.[10] They also have a small magazine

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[9] Former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and his brother Humberto Ortega were both members of this faction.

[10] This Russian designed rifle is known locally as the "*cuerno de chivo*" (horn of the goat) due to its long, curved magazine. It has a reputation for operating reliably even with haphazard care. Its bullet however, tends to cause a less serious wound than that of the American designed M-16 rifle, due to its tendency to penetrate straight through

called Debate that has published three issues; and they have access to the Internet, where they have published manifestos (El Sol de Acapulco, October 30, 1999).

For their part, the ERPI accused the EPR of being "separated from the base" and lacking "strategic vision." ERPI argued that the EPR adherence to prolonged popular war would scarcely show results in thirty years. The ERPI claimed that the EPR had "five times as many commanders than the troops need to maintain adequate correspondence. In other words, you are an army of bosses hoping that followers will appear, but you do not know how to conduct this" (Proceso, October 10, 1999).

State authorities knew nothing of the ERPI until June 7, 1998, when a patrol of the Mexican Army's 78th Infantry Battalion [10] stumbled across an ERPI psywar team at El Charco, in the municipio of Ayutla de los Libres. The ERPI column was holding a meeting with indigenous community leaders. The army prepared a hasty ambush, killing eleven ERPI guerrillas, wounding five, and detaining twenty-one individuals. Captured documents revealing the existence of a new organization (El Sol de Acapulco, October 28, 1999). Not long afterward, another group of dissatisfied EPR rebels left the organization to form the Revolutionary Clandestine Committee of the Poor-Justice Commando June (CCRP-CJ). They began with attacks in the Tierra Caliente on June 22, 1998, and along the Chilapa-Tlapa road on July 4, 1998. The ERPI next conducted

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human tissue without fragmenting or yawing (Fighting Firearms, date unknown). New ammunition from Yugoslavia seems to have remedied this tendency, although it is not widely available.

[10] The identity of this battalion may be mistaken; most reports indicate that the 48th Infantry Battalion patrols Ayutla de los Libres.

armed propaganda operations in the community of Ahuacatitlan, municipio of Teloloapan, Guerrero, in July of 1998, and later conducted psychological operations in both Acapulco and Teloloapan (Proceso, April 23, 2000). Finally, in February of 1999, a fourth splinter group, the Revolutionary Villista Army of the People (EVRP), began operating in the state of Mexico (Proceso, April 23, 2000).

Recent Guerrilla Actions

On July 11, 1999, the ERPI claimed to have attacked a military base in Talapa, municipio of Omotepec Guerrero, although the army denied that the incident took place (El Sol de Acapulco, July 12, 1999). Between July 11 and July 13, 1999, guerrilla columns of eight to fifteen individuals armed with high powered weapons were detected moving around the communities of Quetzalzalapa, San Cristobal, and Chimalapa, in the municipio of Igualapa, Guerrero. At the same time EPR slogans were found painted in Chilapa's central market (El Sol de Acapulco, July 13, 1999). Several days later, three civilians, all Indians, were killed by men firing AKM rifles in the village of Huachimalco, Guerrero (*El Reportero*, July 18, 1999). Thirty ERPI guerrillas next attacked the town of Computeras, municipio of Coyuca de Benitez, Guerrero, destroying the village logging machinery (El Sol de Acapulco, July 28, 1999). On September 8, 1999, the ERPI interrupted a PRD political rally in Acapulco by appearing on stage and shouting into the microphone "defend the vote." On September 22, 1999, the ERPI ambushed a military convoy in the municipio of Ayutla de los Libres, Guerrero. The military admitted to two soldiers wounded, local villagers reported that four soldiers were killed (Proceso, October 10, 1999). In the summer and fall of 1999, EPR columns

were reported active at night in the municipio of Atoyac de Alvarez. ERPI columns appeared in the municipio of Tlacoachistlahuaca, near the communities of La Trinidad and Huehuetenoc (El Sol de Acapulco, October 9, 1999).

After the January 1998 ERPI-EPR rupture, the pattern of guerrilla activity displayed by each group becomes completely explicable once one has grasped the underlying strategic differences between the two organizations. The EPR can be seen to have conducted the latent phase of prolonged popular war from 1994-1996. Probably prompted by the insurrectionist faction, they then moved on to phase two, the guerrilla war phase, in June of 1996. The EPR, aware of its January 1998 organizational and financial losses, lapses back into the latent phase one of insurgency to repair the party, the popular army, and to secure the base. Its only known activities in 1998-1999 were night maneuvers and perhaps the painting of slogans.

Meanwhile, the ERPI and its parent members in the EPR, consistently remained true to the principles of insurrectional warfare. It attacked the army without authorization while still a faction of the EPR in 1997. The ERPI was seriously damaged in the El Charco clash in 1998, but by 1999 they had recovered and were again on the offensive. During 1999, the ERPI conducted a high-profile, albeit low-scale, campaign of guerrilla war, again fully congruent with an insurrectionist strategy. It was the ERPI which was inflicting casualties on the army in 1999, not the EPR.

Assessing the Social Base

A clear picture of the extent of the guerrillas civilian base of support is difficult to determine. Antonio Crispo, a Mexico City political analyst, states that "the fact is we

don't yet know if [the EPR] has a social base nor does the government have any information to say that it doesn't"(Christian Science Monitor, September 3, 1996). The EPR has been mentioned in the internal documents of thirteen support organizations in Chiapas, Hidalgo, Mexico City, Puebla, and San Luis Potasi (El Universal, October 29, 1999). Organizations that support the EPR include the Comunist Cells (Chiapas), Self-Defense Group Fransisco Javier Mina, Union of Revolutionary Commandos, Revolutionary Commandos of Mexico, Morelos Commandos, and the Revolutionary Workers Organization Ricardo Flores Magon, among others (El Universal, October 29, 1999). The Popular Council of the North in the state of Mexico, the Independent Coordinator FAC-MLN in Ciudad Nezahualcoyotl, and the Center for Information and Monitoring of Human Rights (CIM) have been accused of assisting EPR members (El Universal, October 28, 1999).

There are indications that the rebels have a sympathetic base of support in the rural areas of southern Mexico. To bolster this view, we have the testimony of a physician who was kidnaped by the EPR in Huatulco, Oaxaca, in August of 1996. The doctor was taken to a remote hilltop village and ordered to treat wounded guerrillas. The sixty-odd guerrillas were led by a commander called Eagle One, a tall, fair-skinned man with urban mannerisms and a Peruvian accent.[11] The physician noted that Eagle One "was very correct with me, and in terms of military experience, he definitely knew what he was doing." The doctor saw phenotypic differences between the leader and his

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[11] This reminded me of what a journalist from Chilapa who regularly reports on the guerrillas told me: he had once taken a class in college from a man he believed to be a member of Peru's Sendero Luminoso.

followers, suggesting separate nutritional and working life histories. The guerrilla soldiers were shorter than Eagle One and had rougher hands. The doctor also examined the body of one dead rebel and noted that he had broad feet, suggesting someone who had habitually worked barefoot, perhaps a farmer (New York Times, August 31, 1996).

This incident occurred about ten miles into the coastal mountains of Oaxaca, in a hamlet of twenty or so houses centered in a coffee plantation zone. As he was treating the wounded guerrillas, the doctor noticed that villagers would stop by and converse comfortably with the rebels, and somebody even produced a case of softdrinks. The physician, based on his experiences, concluded that at least some of Oaxaca's coastal farmers were favorably disposed towards the EPR (New York Times, August 31, 1996).

Some reports indicate that the government considers the municipios of Coyuca de Benitez and Atoyac de Alvarez, both in Guerrero, as being the principle areas of EPR and ERPI recruitment (El Universal, October 29, 1999). Other reports indicate that the insurgents major recruiting grounds include the poorer sections of cities and towns like Acapulco, Chilapa, Chilpancingo, and Tixtla. Army counterinsurgency operations currently focus on the Costa Chica, particularly the municipio of Ayutla de los Libres. Unlike the Zapatistas (EZLN), neither the EPR nor the ERPI openly control and administer regions in which the army has agreed to relinquish control.

Government analysts estimate 150-200 armed guerrillas in the EPR, while most independent analysts estimate closer to 400 combatants, given the wide geographic scope of the organization and its use of up to fifty-man columns for a single attack. EPR training manuals indicate that their members receive basic training in both weapons and

tactics (Proceso, September 1, 1996). Typical weaponry appears to be the AKM assault rifle, a 7.62mm select-fire weapon with a maximum effective range of 550 meters. Supplemental arms include the M-16 / AR-15 series of rifles, M-1 carbines, Uzi submachineguns, and shotguns. The picture that emerges is one of a lightly armed guerrilla force, operating primarily in Guerrero and Oaxaca, with an educated, urban leadership and a rank and file composed of poor, rural farmers. This is a makeup commonly found in Latin American guerrilla armies. Marxist-inspired university professors and students, along with other urban intellectuals, form the leadership and generally fight for a vision that includes a socialist state, or other far-reaching socioeconomic transformations. The motives of the rank-and-file members, both urbanites and rural, are more difficult to accurately summarize. I do not have enough data on the EPR / ERPI rank-and-file to make informed generalizations. I do suspect, based on precedent, that the rural recruits in Guerrero's guerrilla movements are more conservative in world-view than their leaders. They participate in fighting for any number of reasons, including perceived self-interest, conviction, and coercion. Both Leites and Wolf (1970) and Stoll (1993; 1999) emphasize the role of coercion in guerrilla recruitment, and the 1985 CIA training manual "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare" certainly suggests that it is a well known technique. This, according to Stoll, combined with the guerrilla strategy of implicating villagers in insurgency (thus provoking an inevitable state backlash) contributes to the declining human rights environment in areas actively contested by government and rebel forces (Stoll 1993, 1999).

Inter-village animosities, fear, dire economic circumstances, and the desire for land also play a role in mobilizing farmers. In a certain sense, segments of both the EPR-ERPI rank-and-file and the EZLN farmer-guerrillas may be fighting for a continuation of the conservative, traditional status quo: they want to maintain the life ways of the ejido and the comunidad agraria, vestiges of the colonial era. There are various elements in these movements: a radical leadership intent on socialism, and a factional, stratified, yet somewhat conservative rural underclass intent on securing access to land, settling feuds, and maintaining the traditional rights of the comunidad agraria. Analysts such as Stoll (1999) emphasize the role of the outside agitators when explaining rural rebellions in Mesoamerica; other analysts such as Harvey (1994) point to the abandonment of land reform and a decline in state subsidies to agricultural sectors.

In the post-war period the modernization of agriculture in developing countries was supported by international research foundations and national governments through the application of Green Revolution technology. Global food output boomed but the problem of rural poverty and hunger did not disappear. Policy was based in favor of urban consumers and the needs of rapid industrialization. As rural producers became increasingly differentiated, competition for land, water, and inputs increased. Export crops expanded, drawing in former subsistence producers into new global markets. The recession in the industrialized countries in the early 1980s reduced demand and world commodity prices began to fall. At the same time Latin American countries were burdened by the debt crisis and generally responded by cutting public expenditure and restructuring their economies to allow a central role for private capital. In this context transnational capital and multilateral lending institutions were able to influence the policy decisions of national governments, privatization of state enterprises, the elimination of subsidies and the opening of domestic markets to cheaper imports were adopted throughout Latin America. Only those producers with sufficient land, capital and technology to compete in the global market became viable.

Some small producers were able to gain access to niche markets or sought ways to associate with private investors. However, the majority of rural producers found themselves occupying a more marginal role in the new economy. A new rural underclass has been emerging throughout Latin America, made up particularly of young people with little prospects of economic improvement. The rapid increase in migration is one

indication of this. Another is the political organization of rural movements seeking to defend small farmers and redefine their insertion into the market on more advantageous terms. Both of these types of responses have been widespread in Mexico, especially since 1982. The third option, one which has always existed in the Latin American context, is the one taken by the Zapatistas in Chiapas (Harvey 1994:4).

It is no contradiction to say that both Stoll and Harvey are indeed partially correct. They are each simply examining in isolation two recurring features of insurgency, (1) dire economic circumstances and (2) the commingling of university-trained revolutionaries with desperate rural peoples. In the current round of guerrilla organizing, it is quite likely that the rank-and-file's agenda will win out over that of the urban leadership. Soviet-style communism has fallen out of favor as a model for development while indigenous rights are currently high-profile items on many developing nations agendas. Only one social organization in Guerrero -- the OCSS -- has publicly suggested that armed struggle may be necessary (El Sol de Acapulco, March 12, 2000). In contrast, most on the legal left, including the ex-FAR guerrilla leader Noriega Catu, and the lawyer for the family members of some of the El Charco casualties, lobby for a non-violent approach to social change (El Sol de Acapulco, March 11, 2000; El Sol de Acapulco, March 13, 2000). The EPR's ideology and public relations campaign have clearly not caught the imagination of the Mexico's urban middle classes or foreign audiences, in striking contrast to the success of the EZLN.[12] Bruhn's (1998) analysis of both organizations communiques determined that the EPR was far more intent on

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[12] Bruhn (1998:36) notes that Columbia's insurgents lament about fighting a bloody war for thirty years without arousing foreign sympathy while twelve days in the field has garnered the EZLN acclaim throughout the world.

promoting "Cold War" era themes such as revolution, war, oligarchy, and the disappeared, perhaps reflecting the intimate genealogy between the PDLP and the EPR. Meanwhile, the EZLN advanced the more contemporary themes of civil society and indigenous rights, skillfully manipulating public opinion.

The Challenge of Mobilizing Support

Redfieldian and Fosterian scholarship has painted a largely conservative portrait of peasant culture and behavior. Che Cuevara provided some empirical evidence for this thesis, when during his fatal Bolivian adventure he discovered that peasants can be wary non-participants who shun insurgent movements. Conversely, the urban poor are often portrayed as being socially progressive. Hence it has been argued that the revolutionary organization will find better recruiting grounds in the city rather than in the countryside (for a discussion see McCormick 1992).[13]

If this were true, Chalco and the poor barrios of Acapulco would be logical recruiting grounds for the EPR. Yet in those cities we have no evidence of widespread support. Of relevance here is a RAND study undertaken by McCormick (1992:57) in

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[13] The major theories of rural rebellion invoke rational models (Popkin 1979), moral economy models (Scott 1976), and coercion / conquest models (Leites and Wolf 1970). Wickham-Crowley (1992) argues that no one theory provides a satisfactory explanation for the multitude of Latin American insurgencies of the last thirty years. The ethnographic monographic that most exhaustively analyzes these theories in a highland Mesoamerica setting is Stoll's (1993) account of the emergence of the Guatemalan Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP). Stoll concludes that the coercion / conquest model best explains EGP-farmer relations in Ixil country. This conclusion, which implicates both government and guerrilla forces in an escalating campaign of coercion and political killings, has troubling implications for the development of a human rights culture in any region marked by insurgency. See Migdal (1974), Paige (1975), Stoll (1999), Wolf (1969), and Yaworsky (1996) for further discussions of rural rebellions.

which he noted that the Shining Path had not fared well in obtaining recruits in the slums of Lima. He went on to identify factors that constrain guerrilla recruitment in urban slums. He noted that the supposed breakdown of community in migrant settlements is much less than what we had once assumed. While frustration, poverty, and anomie are undoubtedly present, rural peoples who immigrate to cities retain much of their sense of rural life. They continue to have contacts with the mother village and preserve some of the social patterns from the hinterland. It is an "urban life with a rural flavor" (McCormick 1992:57).

> This pattern of migration and settlement might appear to be advantageous for the rural-based organization attempting to build an urban front. All things being equal, the community character of the new communities would appear to make them attractive candidates for mobilization. Well-segmented communities will tend to mobilize more rapidly than those with a comparatively disorganized or unorganized set of internal relationships. Systems of this nature tend to be resistant to influences from without and comparatively susceptible to appeals pitched from within. The problem, under these circumstances, is to find a way of getting inside the group in the first place. Having done so, however, one is in a position to recruit the targeted collective en masse rather than individual by individual...although many of the [barrios] meet the first criteria of bloc recruitment -- a strong defining set of community ties -- they do not satisfy the second -- a high degree of group segmentation from the rest of society. In contrast to the countryside, where the village stands apart socially and geographically...it is impossible to move on [urban slums] as if they were isolated entities (McCormick 1992:57-58).

The EPR does appear to be practicing bloc recruitment in well-segmented groups found in rural areas. Approximately 12 organizations joined the EPR en masse between 1994 and 1996, among them the Armed Commando Francisco Villa, the 18th of May Brigade, and the Vicente Guerrero Brigade (El Universal, October 29, 1999).

Guerrero's rural areas are indeed poverty stricken. INEGI's (1991a; 1996) socioeconomic rankings give Guerrero the lowest possible poverty rating. The

immediate hinterland of Chilapa has a sixty-two percent illiteracy rate, rampant alcoholism, and high infant mortality rates. The minimum wage is $30.00 (3.30 US) a day. Health problems include Chagas disease, dengue fever, hemorrhagic dengue fever, and malaria. Chilapa remains a region of refuge and an economic backwater.[14] It was so during the 1970s when the PDLP took up arms and it remain so today. The austerity policies of the 1980s removed traditional safety nets -- state subsidies -- that kept many farmers afloat. The government of Mexico's vision of development, with agriculture based on economies of scale and comparative advantage in the world market, leaves little room for small-scale subsistence agriculturalists. Without subsidies from SEDESOL and NGOs, a greater portion of the rural poor would be potential recruits for political-military organizations like the EPR.

Area of Operations

According to the Secretary of National Defense (SEDENA) there are more than twenty-five rebel groups operating in the mountains of Guerrero, but only two, the EPR and the ERPI, have actually conducted military attacks. They have struck military targets in Guerrero on more than ten occasions in Acapulco, the Central Zone, Costa Chica, Costa Grande, La Montaña, and the Tierra Caliente. They have also attacked in the states of Chiapas, Mexico, Michoacan, Oaxaca, Puebla, Tabasco, Veracruz, and Mexico D.F. They reported have influence in Jalisco and Hidalgo as well. They are actively recruiting

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[14] See Aguirre Beltrán (1979) for an analysis of Mexico's rural, indigenous areas that stresses the influences of geographic isolation and poor transport in shaping the cultural features of those communities.

in Morelos, particularly the municipios near the Guerrero border. EPR support cells were reported in nineteen of Guerrero's seventy-six municipios: Alcozaca, Atoyac de Alvarez, Ayutla de los Libres, Azoyu, Chilapa de Alvarez, Coyuca de Benitez, Igualapa, Metlatonoc, Olinala, Ometepec, Petatlan, San Cruz Grande, San Gerónimo, San Luis Acatlan, San Marcos, Teconapa, Tecpan, Tlacoachistlahuaca, and Tlapa de Comonfort. The newspaper El Sol de Acapulco also reports EPR cells in the municipios of Atengo del Rio, Cuetzala del Progreso, Cutzamala de Pinzon, Iguala, and Teolapan (El Sol de Acapulco, October 28, 1999). Sixty percent of the EPR's forces were reportedly deployed in Guerrero on the eve of the EPR-ERPI rupture.

The Response of the Security Forces and Human Rights Abuses

The government initially responded to the EPR by arresting OCSS members; eight were detained almost immediately after the outbreak of violence in 1996. The main recruiting grounds of the OCSS, Tepetixtla and Atoyoquillo, were also quickly occupied by the military (New York Times, July 17, 1996). Several of Lucio Cabañas's relatives, PRD activists, and FAC-MLN members were also arrested and charged with violating firearms regulations and being EPR members. On August 30, 1996, the army located a safehouse in Huiteco, Guerrero, and attacked; eight rebels were reported wounded in the incident. Nineteen people were detained, fifteen in Guerrero, two in Oaxaca, and two in the state of Mexico. Near the Chilapa-Tixtla road, a military detachment was soon stationed, and other military units were soon deployed around Chilapa. Roadblocks and military encampments were reported in Ahuixtla, La Antena, El Crucero de Santa Ana, along the Chilapa-Tlapa highway, and in the municipio of

Zitlala (JMMP archives, 2000). In Ahuacuotzingo, roadblocks and military detachments appeared in El Crucero de Ahuacuotzingo, in the municipal cabecera of Ahuacuotzingo itself; in Trapiche Viejo; in Pochutla; and in other localities (JMMP archives, 2000). In Atlixtac, roadblocks were established at the crossroads at Ayotoxtla, Tlatlauquitepec, and other locations (JMMP archives, 2000). In Chilapa's hinterland, elements of the Mexican army from Military Zone 35 detained and reportedly tortured four individuals from the community of San Miguel Ahuelican, Ahuacuotzingo, on April 3 and 4, 1997. On April 6, 1997, they detained and tortured two individuals from the community of Pochutla, Ahuacuotzingo. On the 7th, another EPR suspect was detained and tortured in Alpoyecangingo, Ahuacuotzingo. Other suspects who were rounded up and tortured in April and May of 1997 hailed from Cotlamoloya, Atlixtac; San Miguel Ahuilican, and Alpoyetcaningo, Ahuacuotzingo; and Cuonetcingo and Papaxtla, Chilapa. Further cases of torture and detention were reported in Santa Rosa, municipality of Zapotitlan Tablas; Zopilotepec, municipio of Atlixtac; Xocoyolzintla, Mitlancingo, Tlaquilcingo and Tlaculmulco, municipio of Ahuacuotzingo; and in Acatlán, Ahuixtla, and Hueycantenango, municipio of Chilapa. All of these cases in Chilapa's hinterland were investigated by the JMMP. Of the twenty-one local cases of detention of EPR suspects in 1997, eleven resulted in the subsequent release of the suspects, while at least three of the remaining detainees were sentenced to long prison sentences. The Center for Human Right de la Montaña "Tlachinollan" A.C. also investigated a number of reported cases of army detentions and torture of EPR suspects during the years 1996-1999. These cases were located in the Montaña region of Guerrero, particularly in the municipio of Tlapa

de Comonfort.

The guerrilla war and the army's response was noted by Amnesty International (1999:1-2) when they stated that "over the past five years Amnesty International has detected a serious deterioration in the human rights situation in Mexico...the crisis is particularly acute in the southern states of Chiapas, Oaxaca and Guerrero...the crisis in human rights coincides with the emergence of armed opposition groups." In guerrilla warfare, torture is a fairly common interrogation tool employed by counterinsurgency forces to extract information. Insurgent movements in turn, have devised strategies of organization geared to limiting the damage wrought by forced confessions. Prolonged popular war movements often organize important personnel in a network of three-person cells throughout the nation.[15] Each cell member knows only three other individuals in the movement: his two cell mates and his contact with the next cell. In this way, a chain of several hundred clandestine insurgents can achieve a high degree of the compartmentalization necessary for security, albeit at a high cost in operational freedom of action. If a cell mate is captured and does not show up for, say, twenty-four hours, his cell mates know to flee the country or go into hiding. If the captured cell mate can hold out during interrogation for more than twenty-four hours, then there is a good chance his cell mates will flee successfully. Even if the detainee later breaks and informs on his comrades, he can only inform on three people, who are by then already alerted and out of harm's way. Although the three-person cell is the most well known format (it was used

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[15] The film *Battle of Algiers* (1966) vividly depicts the cellular nature of revolutionary organizations.

by the Algerian FLN and the Nicaraguan FDN) we know that at least one of Guerrero's insurgent movements, the ELSS, an EPR antecedent organization, was operating with a five-person cellular structure (Proceso, August 7, 1995).

Eight EPR suspects were detained in El Cucuyachi, municipio of Ayutla de los Libres, Guerrero (El Sol de Acapulco, September 9, 1999). These eight individuals were the same eight names that I saw on an "army blacklist" that had been archived at the JMMP office. The center's list of other EPR suspects detained by the Mexican Army in Guerrero demonstrates that the security forces are actively pursuing the EPR in the Costa Chica, the Central Zone, and La Montaña.[16]

Complicating the human rights situation in Guerrero is the rather common use of "black psyop" tactics.[17] This involves committing human rights abuses (or other acts) while masquerading as the enemy. One episode that very well may have been a black psyop incident occurred during the course of my fieldwork in Chilapa itself. On May 19, 2000, in one of the squatter settlements (El Llano) only a kilometer away from my home in Chilapa, thirty armed and masked gunmen appeared at 3:00 a.m. firing weapons

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[16] A well-known NGO leader in Chilapa was reportedly kidnaped by the military in 1997, tortured, and issued death threats. I met with this individual perhaps once a week for a period of five months, but we never discussed the alleged incident. Some members from the human rights center as well as other trusted informants expressed skepticism at his claims, and at least one informant reported that he made up the story to cover up a theft of 6,000 pesos. The NGO leader was killed in an automobile accident in March of 2000.

[17] The most notorious psyop manual I know of is the 1985 CIA training manual "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare" produced for the Nicaraguan contras, that discusses among other things, how to create martyrs. For an overview of the US military's conception of psychological warfare, see FM 17-88 "Psychological Operations" (Department of the Army 1987).

(AKMs) and shouting "long live the EPR." They burned down four homes and wounded four squatters, some quite seriously. By mid-morning, a military helicopter was circling Chilapa at low altitude, and a heightened military presence was allocated for El Llano. Although the attack was attributed to the EPR, some residents of the squatter settlement believed that the army or other security elements were behind the action. Some members of the human rights center suggested that the assailants might have been hired by local landowners to drive off squatters. Both of these are plausible scenarios. The situation demonstrates the difficulties involved in assigning responsibility for specific acts of violence in zones actively contested by guerrilla and government forces.

Guerrero currently ranks second to Chiapas in numbers of military forces deployed. At least eight infantry battalions from the Mexican Army patrol Guerrero, which is divided into two military zones (Proceso, June 30, 1996). The 27th Infantry Battalion is stationed in Taxco, the 40th Infantry Battalion is located in Ciudad Altimarano, the 41st in Chilpancingo, and the 93rd Infantry Battalion in Tlapa. The 48th Infantry Battalion has been operating in Ayutla de los Libres, and I have seen reports mentioning the presence of the 19th, 35th, 50th, 51st, 56th, and 78th Infantry Battalions in Guerrero as well. These battalions have been on red alert since August of 1995, when military intelligence amassed enough information to conclude that an outbreak of guerrilla violence was likely in the near future. Since 1996, joint police-military patrols known as Multiple Operation Brigades (BOMs) patrol the countryside. During the course of my fieldwork, I was only once stopped by a military roadblock, consisting of about twelve soldiers armed with G-3 rifles. This occurred on the Chilpancingo-Chilapa

road between Chautla and Parada Xochimilco on April 25, 2000, at approximately 8:40 P.M. My taxi was searched, but we were quickly sent on our way.

The military also conducts civic action programs (i.e. road or bridge-building projects in rural Guerrero) ostensibly for local economic development, although critics charge that these transport arteries are constructed to bolster the war against subversion (Proceso, June 30, 1996). These development projects are conducted by joint military-civilian Brigades of Action for Social Assistance (Proceso, July 21, 1996). Incidently, I also heard reports of the military being involved in reforestation projects as well.

On October 23, 1999, Mexico's new, elite counterinsurgency unit, the PFP, captured two leaders of the ERPI's High Command in Chilpancingo, Guerrero. This combined police-army unit is led by W. Robeldo Madrid, and counts on 5,000 soldiers of the Third Military Police Brigade, personnel from the Center of Investigation and Security (CISEN), and the Federal Road Police (El Universal, October 29, 1999). The safehouse in which the ERPI leaders were discovered was located only 1500 meters away from the headquarters of the Mexican Army's 41st Infantry Battalion. The military capitalized on this success in early 2000 when they managed to kill an important EPR leader in unclear circumstances. By January of 2000, somewhere between 15,000 to 23,000 Mexican Army soldiers were reported on duty in Guerrero.

I frequently saw soldiers in and around Chilapa. Typically, they would be loading up Humvees or trucks with supplies. Often they were wearing kevlar helmets, body armor, and had several soldiers at port arms on alert. Weaponry consisted of German-designed HK G3 rifles, semi-automatic weapons firing 7.62mm bullets with an effective

range of over 600 meters. The bullet has a relatively flat trajectory over long distances and penetrates deeply in both steel and human tissue. Some of the troops carried 40 mm grenade launchers under their rifles; others carried light or medium machine guns of indeterminate type. The federal and state police forces in Guerrero were armed with M-16 rifles, select-fire weapons that shoot 5.56 mm bullets a maximum effective range of 565 meters. These 5.56 mm bullets tend to tumble and fragment after penetrating ten centimeters into human tissue, causing hideous wounds.[18] Supplementary police arms included short-barreled (14.5 inch or 16 inch) carbine variants of the M-16 rifle, AKM rifles, and pump action 12 gauge shotguns that are capable of firing on a single pull of the trigger a spray of nine .33 caliber pellets out to a maximum effective range of fifty meters, or a single .72 caliber one-ounce slug out to a maximum effective range of 140 meters. The large diameter of the slug makes it capable of amputating a human limb on impact or causing an otherwise immediately fatal wound. Municipio police carried either shotguns, or more commonly, M-1 carbines, light .30 caliber rifles with an effective range of 200 meters. Community police (local police forces recruited at the village-level who will patrol rural areas of the municipio) are only authorized to carry civilian weapons (12 gauge shotguns, .22 caliber rifles, .38 caliber pistols). In fact, in early 2000, I occasionally read newspaper reports of military personnel confiscating

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[18] When fired from the standard 20 inch barrel of an M-16 rifle, the bullet will yaw and fragment after passing through 10 cm of human soft-tissue, so long as the target is within a range of 200 meters. However, the short-barreled (16 and 14.5 inch carbine variants of the M-16) produce these wound profiles in soft-tissue targets only to about 100 meters. Beyond these ranges, 5.56 mm bullets will penetrate through human tissue without yawing or fragmenting (Fighting Firearms, date unknown).

unauthorized weapons (typically M-1 carbines) from police or security officers. Security officers, both bank guards and armored car personnel, were mostly armed with Mossburg M 590 or M 500 12 gauge shotguns,[19] robust and reliable weapons that coincidently, are in service with the US military. I also witnessed that these security officers were almost always wearing heavy body armor, perhaps at armor levels 2A, 2, or 3. In sum, the armament and disposition of military and security forces around Chilapa was similar to other military units I witnessed operating in regions where the threat of low-intensity conflict was an ongoing reality.[20]

Discussion and Summary

The EPR is a conventional political-military organization conducting an insurgency through means of the strategy of prolonged popular war. Lack of resources and factionalism have damaged the group. The infighting has led to fissions and by early 2000, at least four factions split off from the EPR to form separate political-military organizations: ERPI; FARP; CCRP-CJ; and the EVRP. Weakened by these events, the EPR lapsed back into phase one of prolonged popular war.

The ERPI, in contrast, follows an insurrectionist strategy, and has not suffered the

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[19] I could not determine which type of ammunition (slugs or buckshot) was being carried by police and security forces.

[20] I am comparing the Mexican Army in Guerrero (1999) with US Army and Marine units that operated in sensitive regions of Panama (i.e. Arraijan) in 1988-1989. In both Guerrero and Arraijan, military personnel were killed in clashes with unknown opponents. Both militaries required (for some time at least) their local forces to carry heavy loads of ammunition (180 rounds minimum in Arraijan) and wear helmets and Kevlar body armor in the stifling heat, although these strictures were sometimes ignored and were eventually relaxed.

same level of divisions that befell the EPR. Both movements originated out of years of clandestine organizing, some of which preceded the current era of economic restructuring. Leaders in both groups are typically urban educated mestizos; rank-and-file members are more likely to be drawn from the rural poor. The leadership is generally attracted to visions of a socialist state, while the farmer-soldiers, of which little is known, most likely fight for a variety of reasons: self-interest, commitment, coercion, fear, economic security, community autonomy, access to land, and the familiar order of subsistence-based agriculture. Guerrero's high indices of poverty, especially in rural areas, provide adequate recruiting grounds. Bloc recruitment is practiced in rural areas by soliciting previously existing groups, particularly political-military organizations. Neoliberal reforms, in the short run at least, are exacerbating the plight of subsistence agriculturalists, who have lost crucial subsidies and must devise new strategies to survive. These circumstances will allow organizations like the ERPI to maintain a low-scale insurgency for an indefinite period.

This insurgency will complicate human rights organizing in Guerrero; the very nature of revolutionary war provides situations where opportunities to commit serious human rights abuses are rampant. Moreover, strategies employed by both insurgents and counterinsurgents in prolonged popular war situations include both the systematic and opportunistic employment of human rights abuses. However, the current level of guerrilla activity and the actual body count is very low, making Guerrero's reputation for violence is in large part exaggerated. Moreover, the recent PAN victory in the national elections syphons off potential support from those willing to back armed movements as a

means of toppling a one-party authoritarian regime. Democratization has occurred, taking away an important symbolic issue for the guerrillas. There is no Somoza to rally against. The fortunes of these movements appear to be waning; guerrilla activity in the state has virtually ceased since the election of Fox. A recurrence of visible armed opposition will now depend heavily on the prevailing economic conditions in rural Guerrero.

In the final analysis, the net effect of the guerrilla uprising may be the issuance of more SEDESOL funds to Guerrero, as either part of a winning the hearts and minds strategy, or simply through a campaign centered on increasing the benefits of cooperating with the government. Should the PAN successfully conclude a peace agreement with the EZLN in Chiapas, the EPR and ERPI may come to be viewed as increasingly anachronistic and irrelevant. At the time of this writing (2002) that is certainly how they appear. Conversely, the PAN victory could, given the party's stated views on economic policy, signal a long term process of decreasing funding for SEDESOL programs, which could exacerbate social tensions in rural Guerrero, ultimately giving both the EPR and ERPI new leases on life. Whatever the final outcome, these movements have proven to be resilient. I suspect that should the current conditions for insurrection prove to be uninviting to the insurgent leadership, they will again enter the latent phase of prolonged popular war, patiently waiting for the day when they may again wage war in paradise.

CHAPTER 8

SUBSISTENCE, PATRONAGE, AND THE ASSOCIATIONAL REVOLUTION

If the community is to be understood in terms of forces impinging on it from the outside, it is necessary to gain a better understanding of national-level institutions. Yet to date most anthropologists have hesitated to commit themselves to such a study, even when they have become half-convinced that such a step would be desirable. National institutions seem so complex that even a small measure of competence in their operations seems to require full-time specialization. We have therefore left their description and analysis to other disciplines...the complex apparatus of such institutions is indeed a subject for specialists, but anthropologists may properly attempt to assess some of their functions (Wolf 2001a:125-126).

This study has thus far made a conscious attempt to take up the challenge issued by Wolf. Moreover, it seems that given the extensive transformations in state-society relationships over the last half century, the anthropological study of national institutions and their linkages to rural communities is timely. Through the early to mid-twentieth century, many rural communities throughout southern Mexico maintained a degree of defacto political autonomy based on geographic isolation[1] and their ability to produce essential foodstuffs independent of state subsidies. Massive population growth, increases in transport efficiency, and the adoption of neotechnic agricultural systems obliterated this scenario (Kyle 1995). Mexico's population, 15 million in 1910, has exploded to approximately 100 million today. Demographic imbalances and a growing reliance on

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[1] Of course I endorse Wolf's (1982) notion of interconnectedness and do not wish to imply that these communities were timeless isolates divorced from the outside world or historical processes. I am also aware that both Wolf (1959) and Wasserstrom (1983) have demonstrated a long history of village reliance on haciendas and migratory wage labor in select areas of southern Mexico. In practice though, until recently the state had little incentive (or logistical ability) to intervene in purely internal matters of villages in the Chilapa region.

external inputs effectively incorporated these previously autonomous rural areas into a dependent and subordinate position in the wider industrial economy.

Peasant communities that in the past opportunistically opened or closed (as described by Skinner 1971; and Wolf 1960) in response to the circumstances in the wider society can now only effect real "closure" if they are prepared to accept massive economic dislocations, most probably involving widespread starvation and depopulation. Although some (e.g., Cancian 1987:162-164) suggest that a limited closure has been attempted by select rural peoples after the 1983 crisis, this is best explained in terms of the increasing ubiquity of occupational multiplicity in the countryside.[2] The integration into the global economy under neoliberal terms has left many rural *Guerrerenses* little option but to commit themselves to a survival strategy based on wage labor via cyclical migration and government subsidized microindustries augmented by small-scale farming and animal husbandry. This phenomenon of increasing rural dependency and transformation is not limited to Guerrero, it has been well documented in both Chiapas (Cancian 1987) and Oaxaca (Cohen 1999).

Given these crucial transformations in the demographic, technological, and economic makeup of Mexico, it should come as no surprise that elites and rural populations would develop institutions and specific forms of organization that adapt to the realities of the emerging global political economy. Much of the "associational revolution" of the late twentieth century signifies a revamping of patronage networks and

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[2] "Repeasantization" the process in which former wage laborers are returning to subsistence agriculture, is but another manifestation of occupational multiplicity.

other subsidy channels to adapt to these new demographic and economic realities. One cannot overemphasize the extent to which residents in rural Guerrero have come to depend on these subsidy programs, particularly those involving transportation, commodity prices, agricultural inputs, and petty commodity production (Kyle 1995). NGOs do not challenge this dependency; rather, they merely represent a shift in the way government subsidies are administered and allocated. NGOs are subsumed within a dendritic-like subsidy network linking state ministries and rural households, and elites control the flow of resources through this system. From the perspective of rural peoples, the main task of NGOs is to access state subsidies, a process that merely highlights the growing dependence of the rural poor on externally derived fossil fuel based technologies. The significance of this observation leads me to conclude that the rhetoric of NGO inspired autonomy can be dismissed.

The placement of NGOs within this subsidy system guarantees that even in the emerging free-market environment, in key respects they resemble earlier peasant organizations, chiefly in that after nearly two decades of neoliberalism, state agencies remain central nodal points despite the undermining of traditional power centers precipitated by structural adjustment (Edelman 2000). Although states have increasingly come to utilize NGOs as low cost mechanisms through which to deliver social services, this in no way alters the continuing hegemony of the state over dependent rural peoples (and NGOs). NGOs themselves are increasingly dependent on the state for finances (Robbins 2002:129) and have been documented to function as fundamental players in neoliberal economic agendas (Edwards and Hulme 1995:4), facts that undercut much of

the new social movement rhetoric proclaiming that emancipatory politics take place primarily in "spaces outside or at the margins of the state" (Edelman 2000:17). The state has altered and in cases diminished its interventions, but rural peoples still rely on it for strategic resources in a situation of extreme scarcity (Edelman 2000:17). The state remains as a vital entity for the amelioration of specific problems and an "essential element in the political legitimation -- as well as certification, licensing, and even incorporation -- of 'new social subjects' who seek to survive by engaging the market" (Edelman 2000:17).

Given this balance of power, the ability of NGOs to alter these power relations and generate "northern" standards of living in marginal areas like Chilapa remains problematic. Whether NGOs will ossify as frontmen for the "lords of poverty" or otherwise function as mere ladlers in the global soup kitchen remains to be seen. This is a very real possibility, given that the Mexican state devotes resources to (1) repayment on foreign loans, (2) amassing wealth for domestic elites, and (3) developing the marginal refuge regions, tasks that are antithetical to one another.[3]

Rappaport (1994:155-156) noted that "structural transformations in subsystems make it possible to maintain more basic aspects of systems unchanged." Given this assumption, it seems appropriate to view NGOs as components of these subsystems. From a wider perspective, both the democratic transition and the neoliberal reform effort can be viewed as subsystemic transformations that have left a highly stratified social

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[3] The disarticulation between the latter goals has been noted by other observers of development in southern Mexico, particularly Cynthia Hewitt de Alcántara (1984:176).

order virtually unaltered.

One must grant that over the last decade Mexico's governing institutions have evolved from a defacto one-party state to a multiparty democratic republic. The PRI's monopoly on power has been broken and with it, the rule of the one-party system. Indeed, in Chilapa itself the local NGOs that comprise the Regional Indigenous Council are now reportedly preparing to support the PAN in the next election for municipal president, all part of an anti-corruption strategy. With the PAN ascendent nationally and a multiparty democratic system functioning, new avenues of social mobility have indeed been opened. Yet there are brakes on the decentralization of power. Mexico's rulers are typically delegating routine tasks to lower income and marginal organizations while retaining control of strategic decision-making (Rodriguez 1997:4). Adaptive responses in this context involve differential costs and benefits for the parties involved. In this regard, Mexico's very real political evolution, much like that in the former Soviet Union, has transformed and widened the composition of elites while maintaining the stratified underclasses and asymmetrical power relations typical of the state-level of sociopolitical organization.

This takes us back to the basic strategic relationships apparent in any state level sociopolitical system, which were identified by Wolf (2001a) in the following manner:

> In dealing with group relationships in a complex society, we must underline the fact that the exercise of power by some people over others enters into all of them, on all levels of integration. Certain economic and political relationships are crucial to the functioning of any complex society. No matter what other functions such a society may contain or elaborate, it must both produce surpluses and exercise power to transfer a part of these surpluses from the producing communities to people other than the producers. No matter what combination of cultural forms such a society may utilize, it must also wield power

to limit the autonomy of its constituent communities and to interfere in their affairs. This means that all interpersonal and intergroup relationships in such a society must at some point conform to the dictates of economic or political power (Wolf 2001a: 126-127).

These are the basic political realities that temper the notion that these organizations will be able to achieve greater autonomy or an alternative development path, or for that matter, anything approaching real "resistance" on behalf of rural communities. Adding to this discussion is the knowledge that in increasingly complex societies, both surplus extraction and targeted subsidies are processes that awkwardly coexist in marginal rural areas like Chilapa. From the 1920s through the 1960s, subsidies were targeted to northern Mexico (Grindle 1990:179), and regions like Chilapa did not benefit directly from government largesse to any significant extent. Underproductivity and political unrest in southern Mexico has now compelled the central government to advance significant credit and resources to this region. Mexican elites must surely recognize that massive foreign investment in Chilapa is unlikely in the near future. For the time being at least, the regional economy is unredeemable via the free market, an assessment echoed by other analysts of southern Mexico (i.e. Salas 2002:35). While states are built upon surplus extraction, the vagaries of national and international political expediencies dictate that at times, regions of refuge such as Chilapa may experience targeted subsidies overshadowing the extraction process as the state's major intervention. While the relationship between the state and the marginal area is indeed complex and multifaceted, the processes of surplus extraction and targeted subsidies are highly dynamic and malleable to political necessities.

In this milieu, untargeted subsidies have proven to be far too costly to maintain on a permanent basis, particularly in the era of structural adjustment. By comparison, funding NGOs must be attractive to policy makers. Capitalist states are successful partially for the reason that the government is able to jettison risk of investment onto private speculators. In a similar vein, via the targeted funding of NGOs, state elites have at their disposal a mechanism through which they can throw resources quickly at politically explosive regions with minimal risk to themselves. NGOs can be defunded with minimum fuss, as the grants and budgets afforded them by agencies like SEDESOL typically must be approved on a project by project or annual basis. Any defunded NGO is of itself, too small and inconsequential to pose a real political threat. In this way, the state deals with NGOs in a divide and rule strategy similar to the one applied to Mexico's historically atomized villages (as described by Dennis 1987). State elites pick and choose among atomized NGOs that are limited in size and power, to further their own interests. Meanwhile, "extralegal NGOs" (the armed leftist EPR and ERPI movements), perhaps seen by some as offering alternative development paths and resistance, are largely moribund and ineffective. They too call for a strongly centralized state. A best case scenario involves the government responding to them with the issuance of more SEDESOL funds, while a worst case scenario involves increasing militarization and a major human rights catastrophe.

With NGOs and guerrilla movements unlikely to lead rural peoples down an alternative development path, some observers look to the day to day practices of rural peoples for harbingers of a non-capitalist alternative. Radical theorists such as Chevalier

and Buckles (1995) and Burbach (2001)[4] interpret occupational multiplicity, the informal economy, and subsistence agriculture as "resistance" to the spread of a globalized capitalist system, but I believe this to be a serious misunderstanding of these phenomena. These subsistence strategies employed by small-scale agriculturalists are best viewed as simple adaptive responses to changing economic circumstances (Kyle 1997). Building a portfolio of remunerative activities through petty handicraft production, migratory wage labor, public works projects, and subsistence agriculture is a strategy for making a living in an unfavorable environment (Grindle 1990:194-195). It is both premature and naive to assign this survival strategy the status of cornerstone in a new and emerging egalitarian political economy, especially one that is overturning capitalism. Villagers are simply responding to the neoliberal reforms by diversifying their economic portfolios. SEDESOL / INI channels subsidies though NGOs that in effect promote and subsidize this occupational multiplicity. Augmenting common survival strategies deployed by the poor in the context of economic restructuring does not constitute alternative development.

The overall prospects for an alternative development (either peaceful or violent) based on resistance to state power in the Chilapa region is best summed up by Kyle (2000):

Returning to the question of resistance, there is nothing like resistance directed at the

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[4] Burbach (2001:93) lists the following as the "incipient foundation for alternative democratic economies": cooperatives, former state run enterprises, fair trade campaigns, socially responsible investment, microcredit banks, small-scale agricultural enterprises, and marketing cooperatives. While all of these are present in Chilapa, I of course disagree with Burbach's characterization of their significance.

underlying basis of power, namely, the expanding dependence on industrial technologies. Stopping this process is impossible, like putting toothpaste back in a tube, this for the simple reason that the region's population is now larger than could be supported without fossil fuel based agricultural inputs. Discontent, which is widespread even as the standard of living in the region improves, has been directed at the PRI, though this is very much a target of convenience and no opposition party has a political agenda calling for any significant change in government priorities. Recent militarization of Guerrero has reinforced frustration, but the EPR, a conventional leftist rebel group, has no program that addresses the underlying basis of power. And it is easy enough to see why. To eat, they must submit (Kyle 2000:8).

Whereas structural-functionalists were rightly condemned for undervaluing societal conflict, power relations, hegemony and resistance, currently a large number of American cultural anthropologists inspired by Scott's (1985) ethnography on resistance have promulgated that concept all out of proportion to its actual analytical utility.[5] There appears to be more than a little truth to Brown's (1996:729) assertion that if there is any hegemony in anthropological theory today, it is the theoretical hegemony of resistance.[6] It is certainly a theme very much in vogue in the anthropological literature surrounding NGOs. However, the classical examples of "everyday forms of peasant resistance" offered up by Scott (viz: foot-dragging, passive non-compliance, deceit, pilfering, sabotage, arson, slander) are not the activities that best characterize NGO cadre behavior in the fieldsite. Quiescence in exchange for subsidies (as suggested by Eckstein 2001)

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[5] In the memorable words of Marshall Sahlins (1993), "The new functionalism consists of translating the apparently trivial into the fatefully political."

[6] "Families, organizations and systems of production doubtless impose systems of subjugation, [but] they are also institutions that enable. Without them society would cease to exist and with it the capacity of human beings to survive. All social life entails some degree of dominance and subordination, which mirror the hierarchy intrinsic to the family and the socialization process itself. Resistance to such power can no more explain the myriad forms of culture than gravity can explain the varied architecture of trees" (Brown 1996:734).

more aptly describes the behavior of NGO members in Chilapa. My fieldwork convinced me that in east-central Guerrero, cooptation, quiescence, and cooperation, rather than resistance, were themes more fruitfully explored.

Some NGOs in the fieldsite, such as OCICI, very much fit the classic pattern of PRI cooptation of organized opposition. OCICI's founder drifted in and out of various political parties such as the PRD and the PT. He founded OCICI in the early 1990s and eventually attracted some degree of support in Chilapa's poorest indigenous communities. By the summer of 1997 (during the height of the EPR scare) rumors about an EPR-OCICI alliance were circulating. The OCICI director then disappeared only to reemerge several days later with the sensational claim that he had been kidnaped by the army. Yet by the time of my fieldwork in 1999, he was a member of the ruling PRI and OCICI had been effectively incorporated into the PRI's electoral machine. In exchange, the director and OCICI were awarded extensive public works contracts. This transformation did not go unnoticed by the citizenry of Chilapa, and his activities were a constant source of gossip (and bemusement) among well-informed consultants.

Other NGOs (Altepetl Nahuas, JMMP, Sanzekan Tinemi) have a commingling of interests with the state and have responded to the government in a manner short of the electoral receptivity extended by OCICI. Rather, these NGOs have adopted varying strategies of cooperation. This was evident in the relationship between the PRI and the JMMP. A commingling of interests had precipitated PRI funding to ideological adversaries. Yet my analysis demonstrates that the PRI had much to gain from funding the JMMP, even if such funding did not incorporate the JMMP into the PRI's electoral

machinery. Many prominent Mexicans with impeccable leftist credentials -- I'm thinking of Jorge Castañeda and Marcos Matías Alonso -- have become high ranking members of the PAN administration of President Vicente Fox. When Marcos Matías Alonso of Altepetl Nahuas joined the PAN administration in 2000 (as the national director of the INI) he did so with the provision that if he could not reform INI programs so as to achieve greater political autonomy for Mexico's indigenous regions, he would leave office after a year. This lends credence to my opinion that the cooperation between Altepetl Nahuas and the state does not fit neatly into the blatantly "coopted" category. Rather, although Altepetl Nahuas is subordinate and dependent, it is striking the best possible deal while maintaining some distance from the PAN's electoral activism.

It is perhaps an opportune time to remind ourselves as anthropologists that cooperation is as much a part of social life as is conflict. Furthermore, the many nuances of these varying forms of behavior (cooperation and conflict) have been so routinely classified as "resistance" by anthropologists that the latter concept itself is being trivialized (Brown 1996). Whatever NGOs are accomplishing in east-central Guerrero, it certainly has little to do with the liberation of subjugated knowledges, resistance, or the march down the road to an alternative development path. Recall that the PRI basically created these NGOs to serve as components of PRONASOL and SEDESOL development programs.[7]

Yet despite my dismissal of utopian development assessments, I submit that NGO

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[7] President Salinas de Gortari (2002:762) recalls that "Luis Donaldo [Colosio] attached tremendous importance to the development of civic organizations, NGOs." Colosio was appointed Minister of Social Development on April 13, 1992.

accomplishments are modest but real. By acting as human rights monitors and providing channels for subsidies, NGOs such as JMMP and SZT do contribute to a better quality of life for the rural poor. These activities are laudable in their own rights. When combined with the remunerations derived from occupational multiplicity and migratory wage labor (particularly that from the lucrative US market) these subsidies keep the region's population fed, clothed, and housed. Yet it will take further shifts in patterns of foreign investment and government funding priorities -- both traditionally skewed towards the agribusinesses of northern Mexico -- to significantly raise standards of living in the Chilapa region.

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APPENDIX

Acronyms

AC	Civil Association / Asociación Civil
ACNR	National Civic Revolutionary Association / Asociación Civica Nacional Revolucionaria
AN	Altepetl Nahuas
ANADEGES	Analysis, Distribution and Management
ANAGSA	National Livestock and Insurance Company / Aseguradora Nacional Agricola y Ganadero S.A.
ARIC	Rural Collective Interest Association / Asociación Rural de Interes Colectivo
BANOBRAS	National Public Works Bank / Banco Nacional de Obras y Servicios Públicas
BANRURAL	National Rural Credit Bank / Banco Nacional de Crédito Rural
BOM	Mobile Operation Brigade / Brigada Operacional Mobile
CCA	Community Council of Supply / Consejo Comunitario de Abasto
CCRP-CJ	Revolutionary Clandestine Committee of the Poor- Justice Commando June 28 / Comité Clandestino Revolucionario de los Pobres- Comando Justicio 28 de Junio
CEPAL	Economic Commission for Latin America / Comisión Economica para America Latina
CIM	Center for Information and Monitoring of Human Rights
CISEN	Center for Investigation and Security / Centro de Investigación y Seguridad
CG500ARI	Guerrero Council of 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance / Consejo Guerrerense de Quinientos Años de Resistencia Indígena
CNC	National Campesino Confederation / Confederación Nacional Campesino
CONAPO	National Population Count / Consejo Nacional de Población

CONASUPO	National Subsidized Staple Products Company / Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares
COPLADE	Planning Committee for State Development / Comité de Plancion para el Desarrollo Estatal
COPLADEG	Planning Committee for State Development Guerrero / Comité de Plancion para el Desarrollo Estatal Guerrero
COPLAMAR	Coordination Plan for Economically Depressed Regions and Marginalized Groups / Coordinación General del Plan de Zonas Deprimadas y Grupos Marginados
CNDH	National Human Rights Commission / Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos
CODEHUM	State Human Rights Commission / Comisión de Estado de Derechos Humanos
DICONSA	Distributor CONASUPO / Distribudora CONASUPO
DS	Social Development / Desarrollo Social
DSPRP	Productive and Social Development in Regions of Poverty
EGP	Guerrilla Army of the Poor / Ejército Guerrilla de los Pobres
EPR	People's Revolutionary Army / Ejército Popular Revolucionario
ERPI	Revolutionary Army of the Insurgent People / Ejército Revolucionaro del Pueblo Insurgente
EVRP	Revolutionary Villista Army of the People / Ejército Villista Revolucionario del Pueblo
EU	Ejido Union / Unión de Ejidos
EZLN	Zapatista National Liberation Army / Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional
FAR	Revolutionary Armed Forces / Fuerzas Armada Rebeldes
FARP	Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People / Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarios del Pueblo
FERTIMEX	Mexican Fertilizer Company / Fertilizantes de Mexico
FDN	National Democratic Front / Frente Democratico Nacional
FIDAPEL	Palm Leaf Trust Fund

FIRCO	Trust Fund for Shared Risk / Fideicomisio de Riesgo Compartido
FMLN	Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front / Frente de Liberación Nacional Farubundo Marti
FONAES	National Fund for Solidarity Enterprises / Fondo Nacional de Empresas de Solidaridad
FONART	National Fund for the Formation of Artisans / Fondo Nacional para Artisanos
FSLN	Sandinista National Liberation Front / Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional
FTA	Fair Trade Assistance
GEA	Environmental Studies Group / Gestación y Estudios Ambiantales
GSO	Grassroots Support Organization
IMSS	Mexican Social Security Institute / Instituto Mexicano de Seguridad Social
IMSS-COPLAMAR	Mexican Social Security Institute-Coordination of Plan of Economically Depressed Regions and Marginalized Groups / Instituto Mexicano de Seguridad Social
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Information / Instituto Nacional de Estadistica, Geographica, e Informatica
INFONAVIT	National Workers Housing Fund Institute / Instituto del Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda para los Trabajadores
INI	National Indigenist Institute / Instituto Nacional Indigenista
JMMP	Regional Center for the Defense of Human Rights José María Morelos y Pavon /
Centro	Regional de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos José María Morelos y Pavon
KT	Kakiztz Totlajtol
LARSEZ	Revolutionary Agrarian League Emiliano Zapata / Liga Agraria Revolucionario Emiliano Zapata
LICONSA	CONASUPO Industrialized Milk, INC.- Program of Milk for Social Storage / Leche Industrializada CONASUPO S.A.

MRTA	Revolutionary Movement Tupac Amaru / Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru
MSO	Membership Support Organization
MT	Matotlanejtikan Tomin
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OCICI	Independent Organization of Campesino and Indian Communities / Organización de Comunidades Indígenas y Campesinos Independentes
OCSS	Organization of Campesinos of the Southern Sierra / Organización de Comunidades del Sierra del Sur
OSING	Nongovernmental Indigenous Social Organization / Organización Social Indígena Nogubenmentale
PA	Office of the Agrarian Attorney General / Procurarduria Agraria
PAN	National Action Party / Partido Acción Nacional
PARM	Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution / Partido Autentico de la Revolución Méxicana
PEA	People Economically Active
PVEM	Green Ecology Party / Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico
PDLP	Party of the Poor / Partido de los Pobres
PDPR	Popular Revolutionary Democratic Party / Partido Democratico Popular Revolucionario
PGO	Primary Grassroots Organization
PI	Intersectoral Program / Programa Intesectoral
PIDER	Integral Program for Rural Development / Programa Integral para Desarrollo Rural
PO	Parastatal Organization
PP	Popular Politics / Politica Popular
PRD	Party of the Democratic Revolution / Partido de la Revolución Democratica

PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party / Partido de la Revolución Institucional
PROBECAT	Commission for Commercial Development /
PROCEDE	Program for the Certification of Ejido Land Rights and the Titling of Urban Land Plots / Programa de Certificación de Derechos Ejidales y Titulación de Solares Urbanos
PROCAMPO	Direct Rural Support Program / Programa de Apoyo Directo al Campo
PROGRESA	Program of Education, Health and Nutrition
PRONAL	National Food Program / Programa Nacional de Alimentación
PRONARE	National Reforestation Program / Programa Nacional de Reforestación
PRONASOL	National Solidarity Program / Progama Nacional de Solidaridad
PT	Workers Party / Partido de Trabajo
RPC	Regional Producer Council
SAGAR	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
SAM	Mexican Food System / Sistema Alimentario Mexicano
SCT	Ministry of Communication and Transportation / Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportistas
SECOFI	Ministry of Commerce and Industrial Development / Secretaría de Comercio y Formento Industrial
SEDENA	Ministry of National Defense / Secretaría de Defensa Nacional
SEDESOL	Ministry of Social Development / Secretaría de Desarrollo Social
SEDUE	Ministry of Ecology and Urban Development / Secretaría de Desarrollo Urbano y Ecologia
SEMARNAP	Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, and Fisheries / Secretaria de Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales y Pesca
SEP	Ministry of Education / Secretatía de Educación
SEPRADE	Professional Services of Aid to Indigenous Integral Development
SM	Ministry of Women / Secretaría e la Mujer

SRA	Ministry of Agrarian Reform / Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria
SSS	Society of Social Solidarity / Sociedad de Solidaridad Social
ST	Ministry of Labor / Secretaria de Trabajo
SZT	Sanzekan Tinemi
TTS	Titekititoke Tajuame Sihuame
UAG	Autonomous University of Guerrero / Universidad Autonoma de Guerrero
UAIMS	Agro-Industrial Units for Women / Unidad Agricola-Industrial de la Mujer Campesina
UCH	Union of Comuneros, Hueycantenango / Union de Comuneros de Hueycantenango
UCNAG	Union of Nahua Communities of Atzacoaloya, Guerrero / Union de Comunidades Nahua de Atzacoaloya, Guerrero
UNAM	National Autonomous University of Mexico / Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEMAC	National Ethnic Union of Mexico / Unión Nacional de Etnías de Mexico
UNORCA	National Union of Autonomous Peasant Organizations / Unión Nacional de Organizaciones Regionales Campesinas