NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilming. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conéré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SHC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.
Rural Politics and the Struggle for Land in Mexico:

A Case Study

by

Dominique Caouette, BSc

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

©copyright
1988, Dominique Caouette
The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-51147-8
The undersigned hereby recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research acceptance of this thesis, submitted by Dominique Caouette, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Chris J. Maule, Director
The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Professor J. Chevalier, Supervisor

Carleton University
Para Epidio Antonio, Vicente Antonio y Epidio Fonseca
que murieron luchando por sus tierras
y para todos los dentro
del movimiento popular independiente
que están luchando para un nuevo Mexico

To Epidio Antonio, Vicente Antonio and Epidio Fonseca
who died while fighting for their land
and to all of those within
the popular movement who are struggling
towards a people's Mexico
ABSTRACT

Struggles for land have been central to Mexican peasant uprisings. In Southern Veracruz, the intensification of cattle and petro-chemical industries have had direct impact in many rural communities. This thesis examines the impact of these industries on struggles for land in Pajapan, an indigenous community in Southern Veracruz. The study reviews the literature on Mexican peasantry and rural politics with a view to developing an alternate analytical framework for understanding political struggles and peasant movements. This analytical framework is applied to a 35 year period (1948-1983) in Pajapan to demonstrate the importance of combining class analysis with research on village factionalism. The approach taken here considers political struggles as the result of class struggle, the relative autonomy of the political sphere and the contradictory actions of the state in rural economics and politics.
RÉSUMÉ

La lutte pour la terre constitue un élément central des soulèvements paysans au Mexique. Dans le sud-est de l'État de Veracruz, l'intensification de l'élevage du bétail et le développement de l'industrie pétrochimique ont eu un impact direct sur plusieurs communautés rurales. La présente analyse examine l'impact de ces deux phénomènes sur la lutte pour la terre à Pajapan, une communauté indienne du sud-est de Veracruz. L'étude fait tout d'abord une revue de la littérature sur la paysannerie mexicaine et le politique en milieu rural afin d'établir un cadre d'analyse alternatif en vue de permettre une meilleure compréhension des luttes politiques et des mouvements paysans. Ce cadre d'analyse est par la suite appliqué à l'analyse de 35 années (1948-1983) d'histoire politique à Pajapan pour démontrer l'importance de combiner l'analyse de classe avec les recherches sur le factionnalisme dans les villages. L'approche privilégiée dans cette recherche considère les luttes politiques comme le résultat de la lutte de classe, l'autonomie relative de la sphère politique et les actions contradictoires de l'État en milieu rural.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is the result of much support and help from numerous people. The first are the people of Pajapan, for it was they who contributed the most to this thesis by receiving me in their homes, sitting with me and explaining patiently the complex history of their struggles for land. Some of them should be mentioned: Don Clemente Trujillo, his wife and all his nine children who always made me feel at home, Andres Martinez, Pedro Martinez Vargas, Salvador Hernandez Martinez, Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Simon Antonio Hernandez, Tomas Martinez Encarnacion, Juan Martinez Jauregui, Sergio Martinez Aleman, Juan Martinez Encarnacion, Juan Pereyra Fonseca, Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Esteva Martinez Bautista, Santos Martinez Hernandez, Enrique Cruz Antonio, Sixto Vargas, Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Juan Tino, Narcisso Cruz, Gabriel Hernandez Antonio and Roman Hernandez Antonio.

This thesis owes much to people of the region of Southern Veracruz committed to peasant struggles who assisted me in understanding better the challenges and difficulties of organizing peasant organizations: Neto, Felipe, Dario, Fernando, and Abel Jiminez whose hospitality, friendship and insights into my work were crucial to my acquiring a sense of what had happened and was happening in Pajapan. The eight weeks spent in Pajapan and in the region taught me invaluable knowledge on how to conduct field work.

Many people in Xalapa and Veracruz assisted me by facilitating access to information and archive documents. Such was the case of all the "compañeros y compañeras" of the "Centros de Estudios Agrarios", as well as José Luis Blanco, David Skeritt, Martin, Daniel Nahmad Molinari from the "Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia", and Narcisso Barrera Bassol from the "Culturas Populares".

There are people that played a determinant role in making me aware and interested in understanding the independent popular movement in Mexico. Not only did they open my eyes to the ongoing struggles of millions of Mexican, they also offered friendship, hospitality and an open ear whenever I had questions (and they know how numerous these questions were!). Carlos Heredia, Claudia Luengas and Marta Elena Luengas received me in their house with open arms whenever I suddenly appeared in Mexico City. Luis Hernandez taught me "algo de la grilla". Emilio Garcia, one of the most knowledgeable Mexicans on the peasant movement but also a true activist, was always willing to take time to untangle what I was trying to understand. All the people of the "Equipo Pueblo" also facilitated my research. If it
were not for all these people, my three months of research in Mexico could never have been what it turned out to be, a continuous and fascinating learning experience.

Before and after this trip to Mexico, I had the chance to benefit from a circle of dynamic and stimulating people. My advisor Prof. Raymundo DeAndrade from the Université d'Ottawa, and Prof. Pierre Beaucage from the Université de Montréal were there to provide me with feedback and ideas on my work. Prof. Maureen Molot, Prof. Ozay Mehmet and Brenda Sutherland from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs supported and respected my ideas and permitted me to feel at ease in a new University environment.

Many friends deserved a special mention for their fantastic job in proofreading and editing my "Québécois" English; Nancy Taylor, Mary Ann Kandrack and John Devlin, the "fourth Pajapan specialist", showed an incredible patience. Other friends were also essential to the realization of this thesis, Claude Domingue (who lent me his computer, even though he knew my reputation with breaking computers), Takako Ito, Junko Kino and Siavash Solati. Hélène Pellerin and Paco Fortier (who also lent me his computer "Karl"), were exceptional companions with whom I could debate my eternal questions. Two other persons played a crucial role in permitting to complete this thesis, Judith Moe and Ravi Pendakur. Not only they host me in their home, they were friends, brother and sister, proofreaders, computer technicians, doctors, and always willing to compromise their sleep by letting me work at night...

My family and my extended family have always been there when I needed support. Their belief in life and their respect for each other's autonomy gave me confidence and optimism in undertaking new challenges.

Daniel Buckles and Prof. Jacques Chevalier my supervisor, by offering me to join their research project in Pajapan and by assisting me through all the writing process of this thesis contributed more than they probably imagine. Daniel facilitated many of my contacts in Mexico. He also became a good friend and an excellent guide in building each piece of the thesis. Jacques was certainly more than a supervisor, his critical judgement and acute knowledge enlightened much of my work. As a team, their complementary skills provided an highly stimulating intellectual environment.

Finally, "mi compañera" Bingbing Arguelles was my best "vitamin" in carrying out this thesis. She was a source of energy and happiness and if she got me out of the thesis many times, by doing so, she prevented me from going crazy and made me enjoy life every day a bit more.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ................................................................. iii
RÉSUMÉ ................................................................ iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..................................................... v
TABLE OF CONTENTS ...................................................... vii
LIST OF TABLES ............................................................. xi
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................ xi
LIST OF MAPS ............................................................... xiii
LIST OF ACRONYMS ........................................................ xiii

INTRODUCTION .................................................................. 1
A. The Setting ............................................................... 2
B. Geography and Climate .............................................. 3
C. Population ............................................................... 6
D. Local and Regional Economy ....................................... 7
E. History of the Land .................................................... 8

I. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE MEXICAN PEASANTRY AND PEASANT MOVEMENTS ..................................................... 10
A. CLASS STRUCTURE AND THE PEASANTRY ...................... 10
1. Internal Differentiation ............................................. 12
2. Internal Differentiation with Articulation ...................... 15
3. The "Peasant Economy" ............................................ 17
4. Peasant Economy and the Articulation of Modes of Production ........................................... 20
B. RURAL POLITICS AND PEASANT MOVEMENTS ............. 23
1. Theories of Rural Politics .......................................... 24
2. Class Struggles and Peasant Movements ...................... 38
C. THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN RURAL POLITICS ............. 44

A. CLASS STRUCTURE ..................................................... 50
B. THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS ....................................... 53
1. The Municipal Authority Formation ......................... 53
2. The Lot Administration Formation ............................ 58
3. The Communal Land Committee Formation ................ 59
4. The Agrarian Committee Formation ........................... 62
C. THE POLITICAL STRUGGLES, 1948-1968 ...................... 68
1. Guillermo Salinas Mendoza and The Emergence of Caciquismo, 1948-1952 ................................. 68
2. Juan Grande's Presidency: A Local Cacique 1952-1955 ......................................................... 72
3. The Request for the Recognition and Titling of the Communal Land and the Emergence of Factionalism, 1955-1959 ........................................... 74

A. CLASS STRUCTURE ........................................ 100
B. THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS .............................. 102
   1. The Pro-Rancher Formation ...................... 102
   2. The Pro-Peasant Formation ...................... 105
C. POLITICAL STRUGGLES FROM 1968 TO 1979 ............ 109
   1. The Ranchers' Political Domination .......... 109
   2. The Enrique Cruz Mobilization, 1970 ........ 113
   3. The Revival of the Communal Land Committee 116
   4. The Elections of New Communal Land and Municipal Administrators ............. 118
   5. The Rock Extraction Incident ................. 119
   6. The Struggles for the Execution of the Presidential Resolution and the Shooting of Pedro Florentino .... 121
   7. The Formation of the Pro-Plenarian Formation: The Struggles to Change the Communal Land Administration and to Redistribute the Communal Land .... 129
D. POLITICAL DYNAMICS ................................... 137

A. THE INDUSTRIAL PORT OF THE LAGUNA DEL OSTION AND THE EXPROPRIATION ................. 141
B. THE CLASS STRUCTURE .................................. 144
C. ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLES .......... 147
   1. The Municipal Elections of 1979 ............. 147
   2. The Announcement of the Expropriation ........ 149
   3. The General Assembly of January 26, 1980 .... 152
   4. The Expropriatory Decree and the Reaction of the Comuneros .................. 156
   5. The August Rebellion: An Advance Toward the Land Redistribution ............. 161
   6. The "Amparo" and the Intervention of the CNPI 164
   7. The Assembly of November 2, 1980 and The Emergence of the Populist Formation ........ 170
D. SUMMARY ................................................ 172

V. THE POPULIST AND RESISTANT FORMATIONS .............. 173
A. THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS ............................ 174
   1. The Populist Formation ....................... 174
   2. The Resistant Formation ..................... 176
   1. The Shooting of Tomas Martinez Encarnacion and the Involvement of the SRA in the Land Redistribution ................................. 180
   2. The Extraordinary General Assembly of May 7, 1981 and the Emergence of Two Antagonistic Political Formations .......................... 183
   4. The Payment of the Land Tenure ............................................. 199

C. LAND REDISTRIBUTION, CLASS STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL DYNAMICS ................................................................. 206

CONCLUSION ........................................................................... 215

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..................................................................... 223

APPENDICES ........................................................................ 236
## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLES

1. Theoretical Perspectives of Mexican Authors According to Selected Variables  . 23
2. Types and Characteristics of Political Dynamics  . 38
3. Political Formations: 1948-1968  . 66
4. Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1970  . 110
5. Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1973  . 118
6. Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1976  . 129
7. Control of the Communal Land in 1979  . 145
8. Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1979  . 148
9. Losses and Gains of Lands by Social Class  . 208
10. Changes in the Cattle Ownership per Class  . 209
11. Change in Landholding and Cattle-Owning for Each Class  . 210
12. Social Mobility Experienced by Each Class  . 211
13. Overall Changes in the Class Structure  . 214
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

I. Analytical Model of Political Struggles ........................................ 27
II. Ideal Types of Political Dynamics .................................................. 28
III. Internal and External Political Linkages ....................................... 67
IV. Alliance and Opposition between the Political Groups ..................... 68
V. The Development of the Pro-Peasant Formation .............................. 107
VI. Class Composition and Internal and External Linkage of Each Formation .... 108
VII. Landlessness in the 1970s .......................................................... 134
VIII. Pre-Reform Land Tenure ............................................................ 134
IX. Internal and External Linkages of Each Formation by 1981 ................ 179
LIST OF MAPS

MAPS
1. Location of the Study Area in Mexico ........................................... 4
2. The Southern Veracruz ................................................................. 4
3. The Region of Pajapan ................................................................. 5
4. The Municipality of Pajapan ......................................................... 5
LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRONYMS:

ACAM: Archives of the "Comisión Agraria Mixta"

ACEAX: Archives of the "Centros de Estudios Agrarios" / Xalapa.

ARFL: "Ley Federal de Reforma Agraria": Agrarian Reform Federal Law.

ASRAM: Archives of the "Secretaría de Reforma Agraria" / Mexico.

ASRAX: Archives of the "Secretaría de Reforma Agraria" / Xalapa.


CCI: "Centro Coordinador Indigenista": Coordinating Indigenous Center.

CEA: "Centros de Estudios Agrarios": Agrarian Studies Center.

CMP: Capitalist Mode of Production.

CNC: "Confederación Nacional Campesina": National Peasant Confederation.

CONASUPO: "Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares": People's Foodstuffs National Company.

CTOP: "Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares": National Confederation of People's Organization.

CNPI: "Coordinadora Nacional de Pueblos Indígenas": National Coordination of Indigenous People.

CNTE: "Confederación Nacional de los Trabajadores de la Educación": National Confederation of Education Workers.

CROC: "Confederación Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos": Revolutionary Federation of Workers and Peasants.

CTM: "Confederación de los Trabajadores de Mexico": Mexican Workers Confederation.

DAAC: "Departamento de Asuntos Agrararios y Colonización": Department of Colonization and Agrarian Affairs.

FIFONAFE: "Fideicomiso Fundo Nacional de Fomento Ejidal": National Fund of Ejido Trusteeship.
FONDEPORT: "Fondo Nacional para el Desarrollo Portuario": Port Development National Fund

INI: "Instituto Nacional Indigenista": Indigenous National Center

PARM: "Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana": Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution.

PEMEX: Petroleos Mexicanos: Mexican Petroleum

PIDER: "Programa Integrado de Desarrollo Económico Rural": Integrated Rural Economic Integrated Development Program

PPS: "Partido Popular Socialista": People's Socialist Party

PRI: "Partido Revolucionario Institutional": Institutionalized Revolutionary Party


SARH: "Secretaría de Agricultura y Recursos Hidraulicos": Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources Secretariat

SCT: "Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes": Transports and Communications Secretariat

SPP: "Secretaría de Presupuestos y Programación": Secretariat of the Budget and Planning.

SRA: "Secretaría de Reforma Agraria": Agrarian Reform Secretariat.

UGSV: "Unión Ganadera del Sur de Veracruz": Southern Veracruz Ranchers Union

TRANSLATIONS USED FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND OFFICIALS:

"Acción Agraria": Agrarian Action

"Asamblea General": General Assembly

"Asesor del Gobierno del Estado": State Government Advisor.

"Asuntos Agrarios": Agrarian Affairs

"Columnna volante": Special State Security Forces

"Comisariado de Bienes Comunales": Communal Land Commission

"Comisión Nacional de Avalúos": National Commission of Evaluation.

"Comite Defensa Pro-Campesino": Pro-Peasant Defense Committee
*Comité Electoral Estatal*: State Electoral Committee

*Comité Regional Campesino*: Regional Agrarian Committee.

*Compañía General del Norte*: North General Company.

*Consejero Agrario por el Estado de Veracruz*: Agrarian Councillor.

*Consejo de Vigilancia*: Vigilancy Council

*Cuerpo Consultativo Agrario*: Agrarian Consultative Body.

*Delegado Agrario* or *Delegado de la Reforma Agraria en Veracruz*: State Delegate or Agrarian State Delegate in Veracruz.

*Dirección de Tierras and Aguas*: Land and Water Directorate.

*Director de Catastro de la Propiedad Federal*: Director of Federal Property

*Director General de Asuntos Agrarios*: General Director of Judicial Affairs

*Director General de Bienes Comunales*: Communal Land General Director.

*Dirección General de Derechos Agrarios*: General Directorate of the Agrarian Rights

*Director General de Inspección, Procuración y Quejas*: General Director of the Inspection, Procuration and Complaints Division.

*Director General de Procedimientos Agrarios*: Director of Agrarian Procedures.

*Director General de Tenencia de la Tierra*: General Director of the Land Tenure.

*Jefe del Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización*: Chief of the Department of Agrarian and Colonization Affairs.

*Jefe de la SRA*: Chief of the SRA

*Jefe del Departamento Jurídico de Expropiaciones del Gobierno del Estado*: Chief of the Judicial Department of Expropriation of the State Government


*Liga de Comunidades Agrarias y Sindicatos Campesinos del Estado de Veracruz*: Agrarian League of Veracruz
"Ministerio Publico Federal": Federal Public Ministry

"Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano": National Plan of Urban Development

"Presidente de la Republica": President of the Republic

"Presidente Municipal": Municipal President

"Programa de Estímulos para la Desconcentración Territorial de las Actividades Industriales": Program of Impulsion to Industrial Activities National Decentralization.

"Regidor Unico": Sole Alderman

"Secretario General de Asuntos Agrarios": Agrarian Affairs General Secretary

"Secretaria Privada de la Presidencia": Private Office of the Presidency

"Secretario de Reforma Agraria": Secretary of Agrarian Reform.

"Sindicatos de Trabajadores de la Construcción, Excavación, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana "Delegación Pajapan": Union of Workers in Construction, Excavation and Similar Activities of the Mexican Republic "Pajapan Section".

"Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Construcción, Similares y Conexos del municipio de Pajapan": Union of Workers in Construction Industry and Similar Activities of Pajapan.

"Sindico Unico": Sole Trustee

"Subdirector de Expropiaciones y contratos de la Dirección General de Asuntos Jurídicos y Legislación": Sub-Director of Expropriations and Contracts of the General Director of Judicial and Legislative Affairs.

"Subdirector de la Tenencia de la Tierra" Sub-Director of the Land Tenure Directorate.

"Subsecretario de Asuntos Agrarios y Organización": Sub-Secretary of the Agrarian and Organization Affairs of the SRA.
INTRODUCTION

Land struggles characterize much of the past and recent history of the Mexican peasantry. These struggles raise several questions regarding class interests and the potential of the peasantry as a revolutionary force. Most recent Marxist analyses of Mexican rural areas tend to reduce the persistence of the peasantry to an economic phenomenon. Studies of peasant politics per se are relatively scarce. Warman suggests that on "reviewing what is being said and written in Mexico on the peasantry, it is clear that the theme of its political action and behaviour is poorly analyzed" (1985: 149, my translation). The development of the cattle and oil industries constitute two important aspects of Mexico's twentieth-century economic history and have had an enormous impact on Mexico's rural population. One effect has been an on-going confrontation between those who benefit from the expansion of the cattle and oil industries and those whose living conditions have been worsened by these developments.

My thesis examines the impact of both industries on the land struggle in Pajapan, an indigenous community in southern Veracruz between 1948 and 1983. In doing so, I intend to demonstrate: 1) that political struggles are the result of both historical and conjunctural factors; and 2) that a "strict" class analysis fails to comprehend political struggles. Beginning with these premises, I develop an analytic framework which combines both class relations and political factors. This framework emerges from earlier works on village factionalism and recent studies of rural politics which attempt "to lay once and for all the ghostly dead hand on any supposed orthodoxy on the agrarian question" (Currie and Ray 1985: 581).

The framework developed in the first chapter centres on rural class structure and politics, peasant struggles and the peasant movement, as well as the role of the Mexican State in the rural sector. The remaining chapters, two to five, describe and analyze the various
forms of political dynamics that characterized land struggles in Pajapan during distinctive periods between 1948 and 1983. The first part of each of these chapters presents an analysis of the class structure characterizing the period under study. The second identifies the different political formations and the third examines political struggles in terms of the internal processes, the external influences, and the interventions of the State that marked the period in question.

A. The Setting

The geographic area that is examined comprises the communal land of a particular municipality in southern Veracruz. In Mexico, three different types of land tenure co-exist: communal, ejido and small private property. The communal land tenure system is, in principle, based on indigenous tradition. After the Mexican Revolution, all former legal dispositions concerning communal land were abolished and a new system ("reconocimiento y titulación de bienes comunales") was established. According to the Agrarian Reform Law, the communal land system is basically a provision granted by the Mexican State through a Presidential Resolution. The Resolution guarantees indigenous communities their traditional system of collective land exploitation. Within a communal land tenure system, there is no private property. Individual access to land is temporary. The administration and distribution of the land, although regulated by the Agrarian Reform Law, is usually left to local authorities (i.e. the Communal Land Commission). Communal land in Mexico represents a small proportion

---

1 But as Osorio mentions "In general, the arable land is appropriated and worked in an individual form and its possessors consider their lots or parcels as private property, even though they may not have registered them as such or may not possess the respective titles" (1974: 538-539).

2 Roger Bartra states that the 1934 Agrarian Code establishes a regime of communal land tenure almost identical to that of the ejido, with the exception that land cannot be divided. However, in 1958 a Decree established the right to title plots of land that were individually owned (1974: 106).
of all land, or approximately 5% of surveyed land (R. Bartra 1974: 106).^3

Ejidos and small private properties are more common forms of land tenure. The ejido land system is an outcome of the Mexican Revolution. In this system, the land is officially owned by the state which confers usufructuary right to individuals "ejidatarios". This right is not equivalent to ownership, it is only the right to cultivate the land. The organization and administration of the ejido is carried out at the local level by an ejido committee ("Comisaria- do Ejidal") and regulated by the Agrarian Reform Law. Small properties are privately owned lands.

The distinction between these three types of land tenure is important since the definition of the land tenure system and its administration are at the center of most political conflicts during the period covered in the chapters that follow.

B. Geography and Climate

Pajapan is a municipality (more or less the equivalent of a county) located in the south-eastern part of the State of Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico (Maps 1 and 2). Its geography is dominated by a volcano that rises 1,300 meters above sea level and a coastal lagoon known as the "Laguna del Ostion" (Map 4 and 5). The land surrounding the lagoon is now covered with pastures, small plots of maize and fallow land while the slopes of the volcano are still forested, they too steep for agriculture. The climate is characterized by humid and warm temperatures and high rainfalls. There are two distinct seasons, a dry season from February to May and a rainy season from late May to December.

---

^3 The agrarian census of 1960 established the existence of only 1,915 communities controlling a total area of 8,700,000 hectares. Gutelman argues that this land is usually forested or has natural pasture, with very little arable land (1971: 152).
MAP 1: Location of the Study Area in Mexico

MAP 2: The Southern Veracruz Region

---

4 Taken from Stuart (1978: 47)

5 INIREB (1980: 8)
Map 3: The Region of Pajapan

MAP 4 The Municipality of Pajapan

6 Taken from García de León (1976: 56)
7 INI (1988)
C. Population

The municipality comprises the village of Pajapan the administrative center and largest village, and approximately 18 other settlements and hamlets. According to the 1980 Mexican census, the population of the entire municipality was 8,548 inhabitants. By 1987, the total population was estimated at about 10,457\(^7\). The village of Pajapan is populated by approximately 4,430 inhabitants or 43% of the total municipal population. Two other villages, Minzapan and San Juan Volador, and 16 smaller settlements comprise 20%, 13% and 24%, of the municipal population respectively. More than 70% of the municipal population live on communal land, i.e., in Pajapan, Batajapan, San Juan Volador, Jicacal, Tecolapa, El Mangal and Palma Real.

A distinctive feature of this population is its cultural identity. More than 95% of those dwelling on communal land are Nahua\(^8\). According to Chevalier and Buckles, "[I]ndustrial development and in-migration during this century has virtually wiped out all traces of a distinctive Nahua culture and language in all but a few remote municipalities in the mountains" (forthcoming: 1). The population of Pajapan is one of the few remaining concentrations of Nahua in the region. The ethnic character of Pajapan is part and parcel of the political struggles analyzed in chapters to follow. The cultural specificity of this village however is not examined in detail for lack of time and space.

\(^7\) Estimates produced by the Department of Planning of DGADHOP based on the 10th General Census. See Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática / SPP. (1984).

\(^8\) INI & CCI (1986: 19) The origins of the Nahual culture are closely related to the development of the older culture of the Olmecs, 1,200 B.C. (Garcia de Leon 1976: 8). For more information on the development of the indigenous population in the region see Vargas Montero and Velasco Toro (n/d); Garcia de Leon, 1976; INI & CCI, 1986.
D. Local and Regional Economy

Cattle-raising and wet season agriculture\(^9\) are the most important economic activities in Pajapan. Fishing, petty-trading, craft work (carpentry, butchering, baking, etc.) and small businesses (stores, taxis, and restaurants) are of lesser importance (Chevalier and Buckles 1988a: 1-2). Some inhabitants commute daily to major cities (Chinameca, Cosoleacaque, Jaltipan, Minatitlan and Coatzacoalcos) to work in either the petro-chemical industry or the informal sector.

The regional economy is clearly dominated by the cattle and petro-chemical industries. The first, centred around the city of Acayucan, developed during the 1940s and 1950s when "[I]ncreasing demand for cheap beef, especially for fast food markets in the United States, provided a strong impetus for new cattle production" (Chevalier and Buckles, forthcoming:2). In the 1970s, the petro-chemical industry developed extensively with the oil boom. This industry is totally controlled by the Mexican State through the national oil company PEMEX. In the region, the cities of Coatzacoalcos, Minatitlan and Cosoleacaque represent important centers for oil refining and petro-chemical transformation. Buckles notes that "about 70% of national production of petrochemicals occurs there, the pipelines and shipping facilities handle about 90% of Mexican crude oil and 80% of national gas production" (1987: 7). The oil industry has played a crucial role in Mexican exports particularly since the beginning of the economic crisis in the early 1980s.

The cattle and oil industries have had a major impact on the political economy of the communal land population of Pajapan. The analysis of the political history of Pajapan shows how these two industries shaped many of the struggles for land and divided the community

\(^9\) Maize is the most important crop but others include; beans, sweet potatoes, manioc, and bananas.
over thirty-five years of Mexican history.

E. History of the Land

To understand the land struggles in Pajapan between 1948 and 1983, one needs to look briefly at the history of communal land prior to 1948. In the 1880s, this community was granted the "communal" use of five different lots through titles issued by the Mexican government. Each of these lots were administered by a Chief of Lot chosen and elected by the community. The precise boundaries, however, were not formally established. It is only when the communal land was formally recognized that the total area was established at 19,158 hectares.

The internal distribution of communal land did not create any major problems until the introduction and expansion of the cattle industry. Until the early 1950s, land concentration was not a source of conflict. As the analysis will show, with the rapid expansion of cattle-raising on communal land, the availability of land became the center of all major political confrontations. Conflicts over the definition of the land tenure system, however, began earlier. In 1932, a request for the creation of an ejido was submitted for the first time to the "Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización"\(^\text{10}\) (hereafter referred to as DAAC). The request was promoted by a group of inhabitants living on the communal land (hereafter referred to as comuneros) who took the form of an Agrarian Committee\(^\text{11}\). The request was made after a neighbouring village, Tatahuicapan, had submitted a request for the creation of an ejido on areas of land that people of Pajapan considered to be theirs (at least in part).

\(^{10}\) Department of Agrarian Affairs and Colonization.

\(^{11}\) The formation and official recognition of the agrarian committee ("Comité Particular Ejecutivo") is the first step toward the creation of an ejido (Chavez Padron 1987: 82).
Although pressure was exerted regularly by the Agrarian Committee of Pajapan on the State delegation of the DAAC in Xalapa (capital of the State of Veracruz), the Government of Mexico took no action.

During the same period, the first cattle were introduced on communal land by a few of the better-off comuneros. It was with the ranching activities that the land concentration problem developed. Since the land had been owned communally and the comuneros only claimed the land that they cultivated for that year, it was easy for the ranchers to start fencing fallow land. The emerging ranchers justified their actions by paying additional taxes to the communal land and municipal administrators (Chevalier and Buckles, forthcoming: 3; Stuart, 1978).

My historical analysis begins at the end of the 1940s. During this period, political struggles were being shaped by the progressive emergence of the rancher class and requests by the Agrarian Committee for the creation of an ejido.
CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE MEXICAN PEASANTRY
AND PEASANT MOVEMENTS

The analysis of the political history of Pajapan addresses central issues in the literature on the peasantry and political struggles in the Mexican countryside including: i) class structure and the peasantry; ii) rural politics and the peasant movement; and iii) the role of the state in rural politics.

This chapter examines each of these issues, and outlines the positions taken by analysts of the Mexican peasantry and formulates the general position adopted throughout the thesis.

A. CLASS STRUCTURE AND THE PEASANTRY

One problem in understanding and conceptualizing the peasant class rests with the identification of social classes within rural communities. Much of the debate on this question revolves around which levels of analysis to emphasize: the internal differentiation of the peasantry, the existence of a "peasant economy", or the "articulation" of peasant production with the capitalist mode of production (CMP).

Students of "internal differentiation" argue that the development of capitalist relations of production within the countryside will lead to

the formation of rural antagonistic classes, often described as 'rural petty-bourgeoisie or 'accumulating peasantry on the one hand and a rural proletariat or 'allotment-owning proletariat' on the other (Currie and Ray 1985: 573).
In contrast, the "peasant economy" thesis considers the peasantry to be outside the capitalist mode of production (CMP). The peasantry has its own structure, logic and economic organization (Shanin: 1973). Within this perspective, differentiation derives from demographic factors and is only conjunctural because there is a tendency to return to "model size as a result of aging and parcelization" (Currie and Ray 1985: 575). For those supporting the "articulation" of modes of production argument, the "development of agriculture in the CMP must be understood [...] with reference to the way urban industrial capital articulates with simple commodity production" (ibid. 577). The internal differentiation analysts ground their work in the writings of Marx (1963-1968, 1968), Kaustky (1900) and Lenin (1899). The "peasant economy" theorists are inspired by the works of Chayanov (1966). Finally, analysts of the articulation of modes of production rely on authors such as Luxemburg (1951, 1972), Preobrazhensky (1971) but also, on some of the writings of Marx (1976) and Lenin (c.f. Vergopoulos 1974: 239). These theoretical positions have produced many debates between scholars. They have also led to different understanding of what peasants are and what they are struggling for, issues to which I now turn.

---

1 For different analyses on the theoretical debate amongst Mexican authors, see Paré 1979; Beaucage 1975; Buckles 1987; Coello 1981; DeMarsh 1985; Feder 1977; Hewitt de Alcantara 1984; Lucas de Rouffignac 1982 and 1985; Schejtmann 1981; and Warman 1983.

2 Similar analyses were carried out by Beaucage (1981) and Lucas de Rouffignac (1985). Much of the Mexican literature on the peasantry and the peasant movement is marked by a never-ending debate between "campesinistas" and "descampesinistas" (Feder 1977; Lucas de Rouffignac 1985; DeMarsh 1985). Basically, the "descampesinistas" see "peasants as a doomed class or as secondary protagonist in any project of building a future society" (Lucas de Rouffignac 1985: 39) whereas the "campesinistas" argue that the peasants "will continue to exist, and will have a say in Mexican agricultural development" (p.39-40). This classification of schools of thought appears to me as unsatisfactory because it leaves aside important theoretical differences between Mexican scholars that are classified within the same category. I believe that a threefold distinction ("internal differentiation", "peasant economy" and "articulation of mode of production") reflects more adequately the epistemological basis of the different Mexican authors.
1. Internal Differentiation

The internal differentiation approach characterizes the peasantry as becoming progressively integrated within the capitalist mode of production. For some authors, the integration from a non-capitalist mode of production to the capitalist has been completed (Rello 1976, Pozas 1971) or is in transition (Guerrero 1979, De la Peña 1979). For others, the peasantry is active in resisting the process of differentiation and proletarianization (Rello 1976, De la Peña 1979, Guerrero 1979). Within this perspective, the peasantry is usually perceived as non-revolutionary or in need of guidance from the proletariat (urban and rural) (De la Peña 1979, Rello 1979, Gomez Jara 1977).

In 1971, Ricardo Pozas wrote one of the first class analyses of the indigenous communities in Mexico. The book recognizes the existence of two central classes in Mexico: the agrarian bourgeoisie\(^3\) and the agrarian proletariat\(^4\). For Pozas, the contemporary Indian "is the result of an historical process and maintains socio-economic relations with the capitalist system of a specific country and with the global society" (Pozas 1985: 15-16). Pozas does not perceive the Indians as being outside, but rather, as being within, capitalism. No mention is made of the possible mobilization of Indians, but one can suppose that, according to Pozas, they would participate in or be part of a proletarian movement.

Fernando Rello (1976) considers the peasants as independent small producers part of the capitalist mode of production, but with forms of production containing elements of pre-capitalist modes of production. These forms of production range from sharecropping to "different types of rental arrangements, the small peasant parcel, artisanry, independent

---

\(^3\) Comprised of the great bourgeoisie and the middle and petty bourgeoisie (Pozas 1985: 131-2).

\(^4\) Comprised of the strict proletarians, (i.e. day-workers), semi-proletarians, sub-proletarians and lumpenproletarians (Pozas 1971: 148-155).
producers associated with capitalist enterprises or the state, etc." (Lucas de Rouffignac 1985: 41). Rello denies any revolutionary potential to peasants (independent small producers), with this non-revolutionary character attributed to their ownership of means of production. Rello suggests that the demands put forward by these peasants are non-proletarian (i.e. better prices for their products, more land, lower interest rates, better credit). It is only proletarian struggles that have a revolutionary character (by demanding higher salaries, less hours of work, and a reduction in the intensity of work)\(^5\). However, peasants and proletarians may unite "under the guidance and tutelage of the proletariat in any given moment to begin a real struggle against capitalism" (Lucas de Rouffignac 1985: 47).

Another influential Mexican scholar, Sergio de la Peña (1979), defines the peasant as a small producer oriented toward subsistence production. The small producer with the assistance of his family (or with wage-workers) obtains and exchanges a small surplus (1979: 51). For Rello, this class is destined to disappear in the process of implementation and with the full predominance of the capitalist mode of production. A minority of peasants will become small entrepreneurs and join the petty bourgeoisie class while the majority will join the ranks of the proletariat. This process necessitates a long period of transition due to the resistance of the peasantry to its proletarianization. The transition period implies a heterogeneous articulation of forms of production (1979: 59). De la Peña considers day-workers ("jornaleros") and agrarian workers as the only classes in the Mexican countryside with a revolutionary potential.

Javier Guerrero believes that the process of internal differentiation is responsible for the "descampesinización" (i.e. the progressive disappearance of the peasantry and the simple commodity mode of production) (1979: 17-18). For this author, the degree and the intensity

---

\(^5\) One must question though, if these demands really constitute a revolutionary platform.
of differentiation depends on peasantry's resistance and the pace at which capitalist relations of production penetrate rural areas. This penetration is contingent upon the economic policy of the state and the actions of the bourgeoisie (1979: 25-26). The concept of internal differentiation permits him to establish a class typology of the rural population. It includes the well-off ("campesinos aburguesados"), developed, middle, semi-proletarian, proletarianized, impoverished, and the lumpenized peasants (1979: 27-28). No precise criteria, however, are used to determine this classification. For Guerrero, the struggle of the peasantry has a revolutionary potential. The peasantry resists its full integration in the capitalist socialization process and is a dynamic factor in opposing the development of capitalism. The peasant struggle for the land is revolutionary and not to be opposed by proletariat. He concludes by stating that "in a socialist Mexico, the peasants will gradually opt for the socialization of the means of production" (p.28, my translation).

Francisco Gómez Jara (1970, 1977, 1979) identifies three social classes in Mexican rural areas: the bourgeoisie, the agrarian proletariat and the peasantry. The bourgeoisie is formed by all the "capitalist and petty bourgeois who have individual plots of more than 5 hectares and hire labour" (Lucas de Rouffignac 1982: 373). The proletariat encompasses the following classes: strict rural proletariat, semi-proletariat, subproletariat, and lumpenproletariat⁶. The third central class is the peasantry which comprises individuals who work the land but do not hire wage labour. The peasantry includes indigenous communities with communal land rights, who work these lands cooperatively and may occasionally work for wages. Gomez Jara considers peasant demands for land as serving the interest of the capitalist class. The maintenance and creation of ejidos permits the Mexican state to control the peasantry and intensify the extraction of surplus value from this class (1977: 161). Gomez Jara recognizes

---

⁶ His class typology is borrowed from Lenin (1969).
the importance of peasant struggles in the Mexican Revolution but, he does not consider contemporary peasant struggles part of working class struggles (1977: 172-175). Limited to a Leninist conception of revolution, Gomez Jara subscribes to the leadership of a vanguard Marxist Party to direct the struggles. He also argues that the only path for revolutionary social change is a violent continental class confrontation. Any other forms of struggle (electoral battles included) are in vain (1977: 176).

2. Internal Differentiation with Articulation

Some Mexican scholars not only identify a process of internal differentiation within rural communities but argue also that the Mexican capitalist mode of production articulates pre-capitalist modes of production. Roger Bartra\(^7\) (1974, 1979, 1982) was one of the first Mexican analysts to propose an internal differentiation perspective conjointly with the articulation of modes of production approach (1974: 9). For this author, the rural areas of Mexico are now characterized by the presence of three central classes: the agrarian bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the rural proletariat (1974: 152). They are also characterized by the articulation of two modes of production: the simple merchant ("modo de producción mercantil simple") and the CMP\(^8\). The peasantry and the rural proletariat are the exploited classes while the agrarian bourgeoisie is the exploiting class. According to Roger Bartra, the exploitation of the peasant is explained by the non-class character of the simple merchant mode of production and its articulation to the capitalist mode of production, within an ex-

---

7 Not to be confused with Armando Bartra who will be examined later.

8 Further explanations of Bartra's mercantile system can be found in *El poder despótico burgués* (1978). Bartra (1979, 1982b) examines in detail the peasant economy in relation to the theory of value.
ploitative relation (1974: 152). Although not formally defined by Roger Bartra, the rural proletariat refers to rural day-workers. The bourgeoisie comprises the owners of capitalist farms units. Roger Bartra defines the peasant as "the independent producer who basically lives off his work on his plots of land" (1974: 154, my translation). The peasantry has a twofold class condition, both petty-bourgeois and proletarian, because of the articulation of its economic basis with both merchant capital and the capitalist mode of production. On the one hand, the development of the peasantry into a bourgeoisie is blocked because of its articulation to the dominant system. On the other hand, the petty-bourgeois character of the peasantry's mode of production eliminates its revolutionary potential (1974: 153-154). The peasantry is incapable of controlling political power, leading a class alliance, or representing itself politically (1974: 156). The only class capable of revolutionary change is the rural proletariat whose numerical and political importance is increasing. For Roger Bartra, "revolutionaries interested in the transformation of Mexico must understand that today's rural masses have essentially a proletarian nature" (1974: 171, my translation) and they are struggling for a socialist world.

Luisa Paré (1985) also proposes her own class typology. For her, the rural areas of Mexico are composed of the bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the proletariat (p.49). Each class has its own fractions. The criteria she employs to establish her class typology is the percentage

---

9 In an earlier section of his book, Bartra defines and explains this relation of exploitation in the articulation of these two modes of production (92-97). He also states that the relations between these two modes of production are so intertwined that one should speak of a "subcapitalism" ("subcapitalismo") (p.95).

10 Bartra (1985: 163) divides this class into four strata (or fractions): the large agrarian bourgeoisie ("gran burguesía agraria"), the middle agrarian bourgeoisie ("mediana burguesía agraria"), the rural commercial bourgeoisie ("burguesía comercial rural") and the rural bureaucracy ("burguesía agropolítica").

11 He divides the peasant class into three strata: the middle-peasants ("campesinos medios"), the well-off peasants ("campesinos acomodados") and the impoverished peasants or semi-proletarian ("campesinos pauperizados" or "semiproletarios") (1985:154).
of the gross income derived from wage earnings. For Paré, the peasantry is associated with a precapitalist mode of production that is progressively disappearing. It is up to the revolutionary movement and the proletarian vanguard to distinguish the different strata of the peasantry. This vanguard must also take a position on the peasantry’s demand for land. Finally, the proletarian vanguard has to develop revolutionary strategies aimed at reappropriating the means of production (Paré 1985: 233).

All in all, there is no consensus on the type of class structure that characterizes the rural areas of contemporary Mexico. Nor is there any consensus on the rate of proletarianization of the peasantry or whether peasant production is articulated from within the capitalist mode of production or from without. With the exception of Guerrero, all of these authors agree on the non-revolutionary character of the peasantry:

Peasant struggles for land and other 'peasant demands' are caused by their supposed dual character (proletariat and bourgeoisie), by their class status of petite bourgeoisie, or by the unfavorable labour market (Lucas de Rouffignac 1985: 49).

It is only in alliance with and directed by, the urban and rural proletariat that peasant struggles may become revolutionary and be targeted toward the socialization of the means of production. The Mexicanists who emphasize the concept of the "peasant economy" share a quite different position with regards to the struggles of the peasantry.

3. The "Peasant Economy"

The debate on the Mexican peasantry has been marked by a sharp distinction between the theorists discussed above and those who consider that peasant productive activities form part of a distinctive "mode of production".

A well-known advocate of the distinctive economic character of the peasantry is Arturo Warman, who provides a discussion of the "peasant class" (1985: 189). The rural areas,
according to Warman, are characterized by the presence of two essential classes: the agrarian bourgeoisie and the peasantry. He defines the peasantry as

a class of rural producers who undertake different productive activities that can be divided into four groups: production; extraction and gathering of natural products; manufacturing and transformation of commodities; handicrafts and the sale of labour (1985: 205, my translation).

Warman considers the agrarian proletariat to be peasants because in his view, within their relations of production, subsistence production is the most important. It is around subsistence that the peasants articulate and organize all other productive activities (p.203). As a result, migrant workers and most of the rural wage-workers should be considered peasants, with the exception of those who are strictly wage-workers. The majority of those who are considered rural proletarians are, in fact, peasants who complement their income with the sale of their labour power (p.203). Thus, Warman rejects wages as a criteria for identifying the rural proletariat. He also rejects the argument that the peasantry is becoming increasingly proletarianized, rather he contends that the structural limits of the agrarian and industrial sectors block the process of proletarianization.

Warman considers the peasantry to be an exploited class. The exploitation of the peasantry occurs because its economic surplus is taken away through the market and transferred to the "compradore" bourgeoisie associated with the market. For Warman, the disappearance of the peasantry is linked to the disappearance of capitalism. Accordingly, the peasantry has a revolutionary potential, and the construction of a new society requires the participation of the peasantry (1985: 212-213).

---

12 Warman criticises those who assume the emergence of an important rural proletariat by basing their data on national census which he considers as often erroneous and not reliable (Warman 1979: 88-89 and 1985: 209).
A second influential advocate of the peasant economy is Gustavo Esteva who argues that the "peasant economy" "functions to satisfy directly and immediately the producers' needs for survival and development and not those of the general economy" (Esteva 1978c: 5). Another crucial argument is the concept of the peasant community. In Esteva's view, the fundamental characteristic of the Mexican peasantry is it collective form of existence: "conditions and organization of work, and individual accumulation are determined from within the community" (DeMarsh 1985: 67). For these reasons, peasants resist the proletarianization process through the reinforcement of their own social system. Furthermore, "Esteva contends that given the reality of capitalism today (i.e., growing unemployment and very slowly expanding wage employment), there is a tendency for this process to reverse" (Lucas de Rouffignac 1985: 55). Esteva calls this reversal process the "recampesinización" (Esteva 1979a: 235). He suggests that the development of capitalism in agriculture has been directed toward the control of the productive process and not so much toward the ownership of the means of production (p.57). For Esteva, peasants are subordinated and exploited by capital, because the entire peasant unit of production, via mechanisms such as credit, contracts, inputs, and marketing, is controlled by capital.

Like Warman, Esteva believes that the peasantry has a revolutionary potential in defining a path for post-capitalist Mexican society. He argues that, since the 1970s, the peasantry has been a significant political actor (1976: 8). Esteva emphasizes "the importance of political strength and structure in order to create the possibility for alliances with other social groups

---

13 Esteva was influential in the design of Mexican agricultural policy in the 1970s. Redclift argues that Esteva's theses received support within the government apparatus (1980: 492). DeMarsh underlines that "Esteva himself worked for a number of years with CONASUPO ('Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares'), the national agency responsible for regulating the market for basic foodstuffs, and is associated with the left wing of the PRI, Mexico's governing party" (1985: 7).

14 For example, the peasants with no land use wages as a possible way to obtain land (Esteva 1980: 157).
and for influence over national policy" (DeMarsh 1985: 50). To sum up, Esteva and Warman\(^{15}\) represent the "peasant autonomy" school because of their emphasis on the distinctive character of social relations and the autonomous existence of the peasantry.

4. Peasant Economy and the Articulation of Mode of Production

Authors such as Angel Palerm and Armando Bartra have combined the notion of peasant economy with the articulation approach. The late Angel Palerm contributed to the analysis of the peasantry by introducing the concept of a "peasant mode of production" (Palerm 1976, 1977)\(^{16}\), a system located outside the capitalist mode but articulated to it. The peasants are exploited by the process of capital circulation; the selling price for the commodities the peasants produce is less than their value. The peasants are also exploited when they participate in the capitalist labour market. Borrowing ideas from Luxemburg (1951), Palerm argues that the peasant mode of production is necessary to capitalism "for the realization of surplus value and as a source of extra surplus value for accumulation" (Lucas de Rouffignac 1985: 52).

Sergio Perello comes to similar conclusions as Palerm while using a dependency approach. He states that the dependent nature of Mexican capitalism blocks the disappearance and proletarianization of the peasants. Indeed, the peasant economy is indispensable for a dependent capitalist economy (1979: 40). For this author, the peasant struggles are not petty-bourgeois but the expression of the class struggle in rural areas. Peasant communities and rural workers (i.e. agricultural workers, day-workers, etc.) must unite in their effort to defeat

\(^{15}\) Lucas de Rouffignac (1982, 1985) should also be included in this stream although her arguments and theoretical basis are different from Warman and Esteva.

\(^{16}\) Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1969 and 1971) also defines the peasantry as the individuals who participate in a "peasant mode of production".
For Armando Bartra, the persistence of the peasantry is a consequence of a twofold dynamic: their struggle to survive and the functionality of the peasant economy for capitalism. On the one hand, the existence of the peasantry within a capitalist economy is related to the reproduction needs of this mode of production (1979: 65). On the other hand, the persistence of the peasantry also results from peasant struggles to maintain control over land (p.48). Buckles summarizes Armando Bartra’s position in the following way:

Armando Bartra [...] attempts to explain variations in the social relations of peasant agriculture from within the logic of the capitalist system of production. He views capitalism as an historically specific process subject to both the requirements of capitalist accumulation and the contradictory effects of class struggles. Thus, his concept of "capitalist transition" allows for the reproduction of peasant forces and relations of production that are subordinated to the functional requirements of capital or won through class struggles (Buckles 1987: 6, his emphasis)

The Mexican authors using the concept of peasant economy usually consider the peasantry as a specific class. Nevertheless, the position of these authors differs with respect to the location of the peasant economy in relation to capitalism. Some perceive the peasant economy to be within capitalism while others locate this economy outside the capitalist mode of production. There is also no consensus about the existence of a transition towards fully developed capitalist relations in the rural areas. Authors such as Warman, Esteva and Palerm affirm that there is no necessary transition towards the full proletarianization of the peasantry. In contrast, Armando Bartra argues that this transition is in process. The transition

---

17 For Bartra, the peasantry is an exploited class within capitalism. Its exploitation is explained by the different mechanisms of unequal exchange (in the commodity, the monetary and the labour markets) within capitalism (Bartra 1979: 90-111). Many authors have examined and debated how peasant production assisted the development of the capitalist agriculture and the urban industry (Barkin and Suarez 1985; A. Bartra 1979b; Diaz-Polanco 1982; Esteva 1980; Feder 1977b; Goodman and Redclift 1981; Hewitt de Alcantara 1978; Moguel and al. 1981; Paré 1982; Rama and Rello 1979) For a critical overview of the debate and an alternate view see Buckles (1987: 30-52).
is incomplete for two reasons: the functionality of the peasant economy for capitalism and peasant struggles to maintain control over land. It is significant that all the authors support the thesis that the peasantry is active in resisting its proletarianization. They also suggest that the peasantry is not only capable of resisting its proletarianization but also capable of struggling for revolutionary action. Warman and Esteva go so far as to state that the peasantry can play a crucial role in the emergence of post-capitalist society in Mexico. Armando Bartra considers the peasantry as capable of struggling and mobilizing itself against its proletarianization. Hence, the peasant movement is part of the class struggle against capitalism. A more extensive consideration of Bartra's views of the peasant movement will be presented in the next section.

To sum up, the above table gives some of the different combinations of theoretical positions that characterize much of the debate among Mexican intellectuals. The table does not exhaust all the variants in the debate, but the main combinations have been illustrated. In the following chapter, I argue that the peasant class in Pajapan can be defined as small agricultural producers who own their means of production and have access to land and may sell part of their labour force to capitalist producers. Their agricultural production consists primarily of subsistence crops. The Pajapan peasantry is partially integrated within the capitalist mode of production. Its integration is neither fully completed nor perfectly articulated to capital. Capitalism is not capable of fully subordinating the peasantry. This inability on the part of capital to fully integrate the peasantry is a result of two processes; peasant struggles and the contradictory actions of dependent capitalism.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Levels</th>
<th>Internal Differentiation</th>
<th>Internal Differentiation &amp; Articulation</th>
<th>Peasant Economy</th>
<th>Peasant Economy &amp; Articulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peas. Production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. within CMP</td>
<td>Rello, Pozas,</td>
<td></td>
<td>Warmen, Esteva</td>
<td>A. Bartra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gomez Lara</td>
<td>R. Bartra Paré</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. outside CMP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition CMP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. completed</td>
<td>Rello, Pozas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perello, A. Bartra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. in process</td>
<td>Guerrero De la Peña</td>
<td>R. Bartra Paré</td>
<td></td>
<td>Perello, A. Bartra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. no transition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Warmen, Esteva</td>
<td>Palerm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proletarianization</td>
<td>Rello, Guerrero De la Peña</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. Bartra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Potency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. non-revolution</td>
<td>Rello, Gomez Lara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. revolutionary</td>
<td>Guerrero</td>
<td>R. Bartra Paré</td>
<td>Warmen, Esteva</td>
<td>A. Bartra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. RURAL POLITICS AND PEASANT MOVEMENTS

Mexican students of the peasantry concentrate their attention on the economic sphere and pay relatively little attention to political dimensions. For these scholars, economic relations and the exploitative nature of these relations, "determine in the last instance the configuration of the political and ideological superstructure" (Beaucage 1975: 2). Within this perspective, class struggles emerge from exploitation in the relations of production. The political sphere is the site of a fundamental antagonism between a majority of proletarians oppressed by a minority of "bourgeois". The conflicting objective interests of these antagonistic classes express themselves in the political arena.

The present section develops an analytical framework to account for rural politics and peasant movements. The framework is constructed by combining the existing literature on
village factionalism and class relations in rural areas. This framework attempts to integrate political and economic dimensions to comprehend rural political struggles. In this sense, it breaks with earlier studies which explain all political struggles by a class analysis. The following discussion revolves around two themes: rural politics and the peasant movement and examines the theories that have been advanced to explain them.

1. Theories of Rural Politics

In the late 1950s, many anthropologists concerned with the political tensions and divisions in rural communities tended to analyze these in terms of factionalism. Schryer (1975: 290) points out that there were two central concerns in these analyses: the establishment of criteria to define political factions (Boissevain 1964; Nicholas 1965) and the identification of functions of village factionalism (Shokeid 1968; Swartz 1969). Later in the 1970s, research on factionalism concentrated upon the "competition among factional leaders for resources available outside of the community and the subsequent distribution of such resources (...) to their clientele" (Schryer 1975: 290).

The village factionalism approach has serious limitations for the understanding of political struggles in rural communities. This approach examines rural communities without considering the "broader literature on class conflicts and other forms of political opposition on the regional and national levels"(Schryer 1975:290). The class structure of these communities is overlooked or is analyzed superficially. Functionalist analyses have failed to consider "factional politics as a mechanism of cooptation in a class-stratified society"(Schryer 1975:

---


19 For examples of these types of studies, see Bailey 1969, Silverman 1973, and Attwood 1973.
291) and that "class conflict and factional disputes often overlap and coexist" (ibid: 292).

The concept of village factionalism is nonetheless useful. The notion of faction as "non-corporated conflict groups which have a political function" (Schryer 1975: 291) should be reconciled with the concept of social classes defined as

basic groupings of individuals in a society, opposed to one another by virtue of the role they play in the productive process, from the point of view of the relations they establish among themselves in the organization of labour and in respect to property (Dos Santos 1970: 188)\(^{20}\).

These two concepts can be used to develop the notion of political formation. I define a political formation as a conjunctural alliance of individuals from different or same social classes united on the basis of a common political project, who form a social entity which has its own internal and external linkages with the state and regional and national economic and political forces. A political project refers to the goal that the political formation is trying to achieve. The notion of internal linkages refers to the local political institutions controlled by the formation (i.e. municipal administration, communal land administration, etc.)\(^{21}\). Lastly, external linkages refers to the connections of these political formations with Mexican state agencies and regional and national economic and political forces (i.e. regional politicians, political parties and peasants and ranchers organization, etc.). Therefore, three different factors characterize a political formation: 1) its class composition; 2) its internal and external

---

\(^{20}\) This definition is close to the one offered by Lenin (1952);
"Classes are large groups of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimension and mode of acquiring the share of social wealth of which they dispose. Classes are groups of people of one which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy" (Vol.II, p.224).

\(^{21}\) I also means the political position of the individuals within the group (i.e. being a comunero or non-comunero, being from the village of Pajapan or from the hamlets, etc). The notion of political position is not fully developed in the analysis of Pajapan because this dimension did not play a crucial role in the political struggles examined. However, in chapter 5, the distinction between comunero and non-comunero was relatively important. The notion will briefly be discussed in that chapter.
linkages; and 3) its political project.

Paré's concept of power structure ("estructura de poder") (1975: 32) is useful to understand the interactions between political formations. The power structure represents "the correlation of forces existing in a specific moment between the different social classes" (Paré 1975: 32). These forces manifest themselves in the way social classes participate in the political power apparatus and also in the social classes' ability to influence the decision-making process affecting their social and economic interests. The power structure reflects the relations of domination between social classes. Paré adds that even if the power structure is dependent upon the changes in the economic structure, "the power structure has its own dynamic" (p.32). Thus, there is no necessary symmetry between the transformations in the economic structure and changes in the power structure.

Paré's concept, however, has some limitations. First, it tends to focus attention on the relationship between classes while not attending to relations within the same class. Secondly, even if Paré states that the power structure has its own dynamic, she does not explain how that dynamic is produced.

The concept of power structure concept has less to offer than that of the political dynamic, by which I mean the struggles between political formations. The political dynamic is determined by: 1) the characteristics of the political formation; 2) the action of the state; and 3) the class structure. State action has a double impact in that it can affect the political dynamic by intervening directly in the community. It can also favor one political formation at the expense of another. By class structure, I mean the configuration of social components of a mode of production during a given historical period. The class structure is a dynamic system which requires a diachronic analysis, i.e. "the development of the mode of production evolves new specific forms of relations among its components and creates new components"
It is important to conceptualize various forms of the political dynamic and not limit the analysis to factionalism versus class conflict. One way of doing this is to create a matrix of "ideal" types of political dynamics in terms of the alliances and divisions within and between classes.
Figure two presents the "ideal" types of political dynamic with the proviso that none are ever encountered in pure form. However, within the political dynamics encountered in the field during a specific historical period, there is usually a tendency toward one "ideal" type.

I now turn to a description of the different types of political dynamics to identify the specificity and characteristics of each.

1) **Village Factionalism**

Schryer states that

> village factionalism is likely to be the predominant form of political activity in peasant communities which are characterized by a certain type of class structure and pattern of production (1975: 291).

The type of class structure referred to by Schryer is described as

> a relatively equal distribution of land ownership (among local elite) combined with a large percentage of landless, wage-earning peasants, and an economic system which involves many isolated and autonomous productive units that are not conducive to collective action or a complex division of labour (1975: 291).

My contention is that political factionalism is not determined solely by class structure and the prevailing pattern of production. The state and the composition of political formations also play an important role. Actually, factionalism is likely to be the dominant political dynamic when:

1) the political formations are composed of various social classes;
2) each political formation has different linkages with political and economic forces;
3) the different political projects are oriented toward the control of local political institutions;
4) the class structure is characterized by a certain degree of internal differentiation (transitory class differentiation);
5) and the state simultaneously promotes the interests of different political formations.

ii) *Caciquismo*\(^{22}\)

Another type of political dynamic is the *caciquismo* defined as a mediation phenomenon characterized by the informal and personal exercise of power for the protection of personal economic interests or in order to obtain a prestigious position (Paré 1973: 22)

Paré argues that *caciquismo* is an effective form of power, parallel to the legal power that emerges political and administrative institutions. The effective power retained the "real power detained by certain formations of social actors according to their position within the social structure" (Paré 1973: 22, c.f. Graciarena 1976). Neither the effective nor the institutionalized political power, however, can work autonomously.

In a later work, the same author states that *caciques* are the political intermediaries between capitalism and a non-capitalist mode of production (Paré 1975: 36), where the *cacique* represents the economic agent of capitalist penetration in the rural community. The economic penetration requires control of the political apparatus, which is achieved through the cooptation of community leaders who "in return for defending the interests of capital are

\(^{22}\) The origins of this term comes from the word "kassiquan" of the arawak language and means "to have or take care of a house". During the Conquest period, this term was used to call the chiefs who reigned over the Caribbean. The Spaniards adopted this word and applied it to authorities in the conquered countries of Latin American, South of the United States and even in the Philippines (Paré 1975: 36). For further explanations see Alegria 1952: 313-316.

Schryer refers to *caciques* as strong men and defines them as "informal leaders who combine economic and political power" (1980: 63). For his part, Friedrich defines the *caciquismo* as "a type of local, informal politics in the Hispano-American area that involves partially arbitrary control by a relatively small association of individuals under one leader" (1965: 190).
corrupted and initiated to the secrets of capitalist accumulation" (Paré 1975: 37). The "cacique" is only useful to capital during the first phase of the capitalist penetration. During the second phase, the "cacique" becomes an obstacle to the expansion of capitalism. This is because "caciquismo" is linked to non-capitalist forms of exploitation. Paré presents four factors which explain the limitations imposed by the "caciquismo" on the development of capitalism. First, the "caciquismo" represents the interests of one individual or only a small faction whose power depends on primitive accumulation (concentration of lands, swindling and duping, corruption, etc.). Second, the "caciques" do not reinvest in production because of the need to spend resources in power symbols and sometimes a private army ("pistoleros") to guarantee their economic and political domination. Third, what the "cacique" pays his workers does not cover the reproduction costs of labour. This prevents the workers from consuming goods that would permit the expansion of the internal market. Fourth, "caciquismo", as a form of exploitation experiences a crisis, not only because it impedes a broader capitalist development, but because it progressively deteriorates with the increasing class consciousness of the peasants subjected to increasing poverty (1975: 38).

Paré argues that capitalist penetration creates different possibilities for accumulation, facilitating the emergence of competition for the cacique's position. At the same time, the expansion of capitalist development leads to the integration of the "caciques" into a larger class, the agrarian bourgeoisie (Paré 1975: 39). In opposition to the interests of the exploited masses, "caciques" are forced to sacrifice their individual interests for class hegemony. This new form of domination is not free from conflicts. The conflicting interests of the different formations of the bourgeoisie leads to the emergence of political factions. Paré stresses that "political factionalism has the characteristics to form not only one single class but to integrate members of different classes"(1975: 39). Accordingly, struggles against "caciques" are often the
expression of conflicts between distinctive factions within the bourgeoisie to gain power. Paré also mentions that support received from the regional "cacique" is crucial for the control of the local political and administrative apparatus by the local "cacique" (1975:50).

Martínez Vázquez's analysis, using a similar theoretical perspective, applies equally well to the political struggles of Pajapan. The author lists various methods developed by "caciques" to maintain their power; for example, calumny, defamation, threat, preventing peasants from getting work, unjustified firings, bribes, various forms of cooptation, granting of positions within the municipal administration, invasion of land, destruction of property, jailing, torture and assassination (1975: 165).

As yet to be demonstrated in the analysis of Pajapan, I argue, as Paré (1975) does, that the "cacique's" power is the result of his effective political control and his domination of the legal structure of power (political and administrative). I also agree with Paré that "caciquismo" is a political intermediary for the penetration of capitalism in the rural community. Factionalism emerges when the "cacique" starts blocking the development of capitalism. Nevertheless, I disagree with Paré's conception of effective power as determined exclusively by the class structure. Rather, I argue that the "caciquismo" is a form of political dynamic that requires the analysis of the different variables identified in the model presented above. I argue that "caciquismo" occurs when:

1) a political formation is composed of different social classes revolving around one individual (the "cacique");

2) the "cacique" controls several political positions or those occupying them;

3) the "cacique" receives support from the regional "cacique";

4) the political project revolves around the penetration of capitalism in the community and consolidation of the cacique's power base;
5) the class structure is in its early stages of differentiation;
6) the state usually supports the action of the cacique or at least does not oppose it openly.

The caciquismo formation is usually challenged by those excluded from the "cacique's" political formation. This process of political struggle can lead to either the emergence of political factionalism and a transitory stage of class differentiation, or to a "cacique's" system based on the use of violence and a more polarized class structure differentiation.

iii) **Communal Unity**

I suggest that the communal unity dynamic is rarely encountered. The idea of communal unity, however, is often integrated within the discourse of indigenous organizations and even the state.

The communal unity dynamic is characterized by the presence of one political formation which incorporates the entire community. This implies that:

1) all classes participate as part of the same formation and struggle toward the same political project;
2) all internal and external linkages are channelled through the formation;
3) the political project is for the entire community against outsiders;
4) the class structure is secondary: Class differentiation may exist but is not an immediate issue compared to the threat coming from outside the community;
5) the state intervenes as an external element and in some cases may be identified as the enemy.

This type of political dynamic is well suited to past functionalist anthropological approaches to rural communities which insisted upon analyzing social interaction and change in terms of balanced reciprocity employing an analogy of society as an integrated human organism, and eschewing historical research in favour of synchronic studies largely...
carried out at the local level (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984: 6)\textsuperscript{23}.

The rhetoric of communal unity was employed by the state in establishing the communal land tenure system for the indigenous population. In Pajapan, the land is owned communally and is supposedly cultivated collectively. This notion of the communal unity of an indigenous community is in many ways a creation of the state. The analysis of the political history of Pajapan shows how a communal land tenure system permits and, to some extent, facilitates the monopolization of the land.

- Politics and Indian Movement

The idea of communal unity is at the center of many of the demands of the Indian struggles. For Pozas (1971), Beaucage (1973) and Bonfil (1970), however, Indians are fully integrated into the capitalist society such that "indianness" is "the result of an historical process" (Pozas 1971: 15). The inter-ethnic relations have become secondary compared to the capitalist relations of production (1973: 117). This mode of production requires "the progressive disappearance of the cultural difference, the homogenisation and the adaptability of the proletariat" (1973: 118, cf. Bonfil Batalla 1970: 51). For these authors, ethnic dimensions need not to be examined separately and constitute a secondary issue\textsuperscript{24}.

In taking this position, these scholars were reacting to many years of cultural analysis which tended to examine Indian communities as self-sufficient formations and separate from the national economy (Pozas 1971: 15). An example of this perspective is Wolf's concept of

\textsuperscript{23} The clearest examples of this type of analysis are the works of Robert Redfield (1941, 1949, 1956, 1965). The works also of Beals 1946 and Parsons (1936) are also good illustrations.

\textsuperscript{24} Schryer mentions that anthropologists such as Beaucage (1971) and Breton and Labrecque (1981) "who have applied a more orthodox Marxist framework of analysis to their study of both mestizo and Indian villages, do not address ethnicity as a separate issue" (1987: 117).
the closed corporate peasant community. Schryer explains that Eric Wolf (1957) perceived the peasant communities as "egalitarian with effective levelling mechanisms that prevent the emergence of significant wealth differences or internal exploitation" (1987: 99). Many recent studies (Wasserstrom 1983; Chamoux 1981) have contradicted Wolf's assumptions of equality and levelling mechanisms.

Some Marxists have argued that "levelling mechanisms", such as the civil-religious hierarchy, could in fact reinforce class differentiation (Durand 1975; Wasserstrom 1983; Chamoux 1981). Schryer's summary of the position of these authors is that: "[T]hey argue that the same cultural traits which may have once levelled wealth differences are compatible with the development of internal class differences" (1987: 103). In a recent article, Schryer argues that cultural values and other aspects of the corporate Indian community are not necessarily incompatible with a class structure based on wage labour, internal exploitation, and unequal access to land....Poor peasants in Nahuatl communities did not conduct their class struggles in the same manner as the mestizo peasant with whom they shared common economic grievances. Only in Indian villages did the internal conflicts, together with land invasions, result in the restoration of the egalitarian type of closed corporate peasant community first described by Wolf (1987: 115-116).

My position is that the levelling mechanisms associated with the "closed corporate community" reinforce existing class differences. Moreover, "traditional Indian values" form a rhetoric that may be used by different social classes to promote their own economic interests.

Recent studies of Indian movements (Mejia Piñeros and Sarmiento Silva 1987; Barre 1985) also contribute to the understanding of politics of indigenous communities. Barre

---

25 Wolf's position, however, went further than other writers such as Robert Redfield (1941), who only studied the rural communities in terms of "acculturation". This term was used to characterize "those phenomenon which result when groups of individuals having different cultures came into firsthand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural pattern of either or both groups" (1973: 13). For Redfield, there was a folk-urban continuum and the anthropologist could therefore study "the change whereby a folk community is slowly becoming like the city" (Hewitt de Alcantara 1984: 193 n.20).
(1985: 193-200) establishes a list of central themes of Indian movements: land, culture, recuperation of history, self-liberation, harmony, "indianismo" (ideological foundations of the Indian movement), ethnic consciousness, self-management ("autogestión"), Indian medical practice (1985: 194-195). She considers the "Congreso Nacional de Pueblos Indígenas"26 (hereafter referred to as CNPI) to be an official organization created by the Mexican government to channel a self-conscious Indian movement27. The intervention of the CNPI in Paipan will have to be examined in detail to attempt to evaluate the real objectives of this organization during the struggles for land redistribution.

Mejía Piñeros and Sarmiento Silva also provide a list of the central demands of the Indian movement. This list includes: struggle for the land; defense of the natural resources: facilities for production; education and culture; political freedom; respect of human rights; fair labour conditions (1987: 22-23). These authors support Pozas' thesis regarding the integration of indigenous communities within the capitalist mode of production. These communities are part of the exploited rural sectors and their movement is part of the larger peasant movement. Nevertheless, it also has its own characteristics. For example, the Indian struggle for the land must be seen as a demand for the recuperation of a vital space indissolubly linked with the reproduction of their culture (1987: 18).

According to Mejía Piñeros and Sarmiento, the persistence of communal land claims is indicative of the Indian character of the land struggle (1987: 28-29). These authors also argue that there are three distinctive tendencies within the Indian movement: 1) Indianism and ethno-populism ("etnismo, indianismo y etnopopulismo"), which proposes the primacy

26 National Congress of Indigenous Peoples.

27 Like the Mexican official unionism controls the workers and peasants movement (1985: 124-125). For example the following confederations: CNC ("Confederación Nacional Campesina"), CNOP ("Confederación Nacional de Obreros y, CNTE ("Conferación Nacional de los Trabajadores de la Educación").
of ethnic over class differences; 2) classism, which denies the ethnic dimension in the struggles and demands of the Indians and instead states that the Indian struggle should integrate the peasant movement; and 3) a combination of ethnic and class elements that varies according to each concrete situation (1987: 30).

In my view, the notion of communal unity is often used rhetorically by the state to control Indian struggles, but also by Indian organizations or political formations as a means to mobilize. The use of the notion of communal unity may have several objectives, depending on the interest of those using it. For example, it can be used to mobilize exploited sectors of indigenous communities against an outside exploiter, thereby distracting the 'asants' attention from internal relations of exploitation. I suggest that Mejia Piñeros and Sarmiento Silva's third type of analysis is the most appropriate to the understanding of today's indigenous movement.

iv) Class Conflict

A class conflict dynamic in a rural community such as Pajapan has the following characteristics:

1) each political formation has a class-based composition (one dominant class formation comprised of a minority of capitalist producers and one subordinate formed by a majority of peasants and landless workers);

2) the dominant formation exerts a political hegemony within the community while both the dominant and the subordinate have their own networks of external linkages;

3) the formation's political projects are antagonistic; one is the political domination and intensification of capitalist development versus resistance to capitalism and the struggle for levelling economic differences and political power;

4) the class structure is characterized by a full internal differentiation with two antagonistic
5) the state usually supports the dominant formation but may intervene on its own behalf and modify the political dynamic.

In most cases, the dominant formation has privileged relations with some state agencies protecting their interests. By contrast, the subordinate political formation has no access to important local political institutions. The subordinate formation, however, may have linkages with regional peasant organizations or support from certain sectors of the state apparatus.

For a class conflict dynamic, a class analysis is useful to understand the struggles between political formations. The presence of a class conflict dynamic is contingent upon: 1) a polarized class structure, where the internal differentiation is advanced; 2) the intervention of the regional and national economic and political forces in favor of one particular political formation (i.e. peasant organizations, political parties, regional and national politicians, medias, etc.); and 3) the contradictory actions of the state in favoring and discriminating against both formations.

To sum up, the foregoing observations present a model for the analysis of rural politics. A series of concepts and variables were developed with a view to identifying different types of political dynamics. The criterion used to define "ideal" types of political dynamics was the relationship between classes. Class structure, however, is not the only determining element in understanding the dominant political struggles prevailing during a specific historical period. The notion of political formations as conjunctural alliances of individuals from differing or the same social classes was put forward. The members of political formations share a common political project, control different political institutions, and possess specific linkages with the state and the regional and national economic and political forces.
Table 3 synthesizes the different elements of the analytical model and characterizes them according to the type of political dynamic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Types of Political Dynamic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communal Unity</td>
<td>Caciquismo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different classes allied / community united</td>
<td>heterogeneous &amp; based on alliance or opposition to the cacique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one formation controls all political positions</td>
<td>the cacique controls several positions or individuals in these positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all linkages channelled through communal formation</td>
<td>cacique connected with regional cacique &amp; other political &amp; economic forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one political project</td>
<td>penetration of capitalist relations and consolidation of his cacique's power versus resistance to capitalism &amp; cacique's domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internal differentiation may or may not be present</td>
<td>early stage of internal differentiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state as an external element may be identified as the enemy</td>
<td>state usually supports the cacique</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Class Struggles and Peasant Movements

The model presented above raised the issue of the formation of peasant movements. Under what conditions may a peasant movement develop? Different political dynamics may be conducive to the formation of a peasant movement but also to other forms of political expressions, such as spontaneous rebellion, temporary mobilization, passive resistance, etc. The
emergence of a peasant movement is neither inexorable nor given. Specific and conjunctural conditions are of the utmost importance. Even if the peasant movement is central to the understanding of rural politics, it has not yet constituted a focal point of analysis. According to Armando Bartra, the first obstacle to the analysis of the peasant movement is the absence of analytical material (1979c: 98; 1985: 9). Armando Bartra is one of the first Mexican scholars to dedicate considerable attention to the peasant movement. This section attempts to review part of the theoretical literature dealing with the peasant movement in the light of my case study.

In his article "Peasant in Political Action", Teodor Shanin analyzes (1971 157-364) the characteristics of peasant political actions. He suggests that the inescapable fragmentation of a peasantry into small local segments and the diversity and vagueness of their political aims undermine their potential political impact. Hence, how far a peasantry may be regarded as a class should be seen rather as a question of degree and of the historical period and context. [...] we could say that the peasantry would appear as a social entity of comparative low 'low classness', which rises in crisis situation (1971: 357).

The author continues his analysis by determining three patterns of peasant political action:

1) The Autonomous Class Action: "In this type of action, a social class crystallizes in the course of conflict; creates its own nationwide organization; works out its ideology, aims and symbols; and produces leaders, mostly from within its own ranks".

2) The Guided Political Action: "The social formation concerned is moved by an external power-elite which unites it".

3) the Amorphous Political Action:
   a) Local Riots: "which 'suddenly' emerge as short outbursts of accumulated frustration and rebellious feeling".

---

28 Authors such as Armando Bartra (1979a,b,c, 1982, 1986), Hector Diaz Polanco (1977), Ann Lucas de Rouiffignac (1985) have outlined some of the important characteristics of the recent Mexican peasant movements. But compared to the analysis of the peasant economic relations, the analysis of the peasant movement is still minimal.

b) Peasant Passivity: "as a factor of dynamics" (Shanin 1971: 360-361).

This typology may be of some use in characterizing political mobilization. Yet, it does not explain why and under which conditions a peasant movement emerges.

Some of the observations made by Mejía Piñeros and Sarmiento Silva (1987: 26-27) on Indian movements are also useful in understanding peasant movements. For them, whether it is a local, a regional or a national movement, the Indian mobilizations develop in a spontaneous manner from an objective situation of "misery and repression and express themselves in an explosive manner" (1987: 26). Spontaneity, explosiveness, organizational autonomy and unequal development are the fundamental features of these movements (1987: 26). The outcome of the movement may take several forms: 1) once the objective is obtained, the movement disappears; 2) the objective is not achieved due to institutional intransigence or the state reaction; 3) the objective is attained but the movement is coopted by the state; and 4) the initial objective is attained but the movement persists and develops new demands (1987: 26-27). The latter form of political mobilization is usually transformed into an organization.

Eric Wolf (1969a, b) has analyzed six major political and social revolutions (Mexico, Russia, China, Vietnam, Cuba and Algeria)\(^{30}\). In his analysis, he argues that it is difficult for peasants to engage in rebellious action (especially sustained ones) (1969b: 367). He gives six reasons to account for this, including: 1) peasants are often working alone and in isolation from others and are competing with each other for the available resources; 2) the workload of a peasant is almost constant and makes it difficult to invest time in political activity; 3) the

---

\(^{30}\) The works of Eric Wolf (1966, 1969) can be considered pioneering in understanding rural communities as integrated within the rest of society. Hewitt de Alcantara argues that Wolf's "familiarity with the European Marxist tradition permitted him to elaborate new analytical tools of lasting importance to the growth of anthropological theory" (1984: 73).
peasant's control over the land permits him to only produce subsistence crops if market ones crops endangered; 4) kinship and mutual assistance within peasant communication may act as a buffer for social confrontation; 5) peasants' interests may overlap with different class interests; and 6) peasants are often excluded from political participation and lack the knowledge to develop appropriate political action to defend their own interests (Wolf 1969a: 367-368).

For Wolf, peasant rebellions are an outcome of three crises: the demographic, the ecological and the politico-economic. The first type of crisis results from a higher life expectancy in rural areas and the world-wide diffusion of American food crops. For Wolf, the demographic crisis puts a "serious strain on inherited cultural arrangements" (1969a: 369). The second factor is the "alienation of peasant resources proceeded directly through seizure or through coercive purchase" (1969a: 369). The third comes from the insertion of the peasantry into the market economy. Market integration disrupts the power structure in peasant communities;

The development of the market produced rapid circulation of the elite, in which the manipulators of the new 'free floating resources' - challenged the inherited power of the controllers of fixed social resources (1969a: 369).

For Wolf, only the middle peasants are capable of entering into sustained rebellions who are defined as a "peasant population which has secure access to land of its own and cultivates it with family labour" (p.371). They possess enough resources to enter into political activities against the dominant formation. They are also the ones most threatened by commercialization ("his social relations remain encased within the traditional design") and are in contact with the ideas of the urban proletariat which makes them transmitters "of urban unrest and
political ideas" (1969a: 371). For Wolf, poor peasants and landless workers are unable to undertake such actions because of their lack of resources and their dependency on their employers (i.e. landlords) for the latter. There may be exceptions, however, if these formations are able to "rely on some external power to challenge the power which constrains them" (1969a: 370).

Research on peasant movements in Mexico provides important directions for conceptualizing the role of the peasantry in politics. As mentioned previously, for Armando Bartra (1979a), the peasantry persists in capitalism partially because of its struggle to maintain access to land. His theoretical stand has the virtue of trying to break with the orthodox Marxist position which views the peasant movement as "petty bourgeois" and the proletarianization of the peasantry as inevitable. Our Pajapan case study, will show, however, that peasant movements emerge during periods of advanced transition when the internal differentiation is well developed and landless workers form a full fledged class.

Armando Bartra identifies three different types of land struggle. The first has a clear precapitalist resistance character in which the struggle for the land entails an opposition to a bourgeois society in the countryside (as in England). The second type of land struggle is when a "reconstituted" peasantry (i.e. contemporary peasantry) struggles for its own survival within the capitalist mode of production. Finally, the third type occurs when the struggle for land becomes a proletarian movement. The struggle is no longer for a piece of land but, rather, is against capitalist ownership, at least within agriculture. For Armando Bartra, this last type of struggle cannot succeed without the destruction of bourgeois society (1979a: 40-50). The movement is clearly anticapitalist, yet it is only the urban proletariat that can give

---

31 Other analysts of the peasant movement have also observed the important role and militancy of middle peasantry: Landsberger 1969: 39; Huizer 1972: 143-144; Forman 1971 and Schryer 1980: 58).
it a strategic orientation.

For Armando Bartra, there is continuity between each of these struggles. While it is difficult in practice to distinguish between the three types, it is also difficult in Bartra's works to see how he operationalizes each type of political mobilization. My contention is that the second and the third type of struggle represent different forms of peasant movements and their appearance is not historically determined. I suggest that the difference between these two types of struggles lies in the political variables proposed earlier. The class composition, internal and external linkages, and the political project are key elements for understanding the nature of peasant struggles.

Armando Bartra also argues that peasants struggle for the land because it is necessary "for them only to reproduce and self-sustain themselves" (1979c). He also states that struggles for land come not from the proletarianization of agricultural workers but, rather, because peasants have understood "the concrete alternatives to their conditions of being exploited" (1979c). These two arguments elucidate my concept of political project. It is when the subordinate classes perceive an alternative to the domination that they experience that it becomes possible to speak of a peasant movement. It is not necessarily because of the discovery of their location within a mode of production but because of the concrete experience of their domination and the loss of access to land.

Hector Díaz-Polanco's definition of a peasant movement is similar to the notion of political project described earlier. For this author, a peasant movement is "any collective or united action of the peasants oriented toward specific objectives which tend to modify more or less profoundly, their conditions of living" (1977: 141). However, Díaz-Polanco does not explain how the peasant movement fits into the dynamic of rural politics.
Apart from the few analytical perspectives examined above, the recent tendency in the literature dealing with peasant movements in Mexico is to return to descriptive history (Schryer 1980, 1986, 1987a; Binford 1985; Aguado López et al. 1983) and analyses of the independent peasant movement\(^{32}\) (A. Bartra 1982, 1985, 1986, and 1987; Canabal Cristiani 1983, 1984; Beaucage and Paré 1987; and Rubio 1987). The following detailed analysis of Pajapan's political history is part of that tendency. The preceding generalization, however, will hopefully contribute to theoretical debates on peasant struggles and movements.

C. THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN RURAL POLITICS

The role of the state in rural areas has already been discussed in analytical terms. In view of the importance of the state's influence on the political dynamic (through its linkages with a political formation or through its direct intervention), however, further discussion is required in light of Mexican authors' positions.

For Javier Guerrero, the Mexican state grants certain concessions to the peasant movement in order to weaken it to benefit the Mexican rural bourgeoisie (1979: 161). The Mexican state also attempts to "corporativize" the peasant movement through a series of official organizations such as the "Confederación Nacional Campesina"\(^{33}\) and the "Liga de Comunidades Agrarias y Sindicatos Campesinos"\(^{34}\). This "corporativization" has as its objective the cooptation, dismantling and fragmentation of peasant movements.

For Roger Bartra, the Mexican state is a bourgeois state which has developed a double...

---

32 Peasant organizations that are independent from government officials and semi-official peasant organizations, i.e. CNC, CCI, CAM, etc.

33 National Peasant Confederation (hereafter referred to as CNC).

34 Agrarian League. For analyses of the history and formation of this organization see Falcon Vega (1977) and Fowler Salamini (1978).
nature. One function is to exercise the direct power of the bourgeoisie and the other is to serve as an agent of mediation (1975:3, 27). During the period that followed the Mexican Revolution, the bourgeoisie consolidated its power by seeking the support of the peasant masses. This alliance between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry forced the former to grant some concessions to the latter while controlling it. The state also created government agencies and official organizations and supported specific political structures, such as caciquismo, as a way of mediating and controlling the contradictions generated by the development of capitalism in the countryside (1975:3). The state, however, is not free from contradictions and tensions. For example, certain structures of mediation, such as "caciquismo", may contradict with the development of capitalism. The author also mentions the "crisis" between two fractions of the bourgeoisie. One fraction is interested in spurning the capitalist development of agriculture in order to accelerate the process of industrialization to expand the internal market and to slow down the rural exodus. The other fraction, the agrarian bourgeoisie, comprised of landlord and merchants controlling political institutions, have enriched themselves but have also blocked the further development of capitalist relations in rural areas.

Roger Bartra argues that the state exercises its domination in the rural sector through the direct use of power and through the mediation of organizations and institutions which supposedly defend the interests of the peasantry e.g. the CNC, Agrarian League, and some branches of the "Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria"35. Roger Bartra proposes the concept of "internal dialectic" to account for the tensions and struggles between these two dimensions of the state. He contends that "the mediation and direct power function are two substructures and opposite poles integrated within the unity of the political system" (1975: 29, my

---

35 Agrarian Reform Secretariat (hereafter referred to as SRA).
Armando Bartra proposes a similar view of the state. He argues that the Mexican government, after a period of relative political autonomy, has become "the direct representative of the interests of large capital and in relation to its agrarian politics, the interests of the large rural capital (1979: 7, my translation).

The model presented earlier indicates how the state can intervene in the political dynamics of rural areas. As has been suggested, the state may act in contradiction to the interests of the rural bourgeoisie. Actually, the actions of the Mexican state can also go against its own interests and those of the rural bourgeoisie. The notions that the Mexican state solely represents the interests of the bourgeoisie or its own interests as a relatively autonomous social force are highly debatable. The state may act in contradiction to its own reproduction and its political intervention may reflect an inherent "inefficiency" in the management of rural politics. This inefficiency has to be perceived as one of the variables in understanding peasant mobilization.

This brings our discussion of theoretical perspectives on the peasantry and peasant movement, to an end. This discussion revealed that the analysis of the peasantry in terms of its location within the class structure is central to all recent analyses of peasant politics. Within this literature, the political behavior of the peasants is derived from their class position within the social formation.

To be sure, political relations are determined by economic ones, yet this argument simplifies and overlooks the autonomy of the political sphere. I suggest that political relations are, to some extent, autonomous and not determined exclusively by the relations of production.

---

36 The essays of Luisa Paré, Eckart Boege, Pilar Calvo, and Jorge Gutierrez contained in the same books attempts to apply the concept of Bartra to case studies (c.f. R.Bartra 1975).
or class structure. In the remainder of the thesis, I address myself to assessing the relevance of the positions developed in this chapter by examining the political struggles in Japan between 1948 and 1983.
CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE RECOGNITION AND TITLING

OF THE COMMUNAL LAND, 1948-1968

The progressive intensification of cattle-raising activities\(^1\) and the development of a local\(^2\) "caciquismo" appeared as the distinct features of the historical period between the late 1940s and 1968. Local "caciquismo" refers to the political dynamic in which an individual exercises hegemonic political control over several local institutions. In Pajapan, these institutions comprise the municipal administration (local justice system), local ranchers association (after its formation in 1951), the local school system, and the lot administration. This local "caciquismo" was not necessarily associated with economic wealth. Rather, it was based upon the control of local taxes and political institutions. Additionally, the local "caciques" had contacts with the regional "caciques" and the State political apparatus.

Within the process of expanding cattle-raising, the land tenure system became the focal point of political struggles in Pajapan. The struggles over the definition of the land tenure system were crucial. According to the type of the prevailing system, the ranchers could either

\(^1\) Various informants mentioned that cattle-raising activities intensified during the early 1950s. They started to feel its effect by the limits imposed on the land available for their maize plots ("milpa"). Further evidence of such development was the creation of a local ranchers association in 1951. At the time of its creation, the association already had 47 members. See interviews: Tomas Martinez Encarnacion, Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Wenceslao Morales Martinez, Pablo Martinez Tino, and Estaba Martinez Bautista. Pajapan. September 21, 29, and October 01, 1987; and Mendoza Neri (1982).

\(^2\) "Local" refers to the Municipality of Pajapan, "regional" to the Southern Veracruz region (basically the municipalities contained in the perimeter formed by the following three cities: Coatzaocoalcos, Minatitlan and Acayucan); "State" to the State of Veracruz, and "national" to the whole country.
continue to grow and set the appropriate conditions for their expansion, or the small and middle peasants could ensure their subsistence by maintaining access to land. Two land tenure systems were competing for official recognition by the Mexican state: the communal and the ejidal. While the request for the creation of an ejido existed from the early 1930s, it was only in 1952 that the first request was made for the official recognition of communal land.

In Pajapan, the communal land system mainly benefitted the ranchers as long as they controlled the local land administration. This local administration was responsible for the distribution and organization of land. In contrast, the formation of an ejido would have imposed serious constraints on the ranchers since lands would have been divided into individual parcels. This would have made it more difficult for the merging ranchers to control and concentrate large areas of lands, unless private properties were created in addition to the ejido. The ejido would have also made it difficult for regional ranchers\(^3\) to appropriate lands for their cattle. The ejido would have guaranteed access to land to everyone who fulfilled the requirement of the Agrarian Code.

The struggles for the land tenure system were contingent upon several processes, namely: 1) the unsettled state of the Pajapan communal land (the communal land system had not been formally recognized by the Mexican State); 2) the development of the cattle-raising activities within and outside Pajapan communal land\(^4\); and 3) the development of a local caciquismo.

\(^3\) The expression regional refers to the ranchers who are not part of the "comuneros" of Pajapan, i.e. the ranchers who lived in or outside the Municipality of Pajapan and who kept cattle on the communal lands.

\(^4\) The expansion of the regional ranchers on the communal lands was mentioned as early as the 1950s when a conflict developed with one, Aurelio Fernandez Jaurequi, owner of the Ranch "El Moral" and the Pajapan comuneros. The former had taken over 164 hectares of land considered part of the communal lands of Pajapan. See Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, October 01, 1987 and Archives of the Secretaria de Reforma Agraria / Mexico (hereafter referred to as ASRAM), Expediente 276.1/2414. "Dictamen Positivo", November 27, 1967.
quismo.

The following four political formations developed from the struggle for the land tenure system: 1) the Municipal Authority; 2) Lot Administration; 3) Communal Land Committee; and, 4) the Agrarian Committee. During that struggle, the political formations evolved from a specific political project: the recognition of either the communal land or the ejidal tenure system. The individuals composing the different political formations may have had different economic interests but their cohesion was based on the achievement of one political goal. The political dynamic dominating this period was a mixture of "caciquismo" (1949-1956) and factionalism (1956-1968).

The following analysis is divided into three parts. The first describes the class structure of Pajapan. Part two looks at the power structure by examining the composition of the different political formations. The third part analyzes the political struggles leading to the official recognition and titling of the communal land.

A. CLASS STRUCTURE

Between 1948 and 1968, three distinct social classes were present: the ranchers, middle peasants and the peasants.

The rancher class was comprised of the wealthiest comuneros raising cattle. They were usually influential local political actors and often in contact with large regional ranchers, State deputies and civil servants. They were primarily interested in the development and expansion of their own ranches. The majority supported the communal land tenure system

---

5 The term comuneros referred to the individuals (heads of family) living on the 19,158 hectares claimed as communal lands. A comunero could be from any of the three classes, since the term refers in this chapter to geographic location (i.e. on the 19,158 hectares) and not to agricultural activity as such (i.e. ranching or subsistence activities).
without its official recognition by the Mexican State. Official recognition would imply the establishment of boundaries and the obligation, in principle, to administer the lands according to the Agrarian Code. Non-recognition permitted the local and regional ranchers to fence in parcels of lands and to buy parcels from peasants. The absence of defined communal land boundaries and the practices of the traditional administrative system were advantageous to both local and regional ranchers. For many years, these ranchers controlled the lot administrators responsible for the communal land.

The support of regional ranchers was important for the Pajapan ranchers. The former provided the latter with contacts and connections to regional politicians and state offices. The regional ranchers were also economically more powerful than Pajapan ranchers. Several of these regional ranchers assisted Pajapan’s better-off comuneros to begin cattle-raising through an agreement called "a media". This agreement meant that a regional rancher could put his cattle on a fenced piece of land for a period of one year. At the end of the year, half of the newborn calves would go to the Pajapan rancher.\footnote{There were ranchers from other places working ‘a media’ with Pajapan ranchers, for example Don Felix Martinez ‘El Negro’, from the Ejido Las Barrillas and Eulogio Lagunes from La Perla (Interview with Salvador Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 16, 1987). Another important rancher of Pajapan seemed to have started his cattle-raising activities by the same method: "To buy his cattle, he connected himself with Felix Martinez of Coatzacoalcos (‘El Negro’)" (Interview with Aniceto Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, October 03, 1987).}

Only a minority of ranchers supported the ejido system. Those supporting it were interested in creating small properties as a way of ensuring access to a specific parcel of land. The ejido would occupy one section of the communal land while the rest was used as small private properties.

The second class, called middle peasants, was composed of the comuneros who had access to land. They may have owned few head of cattle but not enough to be considered
ranchers (in all likelihood less than 5). The most important feature of this class was that it provided political leadership during the struggle for the recognition of the communal land. The middle peasants were considered by the small peasants to be more credible and less self-interested than the ranchers. The main interest of the middle peasants was to preserve access to land. Although the middle peasants did not oppose the local ranchers, they were against land invasions by regional ranchers. They attempted to protect the integrity of all communal land, as this was essential for their future expansion into ranching activities.

The vast majority of the middle peasants supported the communal land tenure system, and fought for the recognition and titling of this system. A minority approved the idea of land redistribution through the creation of an ejido which would have ensured access to land for everyone. The supporters of the ejido were the middle peasants who feared the expansion of both local and regional ranchers.

The third class are the small peasants. This formation formed a "silent majority" comprising the poorest, least educated and least socially prestigious of the three classes. They experienced a continuing loss of land throughout this period. Politically, they were weak and poorly organized and tended to rely on the leadership of a few ranchers and middle peasants. As with the middle peasantry, their primary interest was to have access to a plot of land. Small peasants were opposed to land monopolizing and to regional ranchers. Some of them wanted the creation of an ejido as a means of ensuring access to land, while others supported the recognition and titling of the communal land. Many were not directly involved in the political conflicts surrounding the recognition of the communal land.
B. THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS

Between 1948-1968, four different political formations were active, some for the whole period, others during specific years.

1. The Municipal Authority Formation

The Municipal Authority formation controlled the municipal administration of Pajapan almost continuously for 20 years (except for one term between 1952 and 1955). Its most significant feature was its rancher composition, although its central protagonist was not a rancher but a primary school teacher named Guillermo Salinas Mendoza\(^7\), who arrived in Pajapan in 1948\(^8\). Soon after his arrival, Salinas allied himself with a large portion of the ranchers interested in developing the cattle-raising activities. His ability to read and count and his connections in Coatzacoalcos with the regional politicians and ranchers allowed him to accumulate several political functions such as municipal secretary\(^9\), judge and main officer of the local ranchers association.

i) Class Composition

---

\(^7\) The origins of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza are part of Pajapan's myths. One informant suggests that Salinas Mendoza was a male nurse in Coatzacoalcos when he came to Pajapan: "Guillermo was from a hard condition; he did not have family and was a nurse in a hospital of Coatzacoalcos" (Interview with Simon Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, October 01, 1987). Another mentions that he was in contact with the politicians of Coatzacoalcos who sent him to Pajapan (Interview with Juan Martinez Encarnacon, Pajapan, September 28, 1987).

\(^8\) Several informants acknowledged that Salinas Mendoza was sent by the regional politicians of the PRI ("Partido Revolucionario Institucional", Institutionalized Revolutionary Party). See interviews with Estava Martinez Bautista, Pedro Martinez Vargas, Juan Martinez Jauregui, and Juan Martinez Encarnacon, Pajapan, September 26, 28, 29 and October 02, 1987.

\(^9\) In 1949, he became the municipal secretary when Wenceslao Martinez was elected municipal president. He held this position (except between 1952 and 1955) and various others until 1967 when he was chased out of the villages by a group of comuneros.
Most ranchers supported Salinas Mendoza\textsuperscript{10}, who gave a strong impetus to the development of cattle-raising activitiess.\textsuperscript{11} This formation may have received support from some landless peasants and poor peasants who worked as day-workers ("peónes") for the ranchers associated with Salinas. These peasants were under the economic control of and politically coopted by their employers. As for the middle peasants, not many were supportive of the Municipal Authorities Formation, except perhaps those with positions within the municipal administration and lot administration\textsuperscript{12}.

ii) Internal and External Linkages

The Municipal Authority formation controlled several local institutions and had linkages with a number of external agents. In Pajapan, it controlled the following institutions:

1) The Municipal Administration: The control of this formation over the municipal administration lasted from 1949 to 1967. It was only interrupted for a short period, during Juan A. Martinez Jauregui's presidency (1952-1955);

2) The Local PRI Committee: Since municipal presidents are always candidates of the PRI, control of the Local PRI Committee was crucial because it determined who was to be the municipal president. The Municipal Authority formation controlled this position from 1949 to 1967, except during Juan A. Martinez Jauregui's presidency (1952-1955);

\textsuperscript{10} A minority supported the Agrarian Committee and others the Communal Land Committee and fought against Salinas Mendoza and the municipal authorities domination.

\textsuperscript{11} The intensive development of the cattle-raising activities was mentioned by several informants, see interviews with; Tomas Martinez Encarnacion, Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Wenceslao Morales Martinez, Pablo Martinez Tino, Pajapan, September 21, 29, and October 01, 1987.

\textsuperscript{12} Juan Martinez Encarnacion, a farmer who was a trustee ("sindicof") as well as a teacher during several years could be considered as an example of the support that the farmers gave to this political faction (Interview with Juan Martinez Encarnacion, Pajapan, September 28, 1987).
3) **The local ranchers association:** The Municipal Authority formation under the leadership of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza established a local association of ranchers in 1951. The local ranchers association played a determinant role in Pajapan political life. All the municipal presidents were ranchers and members of the association;

4) **The municipal judicial system:** Guillermo Salinas Mendoza became both the municipal judge for Pajapan and the municipal secretary;

5) **The local educational system:** Guillermo Salinas Mendoza was a primary school teacher. Together with another teacher (Juan Martinez Encarnacion) he exercised direct control over the educational system and they were able to block any teacher opposed to the interests of the Municipal Authority formation.

The Municipal Authority formation also had several linkages with external actors. One link was with the regional ranchers. The Municipal Authority formation protected the interests of these ranchers especially after the failed assassination of Salinas Mendoza, supposedly organized by Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero, the most powerful regional rancher and president of the "Unión Ganadera del Sur de Veracruz."\(^3\). The alliance between the Municipal Authority formation and the regional ranchers was denounced on several occasions by other

---

\(^3\) Southern Veracruz Ranchers Association (hereafter referred to UGSV).

This regional cacique supported Juan Grande's political campaign in Pajapan. As Simon Antonio recalled that "the State Electoral Directing Committee of the PRI made propaganda in company of the candidate on the day of the elections" (1979: 1).

Jesus Mendoza Neri affirmed that Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero, the cousin of the Mexican President Miguel Aleman (1946-1952), gave a strong impulse to the development of the cattle-raising industry in Southern Veracruz. Gonzalez Caballero dominated regional politics for over twenty years (1950-1970) and held various political positions such as municipal President, Southern Veracruz Rancher Union President, State Deputy, Regional PRI Committee President, etc... (Mendoza Neri 1982).
formations\textsuperscript{14}. This alliance with powerful regional ranchers allowed the Municipal Authority formation to influence the Mexican bureaucracy, to block the request for an ejido, and to delay the recognition and titling of the communal land. These regional ranchers - for example, Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero - also accumulated official political functions, such as State deputy and regional PRI representative. Many regional ranchers were able to exercise political influence on the Mexican government administration\textsuperscript{15}.

At the State and Federal level, the Municipal Authority formation received support from within the "Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización"\textsuperscript{16} in Mexico and the "Delegación Agraria"\textsuperscript{17} of the DAAC in Xalapa. It is difficult to determine whether this support was the result of direct corruption of the civil servants. What is clear is the fact that there were abnormal delays in the procedures leading to the recognition and titling of the communal land. Some delays can be attributed to specific individuals who were apparently "not inclined" to see the Presidential Resolution elaborated. For example, the "Director General de Bienes Comunales"\textsuperscript{18} of the DAAC gave a poor justification for the delays in the elaboration of this resolution\textsuperscript{19}. The "Delegado Agrario"\textsuperscript{20} of DAAC seemed to have supported


\textsuperscript{16} Department of Colonization and Agrarian Affairs, hereafter referred to as DAAC.

\textsuperscript{17} Hereafter referred to as State Delegation.

\textsuperscript{18} Hereafter referred to as Communal Land General Director.

\textsuperscript{19} The letter he wrote, mentioned earlier in section II, showed that his justifications were poor. See ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, Letter, November 18. 1967.

\textsuperscript{20} Hereafter referred to as State Delegate.
this political formation after the request for the creation of an ejido was struck down in 1965. Finally, one of the officials of the State Delegation, David Riviera De la Torre was formally denounced by the other formations for his alliance with the Municipal Authority.21

iii) Political Project

The primary interest of the Municipal Authority formation consisted in the development of the cattle-raising industry. Its political goal was to maintain the status quo in light of the unsettled legal condition of the communal land. This project implied opposing and trying to block any requests for the creation of an ejido. It also meant delaying as much as possible the recognition and titling of the communal land by the Mexican government. Such recognition would result in a census of "comuneros", individuals with right of access to land, hence "comuneros" with a legal claim to land. The recognition would also create a new form of land administration (the lot administration would be replaced by a communal land commission and a Vigilancy council) and the delimitation of the boundaries of the communal land. This new administration would create a problem since the possibility of influencing and controlling it was not guaranteed. The establishment of the communal land boundaries was also problematic in that it jeopardized the possibility for regional ranchers to occupy some of the communal land as pasture for their cattle.22 Finally, the recognition would mean the direct intervention of officials of the DAAC in Pajapan, possibly to the detriment of the rancher class.

The Municipal Authority formation opposed the request for the creation of an ejido

---

21 Another engineer, Eng. Everardo Gonzalez Garcia sent to Pajapan in May 1965 is accused of having conducted a census which contained several irregularities and thus could not be considered valid. See ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, Letter, May 28, 1966.

22 The confirmation and titling of the communal lands would imply the definition of the boundaries as well as a census of the "comuneros" that would exclude the regional ranchers.
since it would mean a redistribution of the lands into small parcels. The ejido would impose severe limitations on the expansion of the cattle industry.

2. **The Lot Administration Formation**

   Communal land were divided into five lots, each having its own administration composed of an administrator, a secretary and a treasurer. The administration of the lots included the collection of taxes on land and the resolution of any conflict between comuneros.

   i) **Class Composition**

   The Lot Administration formation was constituted by a majority of middle peasants and a few ranchers. Several members already performed other political functions, such as municipal president, ex-member of the Agrarian Committee, and municipal PRI Committee president. The Lot Administration formation did not play a leading role. Rather, it tended to ally itself at first with the Municipal Authority and later with the Communal Land Committee, both of which were more politically active.

   ii) **Internal and External Linkages**

   The Land Administration was first allied with the Municipal Authority (1949-1952) and later with the Communal Land Committee (1956-1968). The lot administrators were perceived, locally and outside Pajapan, as legitimate representatives of the comuneros. It was to the advantage of the other formations defending the communal land system to have the lot administration supporting their requests.

   The Lot Administration formation did not have its own external political network since it was always allied with a more politically active formation.
iii) **Political Project**

The main interest of the Lot Administration formation was the maintenance of the communal system. Being part of the lot administration ensured its members possible earnings through tax collection. In fact, in 1950 and 1952, there were accusations of corruption levelled against the lot and municipal administrators\(^{23}\). Apparently, the lot administrators had not paid the State Treasury for over 21 years. The formation was also opposed to a change in the land tenure system or the creation of an ejido. Initially, they supported the Municipal Authority formation in its struggle against the creation of an ejido. In 1956, they allied themselves with the Communal Land Committee because the domination of Guillermo Salinas and the ranchers was threatening their access to land. This threat resulted from the expansion and significant increase in land monopolization by ranchers, local and regional.

3. **The Communal Land Committee Formation**

In 1954, two years after the Primary Titles\(^{24}\) were brought to Mexico City\(^{25}\), a formation of "comuneros" (hereafter referred to as the Communal Land Committee) organized to promote the recognition and the titling of the communal land by the Mexican government.

---


\(^{24}\) The "Primary Titles" are the original documents securing the ownership of the communal lands of Pajapan. Each lot has its own "primary title" which also contains a map defining the limits and the total area covered by the lots. These were given in different years: Lot #1, 1884; Lot #2, September 23, 1890; Lot #3, September 24, 1890; Lot #4, September 24, 1890 and Lot #5, September 24, 1890.

\(^{25}\) In 1952, the Primary Titles were brought to Mexico City for the initiation of the confirmation and titling of the communal lands since the lands were embargoed for nonpayment of State taxes and because of the problem created by the ejidal dotation to Tatahuicapan (the neighbouring village) because the limits of the communal lands of Pajapan were not yet well established. See Letter of February 28, 1952. ASRAM. Expediente #276.1/2414.
In 1956, this formation allied with the Municipal Authority and the Lot Administration in an attempt to obtain the recognition and titling of the lands. From the early 1960s on, the Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration formed a coalition (hereafter referred to as Coalition) to struggle against the Municipal Authority's abuses of power and to defend against the requested creation of an ejido by the Agrarian Committee.

i) **Class Composition**

The composition of the Communal Land Committee is similar to that of the Lot Administration formation: a majority of middle peasants and a minority of ranchers. Once the request for the creation of an ejido was withdrawn, it became apparent that many members of the Agrarian Committee (mostly peasants and the landless) had begun supporting the Coalition in its struggle against the Municipal Authority.

ii) **Internal and External Linkages**

The Communal Land Committee did not control any local institutions. It represented a large formation of comuneros favoring the communal land tenure system. In that sense, the emergence of the Coalition after 1956 was important in that it gave the Communal Land Committee more credibility when presenting different requests to the government.

The Coalition was particularly active in promoting the recognition and titling of the communal land. Its activities were characterized by numerous requests made to various divisions of the DAAC in Mexico. Although one cannot talk about direct linkages, several branches of government seemed to have responded positively to these requests. The following officials responded positively to the Coalition: the "Dirección de Tierras y Aguas"; the

---

26 Hereafter referred to as Water and Land Directorate.
*Secretario General de Asuntos Agrarios* 27; the *Consejero del Cuerpo Consultativo Agrario, No. 1* 28; the *Director General de Inspección, Procuración y Quejas* 29; and the *Jefe del Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización* 30.

In addition, the Coalition received favorable responses to its letters from the *Secretaría Privada* 31. The willingness of the DAAC in Mexico and the office of the President to respond to the requests of the Communal Land Committee was part of a larger initiative by the State to appeal to the rural sector. Schryer states that on his arrival to power in 1960, President Díaz Ordaz was *interested in improving his image as a popular leader* (1980: 297). The need for a better image was a response from the State to the increasing militancy of the peasant movement initiated in the late 1950s 32.

The Coalition also received support from three *official* (*oficialistas*) peasant organizations: the *Liga de Comunidades Agrarias y Sindicatos Campesinos del Estado de Veracruz* 33; the *Confederación Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos* 34, and; after 1965, from the *CNC* 35.

---

27 Hereafter referred to as Agrarian Affairs General Secretary.

28 Hereafter referred to as Councillor of the Agrarian Council.

29 Hereafter referred to as General Director of the Inspection, Procuration and Complaints Division.

30 Hereafter referred to as Chief of the Department of Agrarian and Colonization Affairs.

31 Hereafter referred to as Private Office of the Presidency.

32 See Leal and Huacuja (1976) and Huizer (1972).

33 Agrarian League of Veracruz.

34 Revolutionary Federation of Workers and Peasants, hereafter referred to as CROC.

35 National Confederation of Peasants, hereafter referred to as CNC. See letters of September 30, 1966 from the CROC; May 10, 1967 and June 15, 1967 from the Agrarian (continued...)
A key actor during the entire struggle for the recognition and titling of the communal land was with Siméon B. Limon, a lawyer from Mexico City, who assisted the community and wrote most of the letters. Apparently, this lawyer was working in close association with the Legal Department of the CNC in Mexico[^36]. Since little could be done at the State level (the State bureaucrats in Xalapa either supported the Municipal Authority or the Agrarian Committee), a legal representative in Mexico who could intervene directly at the national level of the DAAC was an important asset for the Coalition.

iii) **Political Project**

The main goal of this political formation was to protect the communal land tenure system by obtaining the Presidential Resolution that would confirm and title the communal land. The protection was felt necessary because of the request for the creation of an ejido and the land monopolization by local and regional ranchers. The members of the Communal Land Committee were therefore opposed to the monopolization of land in the hands of a few large ranchers who controlled the Municipal Authority formation.

4. **The Agrarian Committee Formation**

The Agrarian Committee continued the struggles for the creation of an ejido initiated in 1932. Until its dismantling in 1965, its political project was in complete opposition to the three other political formations. On several occasions, it faced direct repression from the

[^35](...continued)
League of Veracruz; and August 16, 1967 from the Peasant National Confederation (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414). These supporters were confirmed during the interview with Simon Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, October 07, 1987.

[^36] No information was encountered that would explain why Siméon B. Limon supported the Coalition.
Municipal Authority\textsuperscript{37}.

i) \textbf{Class Composition}

Due to its political aim to create an ejido, the Committee was primarily popular amongst the peasants, who feared being forced off their plots, and landless workers\textsuperscript{38}. Few middle peasants and ranchers supported this political formation.

ii) \textbf{Internal and External Linkages}

Except for the control of the municipal administration during Juan Grande's term, the Agrarian Committee did not control any local political institutions. Nevertheless, being recognized as the Agrarian Committee was important because it permitted the Committee to establish linkages with different state agencies. Until its dismantling, the Agrarian Committee had the support of Pablo Hernandez, Director of the "Comisión Agraria Mixta"\textsuperscript{39} in Xalapa, who repeatedly ordered a survey of Pajapan for the creation of an ejido\textsuperscript{40}. In 1965, the Committee was supported by the State Delegate of DAAC, who gave an order to survey Paja-

\textsuperscript{37} Interviews with Juan y Pedro Pereyra Fonseca and Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28 and October 04, 1987.

\textsuperscript{38} If the two letters sent respectively by the Agrarian Committees of San Juan and Pajapan are considered representative of a total of 175 "comuneros" supported the Agrarian Committee (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letters, April 21 and September 2, 1957). This support was confirmed in the interview with Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{39} Mixed Agrarian Commission, hereafter referred to as CAM.

\textsuperscript{40} Such orders were given from 1946 until the withdrawal for an ejidal dotation in 1965. See BUCKLES, Daniel, "Notes of the Archivo de la Comisión Agraria Mixta, Expediente #1860, Xalapa, Veracruz (hereafter referred to as ACAM / Xalapa).
pan lands for the creation of an ejido. In the early 1960s, the Veracruz State Governor, Antonio M. Quirasco, also supported the Committee. He received the Committee for an audience and officially confirmed its existence in 1962\textsuperscript{41}.

At the level of the state peasant organizations, the Minatitlan's "Comite Regional Campesino" of the Veracruz Agrarian League\textsuperscript{42} supported the Agrarian Committee until the request for the creation of an ejido was turned down\textsuperscript{43}.

Finally, during Juan Grande's electoral campaign and the beginnings of his term (1952-1954), the Agrarian Committee received the support of an important regional politician, Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero.

iii) Political Project

The Agrarian Committee promoted the creation of an ejido that would have permitted the redistribution of the land into equal parcels. This project was in direct opposition to the interests of the ranchers for whom large areas of land were necessary in order to expand. By advocating land redistribution, the Committee constituted the only political formation defending the interests of the landless workers and small peasants who represented an increasing portion of the population in the early 1950s. The few ranchers supporting this formation were interested in the creation of small properties in addition to the ejido within

\textsuperscript{41} ACAM / Xalapa. Expediente #1860.

\textsuperscript{42} Hereafter referred to as Regional Peasant Committee. The Agrarian League of Veracruz forms part of the CNC, the National Peasant Confederation, the official peasant organization controlled by the Mexican Government.

\textsuperscript{43} During the 1940s and 1950s, Pablo Yepez, the Regional Agrarian Committee of the CNC representative in Minatitlan, supported the Agrarian Committee. With his departure, the Regional Committee under the direction of Celestino Vazquez supported the Communal Lands Committee. However, after his return to Pajapan in 1956, Guillermo Salinas named himself the Agrarian League representative and thus created an Agrarian Committee opposed to the representative of the Agrarian League, when usually both are allied.
the communal area. One rancher, Juan Martínez Jauregui (hereafter referred to as Juan Bronde), was a central figure in supporting the Committee. He was often at the center of the accusations launched by the three other formations who accused him of supporting the Committee as a way to create private properties.

To facilitate the understanding of the unfolding process of struggle between the different political formations from 1948 to 1968, table three and figure three and four. Table three summarizes the names of the key actors, the class composition, and the political project of each formation. Figure three presents the internal and external linkages and figure four presents the alliance and opposition between the political formations.
### TABLE 3: Political Formations: 1949-1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Municipal Authority</th>
<th>CLASS COMPOSITION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guillermo Salinas Mendoza</td>
<td>Majority of Ranchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenceslao Martinez Afana</td>
<td>Under the hegemonic control of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Martinez Incarnacion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felipe Martinez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Florentino</td>
<td>To protect the interests of ranchers(local and regional). Opposition to creation of an ejido and attempts to delay the recognition of the communal land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pascacio Silvestre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemocito Antonio Antonio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos Martinez Xolo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. LOT ADMINISTRATION</th>
<th>CLASS COMPOSITION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otillo Martinez</td>
<td>Formed mostly by middle peasants and a few ranchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santos Martinez</td>
<td>Several members of administration have had other official functions before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Porfirio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pascasio Porfirio</td>
<td>Maintaining of communal land tenure system, preserving access to land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pablo Osorio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primo Martinez</td>
<td>Ally Municipal Authority (1969-52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonardo Antonio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Hernandez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernesto Montiel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Salas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixto Hernandez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martiano Martinez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymundo Reyes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anastacio Cruz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. COMMUNAL LAND COMMITTEE</th>
<th>CLASS COMPOSITION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aniceto Antonio Martinez</td>
<td>Mostly middle peasants with some ranchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rufino Morales Jauregui</td>
<td>Very active and militant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilio Martinez Incarnacion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santos Martinez Incarnacion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe Hernandez Jauregui</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucio Morales</td>
<td>Recognition and titling of communal land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camilo Ciriaco Martinez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moises Hernandez Eligio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eulogio Lorenzo Martinez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonifacio Martinez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenceslao Morales Martinez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crispino Visilopez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomas Martinez Incarnacion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apolinario de la Cruz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Martinez Alvarez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. AGRARIAN COMMITTEE</th>
<th>CLASS COMPOSITION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvaro Ciriaco</td>
<td>Mainly by peasants and a few middle peasants and ranchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demetrio C. Santos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosalino Lara Antonio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miguel Pereyra</td>
<td>Creation of an ejido, land redistribution and some private properties. Opposition to domination of Municipal Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cirilo Jauregui</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eulogio Martinez Antonio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverio Matias</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrique Cruz</td>
<td>Landless workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maclovio Martinez Antonio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Grande (Juan Martinez Jaur.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus: “co” Pereyra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414 and Buckles, Daniel, "Notes from ACAM, Expediente #1860, Xalapa."
C. THE POLITICAL STRUGGLES, 1948-1968

Having identified and described the class composition and political orientation of each formation, we can now look at how the struggles developed between 1948 and 1968.

1. Guillermo Salinas Mendoza and The Emergence of Caciquismo, 1948-1952

The arrival of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza in 1948 and his accession to the position of municipal secretary\(^{44}\) were determinant factors in the political life of Pajapan. As municipal secretary, Salinas imposed a political dynamic described as "caciquismo". Salinas Mendoza allied with the ranchers opposed to the Agrarian Committee and the creation of an ejido. Earlier municipal presidents, Aniceto Antonio Martinez (1943-1946) and Felipe Martinez

---

\(^{44}\) After his election in 1949 as municipal president, Wenceslao Martinez Aciana chose Guillermo Salinas Mendoza for municipal secretary.
already had problems with the Agrarian Committee.

Guillermo Salinas Mendoza's access to political power meant the intensification of ranching activities on the communal land:

After Guillermo Salinas became secretary of the municipality, he started to assist the municipal president. He allied himself with those who had more money. He was telling the people that they should fence their land. People who had small plots (milpas) began to lose progressively their land. Mendoza Salinas was telling the ranchers: "Bring the poor to drink, buy them beer in exchange for their parcels".

In 1950, a year after Salinas Mendoza's accession to the office of municipal secretary, the Agrarian Committee started resisting his domination. The Committee continued to request the creation of an ejido and even obtained some response from the General Secretary of the CAM. In 1950, the General Secretary sent orders to survey the village of Pajapan for the creation of an ejido. The same year, an engineer surveyed Pajapan, but the municipal president, Wenceslao Mancera Aciana, refused to sign the survey.

Another instance of the Agrarian Committee's opposition to the Municipal Authority formation was through accusations of corruption resulting from the municipal administration charge of 22 pesos to be paid by every family to cover unpaid taxes for the communal land taxes that Pajapan owed the State Treasury. In response to these accusations, the Municipal Authority gathered support from the lot administrators who wrote a letter to the State Governor denying the accusations of corruption levelled by the Agrarian Committee. The lot

---

45 Two informants acknowledged that Felipe Martinez was opposed to the Agrarian Committee. Martinez's opposition led to violent confrontations in the 1950s.

46 Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, September 26, 1987.

47 This state agency was in charge of processing and following up the requests for the creation of ejido.

48 Similar orders had been sent in 1946 and 1948 (ACAM / Xalapa. Expediente #1860).
administrators stated that the Municipal Authority assisted them in paying the outstanding debts. In the letter, the administrators also requested the removal of the Agrarian Committee's members because of the false information they were spreading about the municipal and the lot administrations. The letter read as follows:

[... ] with the assistance of the municipal administration all taxes on our lands which had not been paid since several years were covered by the money given by the families of Pajapan. This money served to pay our debt to the general State treasurer which permitted to lift the embargo on our communal land.

We request from this government that it dictates the necessary measures to remove the Agrarian Committee Alvaro Ciriac and his brother D. Ciriac Santos who are taking advantage of their position to diffuse false information about the municipal administration.

Up until now, we are pleased with our municipal authorities for the benefits they brought to this remote region of the Sierra San Martin. In 1952, another fee of 20 pesos per family was charged by the municipal administration, presumably to again cover unpaid taxes and to initiate the recognition of the communal land. As a result, the General Secretary of the Regional Agrarian Committee in Minatitlán, sent a letter to the State Governor. In his letter, the General Secretary denounced the tax imposed by the municipal administration for the recognition of the communal land.

This time, the Municipal President and the Secretary, Wenceslao Martínez Ariana and Guillermo Salinas Mendoza, reacted vigorously to the accusations and on February 28, 1952 wrote a long letter to the State Governor explaining in detail the reasons for levying 20 pesos per household. The president and the secretary gave the following three reasons for this re-

quest: 1) the lot administration had to pay a civil attorney to carry out the procedures to lift the embargo on the communal land due to the unpaid taxes; 2) part of the 20 pesos charged would also be used to pay the outstanding taxes that Pajapan owed the State Treasury and; 3) because the CAM had ordered the creation of an ejido for the peasants of Tatahuicapan (neighbouring village) and since the boundaries had not yet been defined clearly, the money was used to initiate procedures for the official recognition of the communal land. For all these reasons, the Municipal President and Secretary stated that they were surprised to see the General Secretary denouncing them since they were trying to help the comuneros of Pajapan.

The embargo of the lands triggered the request for the recognition and titling of the communal land because the Primary Titles of the communal land had to be brought to Mexico. In real terms, however, the embargo did not modify the land tenure in Pajapan.

This letter indicates that for the first time, the official recognition and titling of the communal land tenure system was being promoted in Pajapan. The request was made for three reasons, including: 1) to insure that the communal land limits were not being encroached by the newly created ejido of Tatahuicapan; 2) to regularize the land tenure status of Pajapan (the communal land had not been officially recognized and titled by the Mexican State); and 3) to block the creation of an ejido as requested by the Agrarian Committee.

---

53 The communal lands were embargoed because the payments for the land tenure to the State treasury had not been made for many years (Interviews with Enrique Cruz Antonio and Sixto Vargas, September 23 and 26, 1987). Apparently due to the unpaid taxes the State Government took temporary possession of the communal lands until the payment of the debts to the State Treasury. The lot administrators had to re-buy the lands from the Government (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, February 28, 1952).

54 Officially, the request for the recognition of the communal land is made by the General Direction of Indigenous Affairs in representation of Pajapan to the DAAC on January 2, 1952. (continued...)
At the end of 1952, municipal elections were held. Juan Grande, one of the first comuneros to introduce cattle in the communal land and one of the few ranchers supporting the Agrarian Committee, was elected as Municipal President.

2. Juan Grande’s Presidency: A Local Cacique 1952-1955

During the 1930s and 1940s, Juan Grande became an important actor in Pajapan’s political life, not only because of his wealth but also for his continuous support of the Agrarian Committee for the creation of an ejido\(^5\). Two elements account for his victory. The first was the growing resentment against the Municipal President and Secretary, Wenceslao Martinez Aciana and Salinas Mendoza both of who were perceived as corrupt for having charged special taxes (20 pesos in 1950 and 22 pesos in 1952). His support also came from the peasants who were sympathetic to the Agrarian Committee and from a few ranchers and middle peasants dissatisfied with Salinas Mendoza’s domination. The second element was the support Juan Grande received during the elections from the regional cacique Amadeo González Caballero, an important regional rancher as well as a member of the “Comité Electoral Estatal”\(^6\) of the PRI. Juan Grande stated in an interview that he was asked by González

---

\(^5\) (continued)

Later on February 9, 1952, procedures were taken toward recognition by the General Direction of Lands and Waters (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/ 2414).

\(^5\) Juan Grande supported the Committee from its beginnings in its struggle against collective work (faenas) and was in favor of the creation of an ejido (Interviews with Juan A. Martinez Jauregui, Juan and Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, and Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 29, and October 04, 1987).

\(^6\) State Electoral Committee
Caballero to run as candidate.\textsuperscript{57}

At first glance, Juan Grande's attitude toward the creation of an ejido is rather surprising since an ejido would have gone directly against his interests as a rancher as well as the interests of the few ranchers supporting Juan Grande. As suggested by Nahmad Molinari (1987: 9) and confirmed in a letter sent by the Communal Land Committee\textsuperscript{58}, Juan Grande was interested in having private property in conjunction with an ejido for the peasants. During an interview, Juan Grande mentioned that he told the peasants:

"Listen guys, this land is not good for maize. Let us work this land to have cattle. For pasture, this land is fertile, for the maize it is not"\textsuperscript{59}.

Juan Grande could have accepted the creation of an ejido in one part of Pajapan as long as the creation of small private property in another part would have been secured. His support for the creation of an ejido may also have been a way of increasing his popularity among peasants.

During his term, Juan Grande supported the expansion of the cattle industry in a very discretionary manner (i.e. by only supporting and helping his political friends and relatives)\textsuperscript{60}.

\textsuperscript{57} Juan Grande recalls that when he was received as Municipal President, Gonzalez Caballero told him: "I put you as Municipal President so that the community remains calm. If the community complains to me, I will punish you" (Interview with Juan A. Martinez Jauregui, September 29, 1987).

\textsuperscript{58} The letter stated the following: "...today, Mr. Juan A. Martinez, a big rancher and his relatives are attempting to surprise the State administration by affirming that these lands are private properties. Mr. Governor, in this community NOBODY IS LANDOWNER, there is no private property available for the creation of an ejido" (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, October 18, 1958, their emphasis).

\textsuperscript{59} (Interview with Juan A. Martinez Jauregui, September 29, 1987). Most likely, Juan Grande had in mind the creation of an ejido on communal land near the volcano combined with the implementation of small private property in the communal land around the lagoon.

\textsuperscript{60} See the interview with Juan Martinez Incarnacion, Pajapan, September 28, 1987.

A good example of this was his support of Julia Hernandez, a rancher of Coscapa (an ejido within the Municipality of Pajapan) who was accused\textsuperscript{7} in 1954 of land invasions. Juan (continued...)
During the same period, the Agrarian Committee was not all that active. The internal division created by the Committee's president (Alvaro Ciriaco) selling the Committee's office building probably weakened the Committee. The peasants did not feel the need for organizing a Committee since Juan Grande had become the municipal president.

During Juan Grande's Presidency, some middle peasants and a few ranchers formed a new political formation, the Communal Land Committee. This formation organized to fight for the recognition and titling of the communal land. With the establishment of the Communal Land Committee, four distinct political formations were struggling over the land tenure system in Pajapan. At the end of Juan Grande's mandate, the Municipal Authority, the Lot Administration and the Communal Land Committee joined forces to put forward a candidate favorable to the communal land tenure system. Juan Grande was unable to ensure a successor promoting the ejido plan supported by the Agrarian Committee.

3. The Request for the Recognition and Titling of the Communal land and the Emergence of Factionalism, 1955-1959

At the end of Juan Grande's term, the three allied political formations (Municipal Authority, Communal Land Committee and Lots Administration) imposed a new municipal president, Alejo Florentino, a rancher from San Juan Volador. These formations also reactivated the official request for the recognition and titling of the communal land. On April

---

60(...)continued
Grande stated in an interview "I was going to Xalapa with Julia Hernandez. I was going with her to tell my friends, the State deputies, to help her" (Interview with Juan Martinez Jauregui, Pajapan, September 29, 1987).

61 The initial procedures were undertaken in February 1952. Juan Martinez Incarnacion confirmed that he brought the Primary Titles to Mexico with another member of the municipal administration in 1952 (Interview with Juan Martinez Encarnación, Pajapan, September 28, 1987).
18, 1956, the Lot Administrators wrote a request to reopen the Pajapan file which was first activated in 1952 (see section 1)\(^2\). On April 23, Juan Martinez Encarnacion\(^3\) and other comuneros presented the request, together with the Primary Titles of the five lots to the DAAC in Mexico.

The reactivation of the procedures for the recognition and titling of the communal land was justified by the need to define the boundaries of the communal land\(^4\) because Aurelio Fernandez Jaurequi, a regional rancher and landowner of the Ranch "El Moral" had began to occupy part of the communal land. Later, on May 13, 1956, Aniceto Antonio and Ines Martinez were officially named communal land representatives. Both were members of the Communal Land Committee. It was during this period that Simeon B. Limon, a lawyer from Mexico City, became the legal representative of the Communal Land Committee. The election of Aniceto Antonio and Ines Martinez marked the dismantling of the alliance between the three political formations in favor of a communal land tenure system. The Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration formed a coalition in opposition to the Agrarian Committee and the Municipal Authority. This period marked the end of caciquismo and the beginning of factionalism as the dominant political dynamic. The emergence of the coalition between the Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration introduced factionalism


\(^3\) This comunero was a self-elected communal land representative, during Wenceslao Martinez Aciana's (1949-1952) mandate. He was also closely associated with Guillermo Salinas Mendoza (Interview with Juan Martinez Encarnacion, Pajapan, September 28, 1987).

\(^4\) On July 23, 1956, the Primary Titles are certified as being authentic by the General Office of Juridical Affairs of the DAAC (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. "Dictamen Positivo", November 27, 1967).
because the political struggles no longer revolved around the "caciques" domination (Guillermo Salinas and Juan Grande).

Early in January of 1957, José Luis Del Moral, an engineer from the DAAC, was sent to carry out technical work toward the recognition and titling of the communal land. Del Moral submitted his report on January 23, 1957\(^{65}\). In his report, he observed among other things\(^{66}\), that: 1) the population of Pajapan included 3,433 inhabitants, of whom 1,222 were head of households; 2) ranching was one the most important activities; and 3) the local rancher association had many members. Finally, he stated that he had drawn a map of the total area of the communal land covering 19,158 hectares, of which 164 hectares were in dispute because as the owner of the Ranch "El Moral" was claiming the land as his. There were, however, no problems of boundaries with the neighbouring ejidos (Tatahuicapan and Minzapan)\(^{67}\).

---


\(^{66}\) Del Moral stated that the annual income for a family of four children was between 8,000 and 10,000 pesos per year. The lands are top quality for wet season production. He also described the climate, the geographical location and the type of agriculture and fishing practised. He also pointed out that there was a local rancher association, the main religion was Catholicism, and the entire population was indigenous (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. "Dictamen Positivo", November 27, 1967).

\(^{67}\) A second engineer of the DAAC, Jose R. Victoria, went to Pajapan in August 1957. During a general assembly organized on the 27th, he was told that the technical works had already been carried out by another engineer (Jose Luis Del Moral) and that there was no private property within the boundaries of the communal lands and no conflict with the Ranch "El Moral" since the stream Agachapan had been traditionally considered as a natural boundary. Victoria concluded his report by stating that procedures towards the recognition and titling of the communal lands could be further pursued (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. "Dictamen Positivo", November 27, 1967). Later, in March 1958, a third engineer of the DAAC, Francisco J. Navarro completed a revision of the technical works carried out by José Luis Del Moral and suggested that Moral's works were correct and acceptable (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. "Dictamen Positivo", November 27, 1967).
Meanwhile, Guillermo Salinas Mendoza (who had left Pajapan after the elections of Juan Grande) returned as soon as Alejo Florentino was elected as municipal president in 1955. Alejo Florentino, a rancher of San Juan Volador and supporter of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza, named him as municipal secretary. Salinas Mendoza was then able to establish his domination over the municipal administration for the next 12 years. In contrast to Juan Grande’s supporting for small group of ranchers, Guillermo Salinas encouraged the development of larger numbers of ranchers. As a result, cattle-raising activities and land monopolization increased. In fact, the number of conflicts resulting from ranchers invading lands increased significantly after 1955 and became the center of most political confrontations. However, Salinas and the growing domination of the ranchers resulted in internal discontent among the three other political formations (Agrarian Committee, Communal Land Committee, and Lots Administration) as well as external conflicts with the regional ranchers.

The elections of Alejo Florentino and the return of Guillermo Salinas reactivated the Agrarian Committee and led to the creation of a similar Committee in San Juan Volador. On April 21, 1957, this newly formed Committee sent a letter, signed by 25 peasants of San Juan, to the State Governor. The letter requested the governor’s protection from Alejo Florentino and Salinas Mendoza who had threatened them by requesting that they leave their land. The land was to be occupied by ranchers of Coatzacoalcos. The members of the Committee wrote:

We are energetically protesting against Alejo Florentino and Guillermo Salinas Mendoza, municipal president and secretary, for being forced out of our land and threatened by these officials. [...] During a meeting, on April 20, 1957, Salinas told us that we had to leave our land because these were going to be

---

\(^{68}\) The letters sent to Mexico City during this period almost inevitably denounced the land invasions by the ranchers (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letters, 1955 to 1968).

\(^{69}\) San Juan Volador is a small neighbouring village of Pajapan located on the communal lands.
occupied by ranchers from Coatzacoalcos. [...] During this meeting we were threatened with fines, jail, and death. Therefore, we are requesting your protection. [...] and the resignation of these bad civil servants because with these land invasions, our precarious economic situation can only worsen.\textsuperscript{70}

In September of the same year, Pajapan's reorganized Agrarian Committee\textsuperscript{71} wrote a letter to the governor aimed at defending to defend the interests of the peasants and the landless. In their own words:

As organized members of this peasant Community, adherents to the Agrarian League of Veracruz, we are requesting the creation of an ejido, considering the following:
FIRSTLY: we are in this village, 150 peasants, actively cultivating the land until we were recently evicted from our land. [...] We are now suffering from eviction, damages, oppression, and costly charges from the municipal president and the other municipal administrators, and the so-called Lot Administrators of the communal land. These Lot Administrators were named by the Municipal President and have caused us prejudice and damages, and finally forced us to abandon our land;
SECONDLY, since we have become hostile to the municipal authorities and because of the imperious necessity of subsisting and since our unique resource is the cultivation of the land [...] we are requesting the definitive possession of these lands and praying you to concede and order the formation of an ejido in this Municipality;
THIRDLY, [...] we are requesting you to consider our demand and to concede us the definitive possession of the lands we have been cultivating for various generations. While carrying on the necessary procedures, we are praying you to order the temporary possession of the Lot #1, #2 and #3 corresponding to this municipality, and also the approval by this Supreme State Government of the Agrarian Committee elected by this community to conduct the necessary procedures to activate our file which is formed by Rosalino Lara Antonio, Plutarco Pereyra and Miguel Pereyra.\textsuperscript{72}

These two letters and the internal tensions between the Municipal Authority and the Agrarian Committee and also the Communal Land Committee and Lot Administration led to the dismissal of Alejo Florentino from his position as municipal president. Florentino was

\textsuperscript{70} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, April 21, 1957.

\textsuperscript{71} The composition of the Committee is as follows: Rosalino Lara Antonio, President; Miguel Pereyra, Vocal; Plutarco Pereyra, Secretary.

\textsuperscript{72} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, September 2, 1957.
replaced by Juan Silva, a lot administrator allied with the Communal Land Committee and directly involved in the recognition and titling of the communal land. The dismissal of Alejo Florentino meant the dissolution of the fragile alliance between the Municipal Authority, Communal Land Committee and Lot Administration. By the same token, this break-up created the new Coalition (i.e. Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration).

During the same period, Guillermo Salinas Mendoza was the target of an assassination plot. This attempt was most likely related to a conflict with Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero over the occupation of the communal land\textsuperscript{73}. The latter, after the death of the owner of the Ranch "El Moral", had put his cattle on the land of the Ranch which overlapped Pajapan's communal land\textsuperscript{74}. Apparently, Salinas Mendoza was not so collaborative or too autonomous from the regional cacique. An informant contended that after Salinas Mendoza was almost killed, he became "quieter", that is, he aligned himself with Gonzalez Caballero and let him occupy the communal land. The removal of Alejo Florentino and the failed coup against Guillermo Salinas Mendoza were indicative of the discontent felt by the other political formations and by the regional cacique with the type of domination imposed by the Municipal Authority.

The relative success obtained by both Agrarian Committees (from San Juan Volador and the village of Pajapan) forced the Coalition to mount strong resistance against plans to transform Pajapan into an ejido. By 1958, the two requests made by the two Agrarian Committees in 1957 had a concrete impact. In 1958, the General Secretary of the CAM sent

\textsuperscript{73} Interviews with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Juan A. Martinez Jauregui, Pedro Martinez Vargas and Juan Martinez Encarnacion, Pajapan, September 28 and 29, and October 01, 1987.

\textsuperscript{74} See interview with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28, 1987. The presence of Gonzalez Caballero's cattle was mentioned in a letter sent by the Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration in a letter sent by the Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration in 1964 (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. July 18, 1964).
an engineer to conduct a census of Pajapan for the possible creation of an ejido. On September 17, 1958, the engineer went to Pajapan and conducted a census of the petitioners of the ejido (see Appendix A for the results of survey). During the census assembly, only 118 petitioners (out at least 1,000 head of households) were registered, which suggests that not all of the Pajapan comuneros participated. Those who registered were those who were favorable to the Agrarian Committee and the creation of an ejido. Four petitioners were excluded from the list of potential beneficiaries of the reform; three ranchers (Juan Grande, Higinio Cuervo, Alejo Martinez) and a tailor. The three ranchers were excluded because their wealth in cattle and horses was too important and the tailor because he was not currently working the land. The exclusion of Juan Grande supports the hypothesis that the only reason Juan Grande supported the Agrarian Committee and the ejido system (from which he would be excluded as a rancher) was because he wanted to create small private property in addition to ejido land. If an ejido had been created for 118 individuals, it would not have covered the 19,158 hectares of the communal land because the individual plots granted in an ejido have a ceiling of 20 hectares for wet season agriculture (Article 220 of the Agrarian Reform Federal Law, Chavez Padron 1987: 225). Thus, Juan Grande and the other ranchers favourable to the creation of an ejido would have had their already fenced areas recognized as private properties.

---


76 An element that would confirm this hypothesis was the refusal of Juan Silva to be surveyed and his abdication from his position within the Agrarian Committee (ACAM / Xalapa. Expediente #1860. 1958). During the census assembly, a new Agrarian Committee was officially recognized (Rosalind Lara, president; Miguel Pereyra, secretary and Plutarco Pereyra, vocal).
The census assembly had a direct impact on the Coalition. On October 13, 1958, two weeks after this assembly, the Coalition reacted by sending a letter to the State Governor. The letter was signed by all lot administrators, a former president of the Agrarian Committee, and Aniceto Antonio, who was the elected representative of the communal land since May 13, 1956. The letter denounced the census carried out by the CAM engineer. The letter stated that: 1) the lands had always been communal, and therefore there was no land available for the creation of an ejido; 2) the census carried out by the CAM engineer was related to a former request made in the 1940s by a member of the Agrarian Committee who was no longer in office; 3) the representative of the CAM had called a census assembly comprising only those people associated with Juan Grande, a rancher trying to appropriate the communal land; and 4) Juan Grande, in collaboration with his relatives and friends, were lying to the State Authorities by treating the Pajapan land as private property when all of the land had been given in 1880 as communal land. The letter ended by mentioning that official procedures leading to the recognition of the communal land had been initiated in April 1956 at the DAAC in Mexico. Therefore, the governor should order the Veracruz DAAC Delegation to cancel procedures undertaken to create an ejido. It is worth noting that copies of this letter were sent to Siméon B. Limon, the lawyer in Mexico City assisting the Communal Land Committee, Francisco Mata Aguilar (alias Pancho Mata), an important politician of Coat-


78 This was a strategic lie, since the professional came after a new Agrarian Committee had written to the CAM in September 1957. See letter sent on September 2, 1957 to the Governor of Veracruz by the newly reorganized Agrarian Committee (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414).

zacoalcos, the Agrarian League of Veracruz and, to the CROC\textsuperscript{80}, which had some impact on the process. On October 24, 1958, the General Secretary for the Southern Veracruz Region of the CROC wrote a letter to the State Governor supporting the position defended by the Coalition\textsuperscript{81}. On November 11, 1958, Simeon B. Limon wrote to the President of the CAM, stating that the initial procedures for the recognition of the communal land had been started in April 1956. The letter also mentioned that already three engineers from the Land and Water Directorate from the DAAC had already gone to Pajapan to collect the missing data needed to prepare the Presidential Decree which would confirm the communal land tenure system. Limon concluded his letter by asking the governor to reject the creation of an ejido\textsuperscript{82}.


The struggles which took place between 1959 and 1968 were critical in the settlement of the conflict on the land tenure system\textsuperscript{83}. Considerable turmoil was created by the census assembly held in 1958 in Pajapan. This assembly forced the Coalition to react and take offensive action. In these years, the Municipal Authority formation continued to oppose the creation of an ejido but also tried to delay the recognition and titling of the communal land.

Meanwhile, the Agrarian Committee continued to request the creation of an ejido and

\textsuperscript{80} ARSAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, October 13, 1958.
\textsuperscript{81} ARSAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. October 24, 1958.
\textsuperscript{82} ARSAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, November 11, 1958.
\textsuperscript{83} For a brief chronology of the events surrounding the elaboration of the Presidential Resolution see Appendix B.
received the support of the General Secretary of the CAM\textsuperscript{84}. In 1960, an engineer from the CAM went to Pajapan to draw a map of the land in San Juan Volador toward the creation of an ejido. He was stopped, however, and his equipment was taken away from him by the comuneros\textsuperscript{85}. The opposition from the Coalition and the Municipal Authority was very strong, so much so that two members of the Agrarian Committee had to leave the village\textsuperscript{86}. This accounts for the formation of a new Committee in 1962. Despite internal opposition in Pajapan, the State Governor continued to support the Agrarian Committee and gave officially recognition to the newly formed Committee in March\textsuperscript{87}. These pressures seemed to have had some effect. Until 1965, no request from the Agrarian Committee and no order from the CAM in Xalapa were issued for the creation of an ejido.

A new element in the political dynamic was added in 1964 when the Coalition not only denounced the Agrarian Committee and its request for the creation of an ejido but also the Municipal Authority formation. On July 18, 1964, a letter was sent to the General Secretary of the DAAC in Mexico asking again for the recognition and titling of the communal land\textsuperscript{88}. This letter was signed by Simeon B. Limon and 147 comuneros supporting the Coalition.

\textsuperscript{84} In 1959, he officially confirmed the existence of the Pajapan Agrarian Committee and sent a letter to the Municipal President supporting the new Agrarian Committee. He also ordered to do another survey of Pajapan in 1960 and in 1961 (ACAM / Xalapa. Expediente #1860. Letters, 1959, 1960, 1961).

\textsuperscript{85} The Coalition between the Communal Lands Committee and the Lot Administrators denounced through their lawyer the actions of the Agrarian Committee in a letter to the General Secretary of the DAAC in Mexico (ARSAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Xalapa, 1960).

\textsuperscript{86} Interviews with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, and with Juan and Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28 and October 04, 1987.

\textsuperscript{87} The new committee was composed of Maclovio Martinez Antonio, president; Enrique Cruz Antonio, Secretary; Silverio Matías Martínez, Vocal.

\textsuperscript{88} Two days after a copy of the letter was sent to the Mexican President, Adolfo Lopez Mateos (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, July 18, 1964).
tion. It identified the harm inflicted on the community due to the confusion over of the land tenure system. First, since the death of Aurelio Fernandez Jauregui, his ranch which overlapped with communal land, had been occupied by the cattle of the State Deputy Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero. Second, despite the request made to the State Governor to remove Guillermo Salinas Mendoza from his position, he continued to occupy several official positions such as the official representative of the local ranchers association, the representative of the Agrarian League of Veracruz, municipal judge and primary school teacher. He had also appropriated 20 hectares of lands, even though he was not from Pajapan. Third, Salinas Mendoza and Martinez Incarnacion (a self-elected communal land representative) were giving the land to regional ranchers as well as charging money to all comuneros for the land tenure (this function normally belonged to the lot administrators). Fourth, the Agrarian Councillor for the State of Veracruz had not yet reactivated Pajapan's file despite the order sent from the Chief of the DAAC. Finally, the letter requested: 1) the definitive recognition of the communal land through a necessary Presidential Resolution; 2) the exclusion of Guillermo Salinas and Juan Martinez Incarnacion from the list of comuneros; and 3) the inclusion within the communal land of the 500 hectares occupied by the State Deputy Gonzalez Caballero.

This letter had an impact on the completion of the bureaucratic requirements for the recognition and titling of the communal land. On August 1, 1964, the Private Secretary to the Office of the President petitioned the Chief of the DAAC in Mexico to pay attention to the request described above in July by the Communal Land Committee89. On September 29, 1964, the Private Secretary to the Chief of the DAAC requested the intervention of the Director of the Communal Land Division to attend to the demands of the comuneros of Pajapan90.

---

Meanwhile, Simeon B. Limon continued to exert pressure on several divisions of the DAAC to accelerate procedures toward the Presidential Resolution.\textsuperscript{91}

An important turning point in the settlement of the conflict between the ejidal and the communal land systems occurred in 1965, when an engineer from CAM in Xalapa sent to survey Pajapan for the creation of an ejido was stopped by a large formation of comuneros.\textsuperscript{92} This event forced the CAM to organize a general assembly in Pajapan. During this assembly, the ejidal dotation request was turned down, apparently with the approval of both the president and secretary of the Agrarian Committee and of the General Secretary of the Regional Agrarian Committee of Minatitlan. The informants acknowledged that the General Secretary supported the Coalition and was opposed to the Agrarian Committee.\textsuperscript{93} None, however, confirmed the approval of the Agrarian Committee to withdraw the request for the creation of an ejido. Two hypotheses may explain this apparent withdrawal. The first (based on an interview with one representative of the Agrarian Committee\textsuperscript{94}), is that the municipal administration did not sanction the Agrarian Committee\textsuperscript{95} such that there may have been a substitution of persons by the Coalition. Alternatively, the members of the Agrarian Committee may have been pressured and threatened by the members of the Coalition.

In November 1965, the refusal to create an ejido for Pajapan and San Juan was

\textsuperscript{91} See the internal memorandum from the General Secretary of the Agrarian Affairs to the Director of the Communal Lands (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. March 01 and 20, 1965).

\textsuperscript{92} See Letter and Memorandum, ACAM / Xalapa, Expediente #1860", April 1965.

\textsuperscript{93} Interview with Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{94} Interview with Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{95} Enrique Cruz affirmed that the official membership cards for the Agrarian Committee arrived at the Municipal Palace where they were kept (Interview with Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987).
published in the Veracruz Government Journal. This refusal put an end to the Agrarian Committee's political project and led to its eventual disappearance from Pajapan's political scene. The Coalition was still faced with opposition from the Municipal Authority. An interesting illustration of the struggle between the Coalition and the Municipal Authority formation was the letter sent on May 26, 1966 by the former to the General Secretary of the Agrarian Affairs of the DAAC. This letter denounced the alliance between Guillermo Salinas Mendoza and the Communal Land General Director. The latter was accused of intentionally subverting all the procedures that would lead to the recognition of the communal land. It also challenged the Communal Land General Director's statement that the procedures leading to the recognition were blocked because Pajapan was divided into two formations of comuneros. The Coalition claimed to represent a large majority of Pajapan comuneros. The Coalition also contended that Salinas Mendoza's formation was made up of a small minority of comuneros. The Coalition concluded by requesting that: 1) a trustworthy persons be sent to Pajapan to verify the genuineness of their complaints; 2) the General Director of the Communal Land of the DAAC be ordered to submit all the necessary documents to the Veracruz DAAC Delegation; 3) the census conducted by José Luis del Moral be the one used for the Presidential Resolution since there were many irregularities in the other censuses; 4) the person sent to Pajapan also verify the problems created by delays in preparing of the Presidential Resolution (several peasants had been forced off their lands and became landless); and 5) a report be made by the State DAAC Delegate to explain why procedures had not yet been


97 In 1965, Everardo Gonzalez Garcia carried out a census that according to the coalition, contained many irregularities.
completed\textsuperscript{98}. The response of the General Director of the Communal Land to these accusations came a year later in a letter sent on October 31, 1967 (described below).

On January 30, 1967, Siméon B. Limon wrote a letter to the Mexican President to denounce Guillermo Salinas Mendoza's action, who, in association with other municipal administrators, supported and encouraged the stealing of cattle and the invasion of communal land\textsuperscript{99}. Limon also denounced the fact that the Pajapan case had been blocked in the DAAC in Mexico for 14 years. Limon accused the General Director of the Communal Land of wilfully blocking the procedures toward the recognition and titling of the communal land with a view to protecting the interests of "enemies" of the community (i.e. Guillermo Salinas and the ranchers comprising the Municipal Authority formation)\textsuperscript{100}. Limon concluded his letter by warning that if no action was taken, the comuneros would go public and air out their grievances in the newspapers\textsuperscript{101}.

---


\textsuperscript{100} In October 1967, this director was being questioned by the Ministry of Justice on the Pajapan case. However, no document was encountered showing whether or not he was found guilty of any infraction (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, October 09, 1967).

\textsuperscript{101} With the letter, Limon enclosed a copy of another letter sent the same day to the General Director of DAAC (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, January 30, 1967). This letter outlined in detail all the procedures conducted in the late 1950s toward the Presidential Resolution. Limon argued that all the documents and censuses carried out by the engineers mandated by Mexico were sent to the Agrarian Council for the State of Veracruz of DAAC, where they "mysteriously" disappeared. According to Limon, in 1961, the Agrarian Council requested from the Director of Communal Lands that the technical works and the censuses be done all over again. Limon attributed this delay to the Director of the Communal Lands, whom he accused of having been corrupted by Pascacio Silvestre Martinez and Guillermo Salinas Mendoza (municipal president and secretary) and Juan Martinez Incarnacion. According to Limon, these three individuals had been extorting money from other comuneros, stealing cattle, threatened several comuneros and imposed an administrative sanction of 5,000 pesos on one comunero. Limon concluded his letter by requesting the General Director of DAAC in Mexico, to complete the work needed for the Presidential Resolution.
The General Secretary of the Regional Agrarian Committee of Minatitlán, later (May 10, 1967) wrote to the General Secretary of the Agrarian League to inform him of the recent events which had taken place in Pajapan. The Regional Agrarian Committee General Secretary stated that an engineer sent to Pajapan by the DAAC to conduct technical works overlooked a former agreement between himself and the State Delegate. According to the agreement any technician sent to Pajapan would go in his company. Instead, the engineer went to Pajapan alone. He was stopped, however, by the supporters of the Coalition who demanded the presence of a regional secretary. The engineer did not execute any work, but instead left with Guillermo Salinas and two ranchers from the ejido "Las Barrillas". Following his departure, the supporters of the Coalition met during an assembly with the General Secretary Regional Agrarian Committee to register an official complaint against the engineer. The complaint was later sent to the Delegate of DAAC in Xalapa with a letter written by Siméon B. Limon, which outlined two requests: the cancellation of any document that the engineer would submit to DAAC following his mission in Pajapan, and the nomination of a new technician to complete the technical works needed for the recognition of the communal land tenure system.

On May 21, 1967, the same engineer of the DAAC went back to Pajapan and conducted a census of 4,112 inhabitants of which 788 were head of households and 113 were single men over 16 years old. During the same visit, new communal land representatives were elected, namely, Rufino Jauregui Morales and Santos Martinez Antonio. Both were supporters of the Communal Land Committee. Finally, two documents were prepared stating that there was no boundary problems with either the ejido "Peña Hermosa" or the ejido of "Tatahu-


103 Soon after, both the Agrarian League of Veracruz and the CNC wrote to different DAAC divisions to request the recognition and titling of the communal lands (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. June 15, 1967).
Later that year, on October 28, the General Director of the Inspection, Procuration and Complaints Division of DAAC sent a memorandum to the General Director of Communal Land to inform him of the complaints launched against him by the Coalition (as formulated in the letter sent on May 28, 1966, to the Chief of the DAAC). On November 18, 1967, the General Director of the Communal Land responded to the memorandum sent by the General Director of Procuration and Complaints of DAAC explaining his version of the delays in the bureaucratic process\textsuperscript{104}. The Communal Land General Director stated that: 1) the delay came partly as a result of a bureaucratic rule that made it compulsory to publish the request for the recognition and titling of communal land in the Government Journal ("Gaceta Oficial" only published in March 1963); 2) the delay also resulted from the loss of Pajapan's documents when his division moved from one building to another; 3) all the accusations directed toward him by the other divisions of DAAC delayed the execution of technical works; 4) the census made by the engineer David Rivera De la Torre was the one to be considered in the presidential resolution\textsuperscript{105}; and 5) Siméon B. Limon was receiving money, collected from the comuneros by Aniceto Antonio Martinez and Ines Martinez, for his legal assistance and thus they could not be sanctioned as legitimate representatives of the comuneros. Instead, the General Director considered the former representatives, Juan Martinez Encarnacion and Guillermo Morales, both of whom were supporters of the Municipal Authority formation.

A few days later, the Chief of the DAAC issued a memorandum sent to the Veracruz DAAC State Delegate requesting the final revision and completion of the technical works for

\textsuperscript{104} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Memorandum, November 18, 1967.

\textsuperscript{105} This new study was submitted to the State DAAC Delegate on October 31, 1967.
the recognition and titling of the communal land of Pajapan\textsuperscript{106}. The memorandum indicated that all of the technical works had been virtually completed, and there were only small details to be reviewed. It also mentioned that a total number of 905 comuneros\textsuperscript{107} were to be recognized in the Presidential Resolution.

Finally, on November 27, 1967, the Agrarian Councillor for the State of Veracruz presented the "Cuerpo Consultativo Agrario\textsuperscript{108}" with the final text of the Presidential Resolution ("Dictamen") recognizing 905 comuneros. It contained six resolutions:

1) that the juridical capacity be granted to Pajapan for the recognition and titling of the communal land;

2) that the recognition and titling of a total area of 19,158 hectares of lands to Pajapan be given;

3) that the conflict with the ranch "El Moral" be declared non-existent and that the zone in dispute be resolved in favour of Pajapan;

4) that there be no private property within the title communal land;

5) that the communal land be inalienable, imprescriptible, and unseizable, and that it be possessed and used by the community and that these land remain under the laws established by the Agrarian Code applied to ejidal lands;

6) that the urban zone encompass an area of 131 hectares.

The decree ("dictamen") was approved by the Agrarian Consultative Body on December 1, 1967\textsuperscript{109}. On January 9, 1968, a copy of the proposed Presidential Resolution written by the Presidential Resolutions Office was sent to the Agrarian Councillor for the State of

\textsuperscript{106} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. October 31, 1967.

\textsuperscript{107} An earlier census carried out in 1966 had found 1,222 individuals likely to be considered as comuneros (ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, "Dictamen Positivo", November 28, 1967).

\textsuperscript{108} Agrarian Consultative Body.

Veracruz for its final revision prior to its submission to the Agrarian Consultative Body.\textsuperscript{110} On January 11, the Agrarian Councillor wrote to the "Cuerpo Consultativo Agrario" and recommended the final approval of the proposed Presidential Resolution\textsuperscript{111}.

After 16 years of procedures and requests, the Presidential Resolution was finally signed by the Mexican President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz on March 8, 1968, and published in the Official Journal ("Diario Oficial") on March 18, 1968\textsuperscript{112}. The signing of the Presidential Resolution did not, however, end the struggles for land in Pajapan. The Resolution has yet to be implemented. The next chapter analyzes the struggles that took place around the execution of the Resolution as well as the direct confrontation between the ranchers, peasants and a large number of landless workers.

Before concluding, it should be mentioned that Guillermo Salinas Mendoza left suddenly from Pajapan a few hours before being chased out by the supporters of the Coalition.\textsuperscript{113} His departure occurred three months after the election of Cecilio Martínez Incarnacion as municipal president. At the end of 1967, the Coalition was, for the first time, in a position to elect a municipal president and to alter the balance of power. Indeed, this election broke the political domination of the Municipal Authority formation which had lasted for 12 years and that had been supported by many local and regional ranchers. Other key political positions, such as the Local PRI Committee President and the Local Rancher Association, however, were still held by members of the Municipal Authority formation. Thus, even

\textsuperscript{110} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, January 9, 1968.

\textsuperscript{111} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, January 11, 1968.


\textsuperscript{113} Interviews with Wenceslao Morales Martínez, Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, and Juan Martínez Jauregui, Pajapan, September 29 and October 01, 1987.
though the Coalition was successful in finally obtaining the recognition and titling of the communal land, the Municipal Authority formation remained powerful and a significant force in Pajapan political life.

D. THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS

The analysis of the class structure, political formations and struggles that took place between 1949 and 1967 are indicative of distinct political dynamics. Two types of political dynamics can be identified; "caciquismo" and factionalism. The first evolved during three periods: 1) the first term of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza, (an outsider who occupied the position of municipal secretary 1949-1952); 2) the municipal presidency of Juan Grande; and 3) the last period of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza's tenure as municipal secretary (1964-1968). These three periods were characterized by the domination of two individuals over the local polity. "Caciquismo" allowed only the "friends" of the "cacique" to benefit from his domination and was a powerful instrument in the development of cattle-raising activities.

Factionalism characterizes the period after the end of Juan Grande's tenure (1955) until the renewed consolidation of the political power of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza in 1964. Factionalism arose from the struggles over two distinct systems of land tenure; the ejido and the communal land system. The denial of the request for the creation of the ejido led to the dismantling of the Agrarian Committee. After 1965, the communal land system became the only political project. Struggles started to revolve around the speed at which the communal land would be recognized and titled. Actions taken by the Coalition are largely responsible for the Presidential Resolution decreed in 1968.

Connections between the regional and national economic and political forces were illustrated. The intervention of external actors such as Simeon B. Limon, Amadeo Gonzalez
Caballero, the Agrarian League of Veracruz, the Regional Agrarian Committee of the CNC, etc. show that each political formation had its own political network. The intervention was also obvious in the arrival of Salinas Mendoza who came from Coatzaocoalcos to Pajapan and encouraged the development of cattle-raising. The same can be said about Juan Grande’s presidency who was literally put into power by Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero. The return of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza and the failed attempt to assassinate this local "cacique" also illustrate the dominance of the regional "cacique". That is, Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero, did not approve Salinas' support for the recognition of the communal land in 1956 and his coalition with the Communal Land Committee, the Lot Administration and the Municipal Authority. Nevertheless, Pajapan was not completely dominated by the regional forces. Autonomous actions such as those initiated by the Coalition demonstrated the importance of internal dynamics and the limitations of the regional forces' impact on local politics.

Finally, the overall tendency in the regional economy of Southern Veracruz toward the development of cattle-raising was clearly present in Pajapan. At the end of the 1940s, there was an impressive development in the cattle industry in Southern Veracruz, supported by Miguel Aleman Valdes, the Veracruz governor between 1936 and 1939 and Mexican President between 1946 and 1952. Originally from Sayula Veracruz, his mandate as State Governor brought "a protecting shade for the development of the regional economy as well as the political consolidation of the cattle-raisers' political power"(Mendoza Neri, 1982: 27, my translation).

The establishment in April 1943 of the "Unión Ganadera del Sur de Veracruz" (UGSV) illustrates this fact. The UGSV rapidly became a powerful lobbying formation in the political life of Southern Veracruz and its leaders progressively exercised hegemonic control over the whole region. Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero (Miguel Aleman’s cousin), one cattle-raiser rapidly
emerged as the most powerful "cacique". This "cacique" progressively dominated and controlled the UGSV and determined the political life of the region up until his death in 1970. He also had a direct impact on the political struggles occurring in Pajapan until the recognition and titling of the communal land.

The period showed a progressive internal differentiation with the intensification of the cattle industry. Land was to become a central issue with a growing number of landless peasants forced off the land by ranchers. The political dynamics between 1949 and 1968 are not however, reducible to the expression of class conflict. Each political formation had a multi-class composition while the Municipal Authority formation had a rancher character, the three other formations were composed of different classes.

Several important conclusions can be drawn. First the concept of political formation is as a useful analytical tool in that a strict class and structural analysis can not explain the manner in which the political struggles evolved. The analysis of the political conflicts has shown that an exclusively economic perspective is not sufficient to obtain an accurate picture of the political struggles in Pajapan. More specifically, the analysis shows how the Mexican bureaucracy can adopt different positions and that different individuals occupying similar positions can promote distinct political interests.

In summary, the analysis has shown how the political dynamics that existed in Pajapan between 1949 and 1968 were the result of the struggles between different political formations, the intensive development of the ranching activities within the communal land and regional areas, and the contradictory actions of the Mexican bureaucracy.
CHAPTER III

THE DOMINATION OF THE PRO-RANCHER FORMATION VERSUS
THE RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLES OF THE PRO-PEASANT FORMATION,
1968-1979

Although the Presidential Resolution issued in March 1968 ensured the maintenance of a communal land tenure system, land monopolization did not stop. Indeed, increasing numbers of Pajapan comuneros became landless. The preceding chapter presented the history of land struggles in Pajapan. This chapter aims to show how the communal land tenure system allowed the ranching class to expand their control over communal land between 1968 and 1979. The chapter also describes and analyzes how landless workers, small peasants and middle peasants progressively developed new political strategies against the expansion of the ranching class. The chapter is divided into four sections: the first presents the class structure prevailing during this period; the second identifies and analyzes the political formations (class composition, political project and linkages); the third describes in detail the different political struggles that marked this period of history; and the fourth discusses the political dynamic that prevailed in the relationships between the formations.

---

1 An informant stated that by 1975 "the land was wrongly divided. Many ranchers controlled 100, 300, and even 500 hectares of the communal lands. Many comuneros had become day-workers ("jornaleros") (Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 18, 1987).

Another informant confirmed the importance of the land concentration phenomenon during this period; "In 1970, there was no more land available. Many villagers were working as day-workers" (Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 1987).
The central issue of the struggle during this period was land access. Classes forced off their land requested the Mexican Government to guarantee access to land. This central demand was expressed through the following four specific requests: 1) the redistribution of the communal land; 2) the execution of the Presidential Resolution; 3) the elaboration of a census update; and, 4) changes to the communal land administration. To fully understand the meaning of these requests, one has to examine their legal content.

In a communal land tenure system, the distribution of land is basically left to the community. As stated in the Presidential Resolution, however, the communal land remained under the jurisdiction established by the Agrarian Law for the ejidos lands. This guaranteed certain rights to the comuneros included in the May 1967 census. A review of certain articles of the "Ley Federal de Reforma Agraria" is necessary to understand the character of these political struggles. The first article that should be mentioned is Article 130 of the ARFL which states:

The provisional and definitive ejidos and communities [communal land tenure system] will be exploited collectively, except when its members determine by an agreement reached during a general assembly that it will be done individually... (Chavez Padron, 1987: 161, my translation)

The different requests made by the comuneros against land invasions did not, however, refer to this Article. This may show the extent to which the administration of the communal land opposed the local political institutions, namely, the Communal land Administration and the Municipal Administration. These two sets of political institutions remained under the

---


3 The Agrarian Reform Federal Law (hereafter referred to as ARFL) was established on March 22, 1971. It basically synthesized several earlier agrarian laws and agrarian codes. The most important legal document prior to this ARFL was the Agrarian Code (hereafter referred as the AC) of 1942. For a brief history of the antecedents of the ARFL, see the "Introducción", in Chavez Padron (1987).
hegemonic control of the ranching classes who were not interested in a land reform.

The second type of request revolved around Article 364 of the ARFL (Chavez Padron, 1987: 327), which specifies that once the Presidential Resolution recognizing and titling the communal land is granted, the resolution has to be implemented. According to Article 364:

the execution of the Presidential Resolutions by which the ownership of the community is recognized will be carried out by the Agrarian Delegation, marking the boundaries of the recognized land and indicating the fractions of lands that each comunero possesses on their own, designating the Communal land Commission and the Vigilancy Council, in the cases when they do not already exist (Chavez Padron, 1987: 327, my translation and emphasis).

In the case of Pajapan, the execution of the Presidential Resolution would have had major consequences whereby: 1) marking the boundaries implied identifying the "land invaders" occupying land without the right to do so; and 2) identifying the different fractions implied recognizing those monopolizing land. Thus, the Presidential Resolution, if executed, would provide legal grounds for the landless comuneros to use the DAAC survey to prove the unequal distribution of the land.

Another request made by the landless and the poor peasants concerned a census update ("depuración censal" or "actualización censal") in order to revise the list of comuneros registered in the Presidential Resolution. All these comuneros were to receive an agrarian right ("derecho agrario") to a parcel of land (Art.51. of ARFL). Articles 70, 72, 85, 426 and 427 of the ARFL are all related to the census update. Article 70 states that:

the census update would have to be based on the census (i.e. the original census used for the elaboration of the Presidential Resolution) and should be in agreement with the order of preference granted by Article 72 (Chavez Padron 1987: 116, my translation).

Article 72 states that each time it is necessary to conduct a census update, the General Assembly will have to follow a specific order of preference and exclusion (Chavez Padron 1987: 118). Article 85 defines the conditions under which an ejidatario or comuneros can lose
his agrarian right (Chavez Padron 1987: 126). It is worth noting that section IV of this article mentions that an agrarian right of an ejidatario or a comunero who appropriates the plot of land or the production of another producer ("unidad de dotación") or area of common use can be withdrawn (Chavez Padron 1987: 127). Finally, both articles 426 and 427 define the procedures needed to cancel agrarian rights (Chavez Padron 1987: 355-356). Only the General Assembly or the State Delegate are permitted to make a such request to the CAM. Thus, the General Assembly plays a crucial role within the community as the principal decision making body. The General Assembly has to be convened, however, and their agenda prepared by the communal land administration, the new administrative apparatus for the communal land.

The recognition of the communal land tenure system introduced changes in the administration of the land in Pajapan. The ARFL specifies the organization of the agrarian administration. The administration is basically divided into three bodies: the General Assembly ("Asamblea General"), the Communal Land Commission ("Comisariado de Bienes Comunales"), and the Vigilancy Council ("Consejo de Vigilancia")

The General Assembly is the highest internal authority and comprises all individuals who have agrarian rights. Its main responsibilities are: to formulate and approve the internal scheme of land exploitation; to elect and dismiss the communal land commission and vigilancy council; to regulate, encourage and establish productive activities; to dictate how the communal land should be used; to approve, modify, and discuss the decisions and reports submitted by the communal land commission; and to consider different requests concerning the distribution and use of land.

---

4 In order to avoid repetition, the term Communal Land Administration will be used to refer to the Communal Land Commission and the Vigilancy Council.

The Communal Land Commission represents the community (all the comuneros) and is made up of a president, a secretary and a treasurer. All are elected by the General Assembly and have designated alternates. The responsibilities of the Commission are: to represent the community before any other authority; to receive the Presidential Resolution and other documents; to insure that the agrarian rights of the comuneros be respected; to inform the relevant authorities about any land concentration or invasion; to inform the "Secretaria de Reforma Agraria" on any matter related to agrarian rights; to insure that the land is cultivated and used according to the law and in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly; to organize and convene the General Assembly; to inform the federal agrarian authorities, i.e., SRA and "Secretaria de Agricultura y Recursos Hidraulicos" of any decision concerning the pattern and organization of productive activities; and to assist in any social work carried out by the State for the benefit of the community.

The Vigilancy Council is composed of three elected comuneros: a president, a secretary and a treasurer as well as their alternates. Its main functions are: to watch and ensure that the actions of the Commission and that the agricultural exploitative scheme are in accordance with the precepts of the Agrarian Reform Law; to audit the Commission accounts on a monthly basis; to communicate with the SRA any matter related to agrarian rights; to inform the Federal agrarian authorities (SRA and SARH) of any decision concerning the pattern and organization of productive activities; and to convene and organize the General Assembly when

---

6 Agrarian Reform Secretariat (hereafter referred to as SRA). Since the December 30, 1974, SRA, Department of Agrarian and Colonization Affairs (DAAC), was renamed "Secretaria de Reforma Agraria", hereafter referred as SRA. See Presidential Decree of December 30, 1974, published in the Diario Oficial de la Nación, December 31, 1974 and Chavez Padron 1987: 17). For clarity, I will only use the acronym SRA.

7 Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources Secretariat (hereafter referred to as SARH).

the Commission fails to do so (Chavez Padron, 1987: 95 and 104-105).

The new communal land administration system opened the way to conflict between political formations. Before proceeding with a consideration of the political formations which fought between 1968 and 1979, let us examine the actual class structure in Pajapan during this period.

A. CLASS STRUCTURE

In the previous period, the comuneros were divided into three distinct classes; small peasants, middle peasants and ranchers. In the period between 1968 and 1979, a fivefold class typology developed: large ranchers, small ranchers, middle peasants, small peasants, and landless workers.

The number of small peasants forced off their plots of land progressively increased through 1949-1968 and into the seventies. The landless were composed of day-workers ("peones") hired by ranchers; workers who go on a daily basis to neighbouring cities (mainly Coatzacoalcos, Minatitlan, and Jaltipan); and petty traders who buy agricultural goods in Pajapan and sell them in the cities.

The small peasant class possessed the same characteristics as in the earlier period. They had access to small parcels of land and were involved in subsistence agriculture. The small peasants, however, also combined some wage-labour with subsistence production.

The middle peasant class was transformed in the 1960s when some entered into ranching activities to constitute what is now the small rancher class. The dividing line between the middle peasants and the small ranchers is established by their involvement in the cattle industry. A small rancher may have had between 5 and 20 head of cattle, whereas a middle peasant had less than 5. These figures remain approximate since data are not available
that might specify how many head of cattle each rancher had.

Ranchers of the earlier period had grown and progressively controlled larger tracts of land (see Appendix C). They expanded not only in terms of the area of land but also in terms of their herds. A rancher controlled over 50 hectares which meant a potential herd of over 40 head (if 1.2 hectare of land sustained one animal\(^9\)).

Unfortunately, it is not possible to actually measure the class distribution of the comuneros in Pajapan due to a lack of data. To be sure, the rancher and small rancher classes constituted a minority while middle peasants, small peasant and landless workers formed the majority. The availability of precise data on land tenure and class structure at the end of the 1970s (discussed in the next chapter) shows how the division between the ranchers controlling lands and a growing landless class developed. In comparison with the analysis presented in the preceding chapter, land tenure had become polarized. On the one hand, there was a small number of ranchers and small ranchers interested in controlling more and more land. On the other hand, the majority of small peasants and landless workers were joined by the middle peasants. Antonio García De León pointed out that Pajapan had

> a population with a majority of middle peasants and poor peasants, owners of small parcels ("minifundios") [...] subjected more or less by usury and commerce to the plans of a handful of rich peasants retaining the political and economic power (1976: 129, my translation).

J. Stuart (1978), who conducted extensive fieldwork in Pajapan during the 1970s, discovered that the concentration of land in Pajapan was rarely associated with violence. In general the ranchers were gaining control over parcels of lands by fencing fallow lands and then paying taxes to the communal land administration. Traditionally, a comunero who

\[^9\] This ratio is the one calculated by Jacques Chevalier and Daniel Buckles in their analysis of ranching activities in Pajapan (June 1988). It was also confirmed by the secretary of the local Ranchers Association (Interview with Esteban Martinez Bautista, October 01, 1987).
cleared a parcel of land from the forest was guaranteed usufructuary rights to that piece of land which could later be transferred within the family. These parcels, however, were left fallow after a few years of slash-and-burn cultivating practices. The ranchers fenced these fallow parcels and paid 5 pesos per hectare of cultivated land per year to the communal land administration, thereby legitimizing their control over the land. At other times, the ranchers would simply purchase a peasant's plot of land. Often peasants had to give up their parcel to rancher in payment of unpaid debts. In other cases, the ranchers let their animals graze in the "milpa" (a small maize plot) and then compensated small peasants through purchases of land.

B. THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS

The polarization of two groups of classes - the large and small ranchers versus the small and middle peasants, and the landless workers - makes it possible to distinguish two political formations: the Pro-Rancher and the Pro-Peasant. These formations co-existed and confronted each other during the 1968-1979 period. Their political projects were antagonistic. The Pro-Rancher formation took defensive strategies by reacting to initiatives of the opposing formation. As in the preceding chapter, the class composition, linkages, and political project of each of these formations will be outlined.

1. The Pro-Rancher Formation

In the years following the issuance of the Presidential Resolution, an alliance was formed between the ranchers who had been divided in the past into two political formations: the Municipal Authorities and the Communal Land Committee.

i) Class Composition

Between 1967 and 1970, the ranchers and small ranchers active in the the Agrarian
Committee, the Communal Land Committee, the Municipal Authority and the Lot Administration formed an alliance. The 1970 elections of the first communal land administrators and of a new municipal administration reflected the apparent state of compromise and solidarity that developed between the ranchers and the small ranchers. Within the communal land administration, the treasurer and the president of the Vigilancy Council were originally allied with the Municipal Authority formation, whereas the president and the secretary of the Vigilancy Council\textsuperscript{10} had been associated with the Communal Land Committee. It should be added that in the 1970s, the ranchers formerly associated with the Agrarian Committee joined the Pro-Rancher formation while small peasants and the middle peasants joined the Pro-Peasant formation.

Even if there clearly was an alliance among ranchers that began in the early 1970s, lasting up to 1979, it was not free of internal tension: witness the denunciation in the early 1970s, of Guadalupe Hernandez Jauregui (hereafter referred to as Don Lupe), a large rancher, by members of the Pro-Rancher formation for trying to title a parcel of 232 hectares as private property within the communal area. By the end of the 1970s, further tensions developed when some ranchers decided to join the Pro-Peasant formation.

ii) Internal and External Linkages

The Pro-Rancher formation controlled the following local institutions: the communal land and the municipal administration, the Local PRI Committee, and the Local Rancher Association. This control was essential: 1) to maintain access to land; and 2) to gain privileged access to political channels of influence and control of the information issued from the SRA.

\textsuperscript{10} Possibly also the Secretary of the Communal Land Authorities, although no evidence was encountered that would prove his association with the Communal Land Committee.
the State and the Federal Government and the Regional PRI Committee. The control over these political institutions was only challenged by the Pro-Peasant formation in 1979 when the "Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana"\textsuperscript{11} and the "Partido Popular Socialista"\textsuperscript{12} pressed for elections of a new communal land administration. The same year, the control of the Pro-Rancher formation was again threatened during the municipal elections. Otherwise, this formation's control over political institutions was left unchallenged.

The ranchers had several channels of influence. Several agencies were favorable to the ranchers, i.e., the regional office of the SRA in Chinameca, the State Delegate of the SRA in Xalapa and the State Ranching Division\textsuperscript{13}:

- The caciques (the most powerful ranchers) had contacts in the SRA Offices of Acayucan, Chinameca and Coatzacoalcos. They had access to privileged information\textsuperscript{14}.

- We (the ranchers) had a lot of support from the Regional Union of Ranchers and the State Ranching Division. We had contacts all over....\textsuperscript{15}

Although no supporting letters or documents were found, it is apparent this formation also had the support of the Regional PRI Committee and some state deputies.

\textsuperscript{11} Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (hereafter referred to as PARM).
\textsuperscript{12} People's Socialist Party (hereafter referred to as PPS).
\textsuperscript{13} The State Delegate seemed to purposely delay the procedures leading to the execution of the Presidential Resolution by first stating that he lacked the necessary personnel to implement the decree and later by not sending personnel to revise the boundaries. An informant added; "the peasants started petitions to request a land redistribution. Commissions were sent from the SRA in Mexico but they were always stopped in Acayucan. The commissions were stopped with money" (Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 18, 1987).
\textsuperscript{14} Interview with Demetrio Bautista Hernandez, Cosoleacaque, October 19, 1987.
\textsuperscript{15} Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.
iii) Political Project

The central interest of this formation was to maintain access to large areas of land necessary for the expansion of their ranching enterprises, for as long as possible. Its political project was threefold: 1) to maintain a communal land tenure system without land redistribution; 2) to prevent a census update which would include new comuneros; and 3) to oppose the delimitation of the communal land boundaries. This formation was allied with the regional ranchers who occupied some of the communal land. Consequently, the ranchers objected to representatives of the SRA coming to Pajapan and sent letters and delegations to Xalapa and Mexico City to state that there was no problem of land tenure in Pajapan. The fewer the representatives of the SRA that came to Pajapan, the easier it was for the landholding class to maintain control over the land. The ranchers denounced the visits made by SRA engineers and whenever possible, tried to corrupt them as much as they could.

2. The Pro-Peasant Formation

This political formation was constituted in reaction to particular incidents and actions initiated by the ranchers. Prior to 1976, no formation had cohesion or a specific political agenda, nor had a formation itself organized into a movement. It was only after 1976 that a unified and extended political formation developed under the umbrella of the PARM and the PPS successively.

An informant stated that: "The ranchers were going to the different departments and talking to the different civil servants to tell them that there was no problem of land concentration in Pajapan. They were influencing the State Delegation and the Regional Office of the SRA in order to stop the struggles of the poor (Interview with Salvador Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 16, 1987)."
i) **Class Composition**

The Pro-Peasant formation grouped together the landless workers, the small peasants and the middle peasants. This formation comprised the former supporters of the Agrarian Committee and the middle peasants formerly associated with the Communal Land Committee and Lot Administration Coalition.

ii) **Internal and External Linkages**

In the second half of the 1970s, the Pro-Peasant formation was affiliated with Mexican opposition parties (PARM and PPS). This affiliation was not motivated by ideological considerations but rather the possibilities these parties offered in opposing the PRI candidates (all from the Pro-Rancher formation) in elections for the different positions within the communal land and the municipal administrations.

Aside from the two regional political parties (PARM and PPS), the Pro-Peasant formation had connections with the CNC (at both regional and national levels). Although it addressed its claim to the SRA in Mexico, the Pro-Peasant formation did not have any other connections. During this period, no other regional or national organization appeared to have been connected with the Pro-Peasant formation.

iii) **Political Project**

The overall objective of this formation was the redistribution of the communal land. In 1970, with the Enrique Cruz Movement, the land was to be redistributed in two parts, one for the ranchers and one for the small peasants. In 1973, the revived Communal Land Committee struggled to have all the land divided into individual parcels. Finally, in 1979, the PARM struggled to obtain not only land redistribution but also a census update so that the individuals left out in the census of 1966 could also have access to land. The establishment
of clear boundaries was also necessary to avoid land invasions by regional ranchers. The struggle to obtain land redistribution, a census update, and the delimitation of the boundaries of the communal land were at the heart of the Pro-Peasant formation's claims. In the second half of the 1970s, another claim emerged concerning control over the local political institutions which was crucial for achieving transformations in the land tenure system.

The following figures illustrate how the Pro-Peasant formation progressively developed into a full-fledged movement (Figure V) and synthesize the class composition and the political network of each political formation (Figure VI).

**FIGURE V: The Development of the Pro-Peasant Formation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determinant events in the formation of the Pro-Peasant Formation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrique Cruz Mobilization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Extraction Conflict (dethronement of Mun.Pres.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Florentino's Massacre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census up-dating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election of Mun. Administ. (participation of PARM + PPS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resignation of S.V. Election of Com.Land Administ. Merge PARM - PPS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election of Mun. Admis. (PPS obtained two positions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
S.V.: Sixto Vargas, Communal land Commission President (1973-1979)
FIGURE VI: Class Composition and Internal and External Linkages of Each Political Formation

Legend: Bold: social class
C. POLITICAL STRUGGLES FROM 1968 to 1979

This section describes and analyzes the political struggles which took place between 1968 and 1979 and the way in which the two political formations defended and promoted their interests.

1. The Ranchers' Political Domination

When the Presidential Resolution was decreed, the Communal Land Committee and Lot Administration supporters (mainly small peasants, middle peasants and few small ranchers) were in a better position to oppose the ranchers' efforts to concentrate the communal land. The election of Cecilio Martinez Encarnacion as municipal president, the change in the administration of the communal land, and the departure of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza allowed the peasants to exercise partial control over local political institutions. Nevertheless, the emerging Pro-Rancher formation remained in control of the local PRI Committee, the Local Ranchers Association, and the municipal secretary position. In the late 1960s, the ranchers allied with regional ranchers with a view to controlling the political institutions with the support of the small ranchers.

On March 13, 1968, five days after the publication of the Presidential Resolution, the communal land representatives who were members of the Communal Land Committee in the early 1960s, sought the support of the "Acción Agraria" Secretary of the CNC in Mexico against several regional ranchers who had brought between 800 to 900 head of cattle to the

---

17 "[the peasants] in December 1967 were able to impose a municipal president favoring the majority" (Garcia De Leon 1967: 130).

18 Agrarian Action.
communal land\textsuperscript{19}. These regional ranchers were granted permission to occupy the land by local ranchers without communal consent. Interestingly enough, during their audience with the Agrarian Action Secretary, the communal land representatives were not opposed to regional ranchers occupying communal land. The communal land representatives specified that they needed to receive their official sanction to be able to tax these regional ranchers for occupying Pajapan communal land. In response to the request of Pajapan comuneros, the Agrarian Action Secretary of the CNC wrote a letter to the Chief of SRA requiring him to issue the proper credentials ("credenciales") to the Pajapan Communal land Representatives so that they could fulfil their functions\textsuperscript{20}.

This event illustrates the political context of the late 1960s. Although not entirely in control of all political institutions, ranchers were able to maintain access to communal land without much resistance. The confirmation and titling of the communal land had quietened the demands of a large proportion of the comuneros\textsuperscript{21} without altering the actual distribution of land.

As stated previously, the Presidential Resolution had yet to be implemented. A request to this effect was first submitted to the State Delegate of the SRA early 1968\textsuperscript{22}, and again on August 13, 1968\textsuperscript{23}. In response, the State Delegate stated (on April 19, and on August

\textsuperscript{19} An informant confirmed the presence of Felix Martinez's cattle on Pajapan's communal lands. (Interview with Salvador Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 16, 1987).


\textsuperscript{21} An informant states; "Once the Presidential Resolution was published the people became calm and quiet". (Interview with Simon Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, October 07, 1987).

\textsuperscript{22} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, (no date, but most likely written between March 08 and March 18, 1968).

27, 1968) that the official possession of the communal land by 905 comuneros and the elections of the communal land administration had been carried out in April 1968. The definitive delimitation of the boundaries ("deslinde definitivo"), however, had yet to be undertaken. In his letter of August 27, 1968, the State Delegate argued that the delimitation of the boundaries would be done as quickly as possible "within the possibility of the limited staff available to the State Delegation."25

Settling the boundaries of the communal land was an important issue since it meant that regional ranchers could take over parts of the communal land and claim them as part of their property or as part of an ejido. An example of this was the conflict with Aurelio Fernandez Jauregui's ranch "El Moral" which overlapped with the communal land of Pajapan. The communal land administration was elected early in 1970.26 The same year, the new Municipal Authorities were also elected. By the early 1970s, the political domination of the Pro-Rancher formation was well secured. The formation controlled the communal land, the municipal administrations, and the local PRI Committee. Table four illustrates the alliance formed


26 In a letter dated December 7, 1970, the president of the communal land administration reported that the 11th ordinary general assembly of the comuneros was held in November 1970. Since the ordinary general assembly is normally held every last Sunday of the month, (Art.28 of the ARFL), the new communal land authorities were elected either in December 1969 or early January 1970. The election of the new communal lands administration was ridden by conflict. In July 1968, the new authorities wrote to the State Delegation of Xalapa to request its intervention since the former communal representatives did not want to pass onto them the communal land documents and to let them audit the communal land treasury. (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, July 22, 1968). Several informants argued that the first communal land administration was elected in 1970. (Interviews with Sergio Martinez Aleman and Simon Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 23 and October 07, 1987).

27 Following the departure of Guillermo Salinas Mendoza, Sergio Martinez Aleman, the son of Juan Grande, became Municipal Secretary. According to Juan Grande, he himself (continued...
between the small ranchers, previously associated with the Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration, and the ranchers associated with the Municipal Authority.

### TABLE 4: Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Position</th>
<th>Earlier Functions</th>
<th>Social Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNAL LAND ADMINISTRATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communal Land Commission:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Juan Martinez Alvarez</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Antonio Osorio Hernandez</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: Pascacio Silvestre Martinez</td>
<td>Municipal President (1964-67)</td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vigilancy Council:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Nemesia Antonio Antonio</td>
<td>Municipal President (1961-63)</td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Wenceslao Morales Hernandez</td>
<td>PRI Committee President (1967-70)</td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Roman Gonzalez Cruz</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup.Pres.: Juan Martinez Encarnacion</td>
<td>Sind.uno. 1949-1952</td>
<td>Small Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind.Uni.: Pascual Martinez C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup. Sin.: Anastacio Cruz Sales</td>
<td>Lot Treas. No 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. Uni.: Maximino Hernandez R.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup. Reg.: Galina Lorenzo de Silvestre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRI COMMITTEE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Sergio Martinez Aleman</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The distinction between rancher and small rancher is based on: my interview the list of land monopolizers issued by the SRA in Xalapa, Bouyssas-Cassagne's list of ranchers (1981), and genealogical information gathered by Jacques Chevalier and Daniel Buckles (1986). Those identified as ranchers were either identified by interviewers or listed in the SRA or in Cassagne. The small ranchers are those only mentioned in Chevalier and Buckles' genealogical trees. The rationale for such selection was that the three former sources (interviews, SRA, and Bouyssas-Cassagne) attempted to point out the large ranchers ("grandes ganaderas") whereas the genealogical trees identify all those considered as ranchers (whatever their size). Some individuals are not classified due to lack of data.

**Abbreviations:**

Pres. Sup.: presidente suplente (i.e. substitute president)
Sind. Uni.: sindico unico (i.e. sole trustee)
Sup. Sind.: sindico suplente (i.e. substitute trustee)
Reg. Uni.: regidor unico (i.e. sole alderman)
Sup. Reg.: suplente regidor (i.e. substitute alderman)
Com. Land. Com.: Communal Land Committee (political formation, chapt. #1)
Lot Treas. No 5.: Lot Administration No 5: Treasurer

**Sources:** Interviews with Juan A. Martinez Jauregui, Esteban Martinez Bautista, Sergio Martinez Aleman, and Nikanor Trujillo, Pajapan, September 14, 17, and 23, and October 01, 1987; Antonio Hernandez (1979); ASRAK, Expediente C-26 Bis, "Informe sobre la comunidad Pajapan (antesdecientes), July 07, 1976; Bouyssas-Cassagne (1980); Chevalier and Buckles (1986); Gaceta Oficial, Numero Extraordinario, Tomo CIX, Num.139, Martes, 19 de Noviembre 1973.

27(...continued)

proposed Sergio because he had finished his high school and could read, write and count (Interview with Juan Martinez Jauregui, Pajapan, September 29, 1987). Sergio was also the Secretary of Pajapan Ranchers Association (1965-1966) and President of the PRI's Committee (1970-1973) (Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 30, 1987; and, Antonio Hernandez, 1979).
2. The Enrique Cruz Mobilization, 1970

The Pro-Rancher formation had ensured the defense of its interests by gaining control over the local political institutions. By the end of the 1970s, however, it still had to face momentary opposition by other classes excluded and threatened by the ranchers' expansion. Landless workers, small peasants and middle peasants were first mobilized in 1970 under the leadership of Enrique Cruz Antonio, a former member of the Agrarian Committee.

In 1970, Enrique Cruz Antonio went to the SRA in Mexico to denounce the concentration of land in the hands of a few ranchers:

When Cecilio Martinez Incarnacion was Municipal President, [at the end of his mandate in 1970] there was a formation of 520 small peasants who did not have any land. We [Enrique Cruz and his supporters] went to Mexico to request the SRA to send an engineer to divide the land into two parts; one part for the peasants, another part for the ranchers. An engineer was sent. When he arrived here, the Communal land President put me in jail since he accused me of having acted as the communal land commission president. They (ranchers) let the engineer work in the upper part of the communal land but when he reached the Lagoon, the problems started: then, they paid him and he left Pajapan.28

In August 1970, an engineer of the SRA received orders to go to Pajapan since the Presidential Resolution had not been executed, and the boundaries of the communal land had not been delimited. The engineer worked only for 14 days and then left.29

The communal land administrators acknowledged the engineer's stay in Pajapan in a letter sent on December 5, 1970, to the State Delegate of the SRA. The letter confirmed

28 Interview with Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, October 06, 1987.

29 "The engineer came to Pajapan and worked for 15 days. Then, he left saying that he was coming back in 4 days. He left by horse for Jicacal. The communal lands administrators went with him. In Jicacal, the ranchers were there. They brought him to Modesto Perez's bar in Coatzacoalcos. The engineer never came back. He even left his equipment here!" (Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987).

that an engineer arrived in Pajapan on October 14, worked until October 28, and left Paja-
pan on October 30. It also mentioned that the engineer's stopped his work when he reached
the area close to the Lagoon. The letter finally denounced the fact that on the engineer's
arrival in Pajapan, he went directly to Enrique Cruz Antonio's house, though he did not have
any official function within the communal land administration. Enrique Cruz explained that:

The people [his supporters] had their faults. During his visit the engineer said
that he needed money to finish his work. I met with the people and requested
some financial cooperation but they did not want to offer any financial
support. Because of that, the ranchers won [i.e. they gave money to the engi-
neer]. Later on, I wanted to go to Mexico to bring an engineer again to
Pajapan but it was not possible because there was not enough money. The
people were not willing to cover the expenses. In the 1970s, the movement
was strong except that we did not have enough money.\[31\]

The Enrique Cruz mobilization and the visit of the engineer had an impact on the
Communal land Administrators. On December 7, 1970, a week after the departure of the engi-
near, they wrote a letter to the "Jefe de la SRA"\[32\] in Mexico describing the decisions made
by the General Assembly held on November 30\[33\]. This General Assembly denounced the
actions taken of Don Lupe, a powerful local rancher who was trying to obtain a property title
for a parcel of 232 hectares of communal land. The Assembly decided to reject Don Lupe's
claims and to redistribute the land to the landless comuneros. Their rationale was that the
Presidential Resolution stated that no private property could exist within the communal land.
Early in 1971, another letter was sent to the Chief of the SRA to inform him of the results
of the last General Assembly\[34\]. The letter mentioned the comuneros' complaint that the

\[31\] Interview with Enrique Cruz Antonio, Pajapan, October 06, 1987.

\[32\] Chief of the SRA.


engineer who had left Pajapan on October 30 had not come back to delimit the communal land boundaries.

A few observations should be made on the impact of the Enrique Cruz mobilization. First, it is clear from the content of the two letters sent directly to the Chief of the SRA in Mexico that the communal land administrators were trying to improve their image and enhance their credibility by fulfilling their obligations as defined by the ARFL.\textsuperscript{35} This should be read as a reaction to the pressures exercised by the Enrique Cruz mobilization and the engineer’s visit to Pajapan.

Second, Enrique Cruz’s supporters wanted to obtain the division of the communal land into two parts, one for the ranchers and another for the small peasants. This would have been possible since the ARFL, introduced by the Mexican government on March 22, 1971, provides guarantees for such action. Indeed, Article 135 specifies that;

\begin{quote}
In the ejidos and the communities [i.e. communal land system], it is possible by agreement of the General Assembly, convened in accordance with the terms of this Law, to exploit collectively part of the land by creating specific sections for each type of exploitation (Chavez Padron 1987: 164, my translation)
\end{quote}

Therefore, the communal land could have been divided into the two parts. This would have been to the detriment of the ranchers, however, who needed available lands to increase their herds.

Third, the attack launched against Don Lupe indicated a conflict between the ranchers themselves. Don Lupe, who had fought, earlier for the recognition of the communal land, was an important rancher and one of the wealthiest landholders in Pajapan\textsuperscript{36}. The accusations

\textsuperscript{35} See Article: 47, 48 and 49 which define the responsibilities of the Communal Lands Administrators (Chavez Padron, 1987: 99-106).

\textsuperscript{36} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. "Informe sobre la comunidad de Pajapan (antecedentes)", July 07, 1976.
launched against him may have had two objectives: proving to the SRA that the Communal land Administrators were doing their job as well as blocking the expansion of Don Lupe’s ranch.

The Enrique Cruz mobilization was the first of a number of efforts made by the landless workers, the small peasants and the middle peasants to obtain a redistribution of land.

3. The Revival of the Communal Land Committee

In the years following the Enrique Cruz mobilization, Aniceto Antonio, a former leader of the Communal Land Committee, took new steps to obtain a land reform in favour of the landless. Aniceto Antonio’s mobilization ended abruptly when its leader, Aniceto Antonio, was killed in a bus accident on his way back to Pajapan after meeting with the representatives of the Acayucan Regional Peasant Committee of the CNC. Nevertheless, his actions drew some response from the State. First, the General Director of the Agrarian Rights of the SRA in Mexico wrote to a Pajapan representative in Coatzacoalcos telling him that the State Delegation of the SRA in Xalapa had had all the necessary documents permitting the execution of the Presidential Resolution since 1968. The Director also informed the Delegate that an order to execute the Presidential Resolution had been sent on two occasions to Xalapa. However, the State Delegate recognized during a phone conversation with the General Director of the SRA that there was a lack of personnel to implement the order. This seemed to be an excuse more than anything else. It also indicates that influence and pressure were

---

37 He was assisted by Tomas Martinez Incarnacion and Hilario Candelario Angel (Interviews with Genaro Antonio Hernandez and Simon Antonio Hernandez. Pajapan, September 21 and October 06, 1987).

put on him to delay the execution of the Presidential Resolution. That is, the Southern Veracruz Ranchers Association, an important political force, may have influenced the State Delegate.

In May 1972, a second letter was sent to the State Delegate in Xalapa from the General Director of Communal land of the SRA in Mexico, again requesting that the communal land boundaries be surveyed\(^\text{39}\). In October 1972, a third letter, this time from the General Secretary of the 'Comite Ejecutivo Nacional\(^\text{40}\) and the Secretary of the 'Asuntos Agrarios\(^\text{41}\), both of the CNC, was sent to the Chief of the SRA in Mexico which also requested that the Presidential Resolution\(^\text{42}\) be implemented. The SRA in Mexico responded to this request in December 1972 once again re-ordering the Agrarian Delegate to execute the Presidential Resolution\(^\text{43}\). The State Delegate eventually ordered an engineer "to activate the execution of the Presidential Resolution\(^\text{44}\). But like the other orders, nothing happened. In all likelihood the State Delegate was pressured or influenced into not defining the boundaries.


\(^{40}\) National Executive Committee.

\(^{41}\) Agrarian Affairs.

\(^{42}\) ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. October 21, 1972.


\(^{44}\) ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. February 16, 1973.
4. The Elections of New Communal Land and Municipal Administrators in 1973

In 1973, new communal land administrators and municipal administrators and a new PRI Committee President were elected. Table five presents the newly elected individuals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5: Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1973</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNAL LAND ADMINISTRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Sixto Vargas Lorenzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Ramon Hernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: Pedro Antonio Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigilance Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Simon Antonio Hernandez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Dalia Villanueva de la Torre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal: Abed Martinez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Apolinar Hernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind. Uni.: Santos Martinez Morales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin. Sup.: Simon Antonio Hernandez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. Uni.: Agustin Hernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. Sup.: Santos Hernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: same as table 2 except for Gaceta Oficial, Tomo CIX, Num.139, Lunes, 19 de Noviembre 1973.

As in 1970, the domination of the Pro-Rancher formation over the different official positions was clear. Not surprisingly, the execution of the Presidential Resolution was delayed for another three years, with apparently little resistance from landless workers or from small and middle peasants. This apparent lull in the land struggle may have reflected the discouragement of the subordinated classes after the failure of the Enrique Cruz mobilization and the death of Aniceto Antonio. It may also be that the Pro-Rancher formation was able to impose its hegemonic control over local politics. It was not before 1976 that pressure was again

---

45 The General Director of Inspection and Complaints Division of the Agrarian Reform Secretariat in Mexico stated in a letter sent to the Agrarian Delegate of Xalapa that Sixto Vargas was elected on December 10, 1973 (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414, August 3, 1976). On the other hand, Sixto Vargas affirmed in an interview that he became the president of the communal land commission on June 23, 1973 (Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, September 26, 1987). It seems that the new communal Land administrators were elected in the second half of 1973.
applied for the implementation of the Presidential Resolution.

5. The Rock Extraction Incident

An interesting episode in Pajapan's history occurred in 1975. It began in August 1975, when the engineer, Carlos Manuel Daza, came to Pajapan and offered work to the comuneros for the extraction of rocks within the communal land for the construction of the port of Coatzacoalcos. On August 26, 1975, an agreement was made between Manuel Daza and the Municipal and Communal land administrations allowing for the extraction of rocks from the communal land area. The daily salary offered to the comuneros was settled at 50 pesos, which was 35 pesos more than what the rancher would pay to their own day-workers.

The project began in late August but was brought to an abrupt halt when the municipal president decided on September 10 to jail Pedro Rueda, the project supervisor. The municipal administrators released Rueda. Later that day, after they failed to get him to sign blank sheets of paper intended for false declarations. Meanwhile, Sixto Vargas, communal land commission president, went to Coatzacoalcos to seek assistance from the project director, Carlos Manuel Daza. The next day (September 11), Vargas and Daza came back to Pajapan to discover that the Municipal Authorities had decided that of the 50 pesos paid to each workers per day, 25 would have to be given to the Municipal Treasury.

The same day, the "columna volante" arrived in Pajapan. Comuneros gathered around the communal land administration office were attempting to have the municipal president removed. It was because of intervention by the head of the "columna volante" that a

---

48 Special State Security Forces.
violent confrontation between the comuneros and the municipal administrators was prevented.

The comuneros were told by the head of the "columna volante" that he would go to Acayucan to ask the Governor about the possibility of removing the Municipal President. Sixto Vargas described what occurred after the engineer left:

We waited for a few days and when we saw that nothing was happening, we decided to take over the municipal palace. Soon after we had broken into the palace, the municipal administrators called the "columna volante" telling them that there was violent confrontation in Pajapan because of me since I was leading the peasants.

We closed the office and waited. Around 3:00 or 4:00 am, six police cars arrived and asked where was the bloody confrontation? I brought the officer in charge to my house and explained the problems about the engineer who wanted to remove some rock for the construction of the harbour in Coatzacoalcos (The office of the Municipal President was occupied on September, 15: the "columna volante" arrived in Pajapan early in the morning on the 16th).

Vargas had explained the problem to the officer in charge of the "columna volante", who then went to Minatitlan to speak again with the Governor again. This time, however, the governor sent a representative to Pajapan who, according to Vargas was "bought" (corrupted) by the municipal authorities. With this realization, they decided to burn the representative's car but were stopped by the head of "columna volante". The latter promised the villagers that there would be some changes this time, and testified that he also saw the governor's representative receiving money from the municipal authorities. Two days later, a State deputy was sent to Pajapan with a Governor's order to dismiss the municipal president, Apolinar Hernandez, and replace him with Juan Martinez Alvarez, the substitute president (and ex-Communal Land Commission President, 1970-1973) to complete Hernandez's mandate.

---

50 Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.
Nevertheless, the extraction of rock from the communal land was nonetheless cancelled after the removal of Apolianr Hernandez. An agreement was reached with the project director, Carlos Manuel Daza, later in November, in which groups of 20 to 30 peasants were to be sent every week to work on the construction of the new port. Groups were sent until July 1976 when the Union of workers of Coatzacoalcos objected to this because the comuneros did not belong to the union and thus could not be allowed to work on the project\textsuperscript{51}.

This episode illustrates the extent to which the ranchers controlled the municipal administrators and how they took advantage of the large reserve of labour to work their own ranches (at wage of 15 pesos a day). It also shows some of the types of confrontations (invasion of the municipal palace, dismissal of administrators, intervention of the "columna voluntaria", etc.) that occurred between the Pro-Rancher and the Pro-Peasant formations emerging during the second half of the 1970s.

6. The Struggles for the Execution of the Presidential Resolution and the Shooting of Pedro Florentino

Following the Rock Extraction incident, some comuneros organized to exert pressure for the implementation of the Presidential Resolution and also to have an update ("actualización censal") of the 1967 census. The basis for such a request was that comuneros who were not listed on the census were demanding access to land to replace those on the list who were not using the land\textsuperscript{52}. On April 26, 1976, the General Director of Communal Land of

\textsuperscript{51} Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.

\textsuperscript{52} Many comuneros listed were living outside Pajapan or were deceased (Interviews with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 24, 26, 1987).
the SRA, in response to pressures exert by the CNC on behalf of Pajapan communal land administrators, requested that the State Delegate in Xalapa carry out a census update in Pajapan. Interestingly, it seemed that the preceding episode, which resulted in the removal of Apolinar Hernandez, had made Sixto Vargas more militant and more apt to argue the cause of the peasants and landless workers. Indeed, a telegram sent from the General Director of the Inspection and Complaints Division of the SRA in Mexico to the State Delegate mentioned that the Communal Land Commission President (Sixto Vargas) had complained to the CNC about an ejidatario from "Las Barrillas", Pedro Florentino, who occupied a tract of communal land. No one was sent in response to this, however, until a violent confrontation occurred in June 1976 between Pajapan comuneros and Pedro Florentino of the "Las Barrillas".

On June 28, 1976, the situation worsened. An informant described the events in the following words:

He (Pedro Florentino) was occupying Pajapan communal land. A formation of comuneros, after trying to find a solution without violence, decided to invade the occupied lands. The formation of comuneros did not want to leave the lands. The ejidatario called the "columna volante" who came and took two prisoners. When the comuneros realized what was happening, they organized themselves and were able to catch up with the "columna" in Jicacal. They went with their machetes and wooden sticks. There was a violent confrontation and three peasants were killed and several wounded. At first, the "columna volante" was shooting in the air but after they started shooting people.

Another informant added:

There was a big "bronca" (violent conflict) with Pedro Florentino, an ejidatario from Las Barrillas who invaded the communal land. He was really astute ("muy politico"). After the comuneros had invaded the occupied lands, Pedro requested the "columna volante" to intervene. The "columna" arrested two villagers who had started cultivating land within Florentino's fenced parcel. Later, they came to Pajapan to capture Sixto Vargas but since they did not find

53 ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. Telegram, April 30, 1976.

54 Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 18, 1987.
him, they took his son. The people got together and went to Jicacal just at the
time the police were taking the boat to cross the mouth of the Lagoon. The
people stopped one of the policemen and threw him in the water. The others
were in the boat. The policemen then started to shoot people. Epidio Antonio,
Vicente Antonio and Epidio Fonseca were then killed.\footnote{55}

The three comuneros who were killed were apparently small peasants (or
maybe landless workers). During the shooting, three other comuneros were also wounded;
Santos Hernandez Martinez (substitute alderman and small rancher), Juan Antonio Gracia (a
small rancher), and Santos Martinez Martinez (a small peasant or landless worker). The fact
that two small ranchers were present is interesting. It indicates that some of the small ran-
chers were opposed to the invasion of the communal land by regional ranchers and were will-
ing to support the peasants and landless workers’ invasion.

After this violent confrontation, the comuneros stayed in the area of the occupied land
and built a corral to keep Florentino’s cattle. The incident was brought to an end in July
1978, when an agreement was reached between Pedro Florentino Patraca and the municipal
and communal land administrations of Pajapan, and the three widows.\footnote{56} According to this
agreement, Pedro Florentino had to pay a sum of 28,333 pesos and 5,000 pesos to each
widow and each of the wounded respectively. In exchange, Pajapan villagers would return
Florentino’s livestock (113 vaccinated head of cattle, 28 cows, 10 pregnant cows, 25 females
calves, 26 males calves, 1 toro, 5 horses).\footnote{57} The agreement was clearly unfair inasmuch as
Florentino paid very little to recuperate all his cattle which had been taken care of by the
comuneros of Pajapan for two years. The incident, however, had a significant impact as a “a

\footnote{55} Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.
\footnote{56} Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.
\footnote{57} Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.
catalyst for the land struggle" that was to develop in later years\textsuperscript{58}.

Immediately after the incident, Sixto Vargas exerted more pressure to obtain the implementation of the Presidential Resolution protecting the land from regional invaders and also fought to obtain a census update. These actions were favorable to the landless workers, small peasants and middle peasants since the execution of the Presidential Resolution would protect the communal land and force the SRA to acknowledge the unequal distribution of land in Pajapan. This may have led to concrete action for a land reform. The census update was also to their advantage because it would permit comuneros not listed to become part of those with agrarian rights, the first requirement in order to get legal access to land. The census update was also the first step toward a land reform which seemed to have been part of Sixto Vargas' intentions.

The Florentino incident forced the SRA to take action. On July 2, 1976, the State Delegate of the SRA in Xalapa wrote to the representative of "Programa Integrado de Desarrollo Económico Rural"\textsuperscript{59} for the South Tuxtlas region asking him to go to Pajapan and carry out the technical works needed to complement the Presidential Resolution\textsuperscript{60}.

Five days later, the State Delegation of the SRA issued a memorandum containing a great deal of useful information on what had happened and was happening in Pajapan\textsuperscript{61}. The memorandum indicated that even if a Presidential Resolution had been issued, many comuneros with agrarian rights still did not have access to land. Much of the land had been

\textsuperscript{58} Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 18, 1987.

\textsuperscript{59} Integrated Rural Economic Integrated Development Program (hereafter referred to as PIDER).

\textsuperscript{60} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis, July 02, 1976.

\textsuperscript{61} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis, "Informe sobre la comunidad Pajapan (Antecedentes), July 07, 1976."
concentrated in the hands of 33 well-to-do families of Pajapan.\textsuperscript{62} It also mentioned that as a consequence of the numerous complaints raised by the comuneros, three engineers were sent to Pajapan on February 2, 1976, by the State Delegate of the SRA in Xalapa, to organize a census update. The document stated, however, that these engineers were not able to complete the census due to internal problems between peasants and ranchers. The document also added that a representative of the Agrarian Regional Office of PIDER for the Southern Tuxtla area went to Pajapan to carry out the same technical works but was unable to do so because of the conflict between Pedro Florentino and Sixto Vargas\textsuperscript{63}. Nevertheless, a second assembly was set up for July 7 with the census update on the agenda. Finally, the document included a list (established by the personnel of PIDER) of 33 ranchers who owned a total of 14,530 hectares, with a maximum 1,300 hectares and a minimum of 80 hectares (see Appendix C)\textsuperscript{64}.

In Pajapan, the period immediately following the Florentino incident was very hectic. Sixto Vargas worked with the engineers of PIDER to carry out the update census;

After Pedro Florentino's conflict in 1976, there was a census done but this census did not have any result. He (Sixto Vargas) announced that he was going to do a census because he had received an order. There was an assembly in Pajapan and people gave their data, so our agrarian certificates would be sent. Two representatives of the Agrarian Office of Acayucan stayed here for a week to carry out their work. These representatives took all the information but nothing happened. Later on, we learned that the census had been refused\textsuperscript{65}.

\textsuperscript{62} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis, "Informe sobre la comunidad Pajapan (Antecedentes). July 07, 1976.

\textsuperscript{63} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. "Informe sobre la comunidad Pajapan (Antecedentes), July 07, 1976.

\textsuperscript{64} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. "Informe sobre la comunidad Pajapan (Antecedentes), July 07, 1976.

\textsuperscript{65} Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.
Vargas, however, was brought under the control of the Pro-Rancher formation. One
of the ranchers described how they managed the situation;

The movement initiated by Sixto Vargas fought for a census update. I went
with the older people of Pajapan. We (the ranchers) felt that a land redis-
tribution was coming, we knew we were wrong but we decided that we were
going to fight until the end. It was going to be the last "bronce" (quarrel). To
stop the census, we had to pressure the communal land commission presi-
dent, Sixto Vargas, so he could support our position and calm the people. Poli-
tics are a bit dirty...

At first, Sixto Vargas was right; he was supporting the small peasants and
landless workers. This is why we felt that we had to bring him on our side.
We called the attention of Sixto Vargas quite strongly so he would start to
support us. We were receiving a lot of support from the Regional Union of
ranchers (Southern Veracruz Ranchers Union) and the State Ranching Divi-
sion. We had contacts all over... We went and talked to the comuneros to calm
them. We were able to calm them down for a year. However, I thought that
this situation could not last much longer. I felt that the 905 comuneros had
to be able to use the land also.66

The 1976 census update was rejected, after much pressure had been exerted by the
ranchers. Sixto Vargas explained how his effort to get the new census was blocked;

After two days of work of the engineers, the ranchers realized there was a
census update going on. Then, they met in the house of Moises Hernandez
Eligio, who was the leader of the ranchers. Some day-workers ("jornaleros")
were also present and told me that they did not want to divide up the land
because they were employed by the ranchers.

After that meeting the ranchers went to Mexico to talk to the officials
of the CNC to tell them that there was no land problem in Pajapan. The ran-
chers told them that the CNC did not have any proof of the land
monopolization and that they were conforming to the law. Then, 27 or 28
ranchers and one of their day-workers went to Xalapa to testify that there was
no problem of land tenure in Pajapan and that there was no need for a census
update67.

The Pro-Rancher formation also wrote a letter to the Mexican President on July, 25,
1976, signed by 203 comuneros (ranchers, small ranchers and their day-workers), denouncing

66 Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 1987 (emphasis is
mine).

the visit of an engineer from the Agrarian Office of Acayucan (i.e. from PIDER) who had come to Pajapan about 15 days earlier. In this letter, the signatories argued that the majority of comuneros included in the basic census did not agree with the idea of parcelling the communal land. The letter also denounced the Communal Land Commission President, Sixto Vargas, for having been in power for more than the legal period of three years and for not having paid a single peso to either the Municipal Treasury or the State Revenue Office ("Hacienda del Estado") in Coatzaoalcos. They concluded the letter by requesting the dismissal of Sixto Vargas and the nomination of a new communal land commission president who could rapidly reimburse the different treasuries.\footnote{68}

It appeared that this action, combined with constant pressure, made Sixto Vargas less militant and paralyzed the struggles for the census update. Sixto Vargas stated that “after that (the pressure from the ranchers and their visit to Xalapa), I decided to stop fighting and I said, it is better not to do anything.”\footnote{69}

The State Delegation of the SRA nevertheless continued to order the establishment of the boundaries of the communal land but he no longer put pressure for a census update.\footnote{70} On October 26, 1976, the PIDER Delegation of the Southern Zone of the Tuxtla ordered an engineer, Enrique Hernandez Lira, to survey the communal land boundaries so that the Presi-

\footnotesize


\footnote{69} Interview with Sixto Vargas Lorenzo, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.

\footnote{70} See letter of July 28, and telegram of August 03, 1976. ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis and ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414.
dential Resolution could be implemented\textsuperscript{71}.

On November 17, 1976, Enrique Hernandez Lira went to Pajapan and announced that on November 24, an assembly would be organized for the establishment of the communal land boundaries. A week later, the Assembly was held and the final possession and definitive boundaries of the communal land were made official. Hernandez Lira found that the boundaries were in accordance with those contained in the Presidential Resolution of March 8, 1968. It should be noted that the act of assembly indicated that:

once the communal land are formally delivered to President of the Communal land Commission, according to the list of comuneros registered, a parcel of land should be conceded to each of them\textsuperscript{72}.

In spite of this, Sixto Vargas and the rest of the communal land administrators did not carry out any land reform. It seemed that pressure from the Pro-Rancher formation was strong enough to block and prevent such action. The census update as well as the distribution of the agrarian rights were also left up in the air until the next year.

On June 28, 1977, the State Delegate sent a letter to the General Director of the Communal Land of the SRA in Mexico stating that the director of State Delegation of the CAM on behalf of the comuneros of Pajapan requested the elaboration of a census update. However, the State Delegate felt the Directorate of Communal land was more competent to deal with the matter. No follow-up to this letter was made.

A year later, in June 1978, the State Delegate was told by letter that a new plan for

\textsuperscript{71} This order was given after the PIDER Delegation received an order on July 2, 1976 from the State Delegate of the SRA in Xalapa to execute the Presidential Resolution. The State Delegate justified his order by the letter sent by the General Secretary of the DAAC on August 13, 1968 to execute the Presidential Resolution! ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, October 26, 1976.

\textsuperscript{72} "Acta de posesión y deslinde definitivo total del reconocimiento y titulación de bienes comunales al poblado denominado "PAJAPAN", ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis, November 24, 1976."
the boundaries of the communal land should be carried out in response to requests made to the CNC on behalf of the comuneros of Pajapan.\footnote{ASRX. Expediente C-26 Bis, Letter, June 18, 1978.}

These two letters offer an insight into what was happening in Pajapan. The first letter illustrates the struggle of some landless workers, small peasants and middle peasants for a census update which would afford them to receive agrarian rights and also as a necessary step for a general land redistribution. The second letter demonstrates the resistance of the local and regional ranchers who were unhappy with the delimitation of the communal land which prevented them from claiming private parcels within the 19,158 hectares of communal land.

7. The Formation of the Pro-Peasant Formation: The Struggles to Change the Communal Land Administration and to Redistribute the Communal Land

At the end of 1976, Pajapan had a new municipal administration as well as a new local PRI Committee president, while the same communal land administration remained in power. The individuals occupying political positions in 1976 are presented in table six.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6: Individuals Occupying Official Positions at the End of 1976</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official Positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNAL LAND ADMINISTRATION (same as in 1973)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communal Land Commission</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Sixto Vargas Lorenzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Ramon Hernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: Pedro Antonio Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vigilance Council</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Simon Antonio Hernandez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Dario Villanueva de la Torre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES**

| President: Emilian Trujillo Antonio | Rancher |
| SInd. Uni.: Epifanio Matias Martinez | Rancher |
| Reg. Uni.: Pascuel Pablo Martinez | PPS Leader |
| Reg. Sup.: Lazaro Palomino Patraca |

PRI COMMITTEE

| President: Simon Antonio Hernandez | Vigilance Council |

\footnote{ASRX. Expediente C-26 Bis, Letter, June 18, 1978.}
An important change in local politics was the participation of an opposition party in the municipal elections, the PPS. Pascual Pablo was the leader of the Local PPS Committee. He was living in Batajan, a hamlet beside Pajapan. This party was able to obtain an official position in the 1976 elections when Pascual Pablo became the sole alderman. During the same period, a committee called "Defensa Pro-Campesino" was established and led by Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, brother of Roman Hernandez Antonio, the PARM's local leader. On August 31, 1978, Gabriel Hernandez sent a telegram to the State Delegate of the SRA in Xalapa requesting that an order be given to detain Anastacio Martinez Reyes, a land invader of Pajapan who forced out six peasants cultivating 3 hectares of land. The Regional Agrarian Office headed by Carrioza did not pay any attention to the request. If justice is not done for the peasant, there will be violence in Pajapan.

This telegram illustrates the tensions developing in Pajapan. On the one hand, the ranchers continued to look for new land to expand. On the other hand, the landless workers, small and middle peasants, and some small ranchers were exerting pressure to secure access to land. The first struggle undertaken by the PARM was to remove Sixto Vargas and the rest of the communal land administrators who had been in office for more than five years (a normal term is a three-year period [Article 44 of the ARFL]).

The demotion of the communal land administration was also requested for other reasons, as explained Roman Hernandez Antonio:

We (PARM representatives) went to Coatzacoalcos and Mexico to see if Sixto Vargas had paid the land tenure taxes and we discovered that he had not paid anything to the State Treasury. We wanted to remove Sixto Vargas because

---

74 Pro-Peasant Defence.

75 ASRX. Expediente C-26 Bis, Telegram, August 31, 1978.
he was not paying\textsuperscript{76}.

His brother Gabriel added some interesting details:

My brother ran against Sixto Vargas as President of the Communal land Commission, because he had doubts about the use of the money paid as taxes for the land tenure. We started to investigate and no proof of how the money was used was presented. We discovered that Pajapan owed about 1,600,000 pesos to the Department of Land Tenure of the Federal Revenue Office ("Departamento de Catastro, Hacienda Federal") in Coatzacoalcos\textsuperscript{77}.

The idea of land reform was also among the reasons for dismissing Sixto Vargas. The land redistribution was an essential component of the PARM's agenda. Another comuneros explained what was happening:

When Sixto Vargas was the Communal land Commission President, the small peasants organized to remove him. They organized around Roman Hernandez to remove Sixto Vargas and to struggle to obtain a land redistribution, because Sixto Vargas was with the "caciques" [i.e. the ranchers]. The people were struggling to remove Sixto and then to distribute the land\textsuperscript{78}.

The strategies employed by the Committee of the PARM to organize elections for a new communal land administration consisted of several trips to Mexico, to the National Secretariat and to the Regional Committee of the CNC in Minatitlán\textsuperscript{79}. Roman Hernandez described the process leading to a change in the Communal Land Authorities:

The Committee (Regional Peasant Committee) supported us when we pressured for an election. Finally, I was proposed as candidate. To have the elections organized, it took us three years of struggle. We started fighting in 1976\textsuperscript{80}.

In March 1979 the Regional Agrarian Office of the SRA sent a representative to

\textsuperscript{76} Interview with Roman Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 27, 1987.

\textsuperscript{77} Interview with Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{78} Interview with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28, 1987.

\textsuperscript{79} Interview with Roman Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 27, 1987.

\textsuperscript{80} Interview with Roman Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 27, 1987.
organize the elections for new Communal land Administrators. On March 3, 1979, the first
covocation was announced for Saturday, March 17, 1979. On that day, the general
assembly was held and the only party presenting a panel of candidates was the PARM (see
Appendix D) and thus they were elected by acclamation. The results of this election were
cancelled since neither the communal land nor the municipal administrators in office signed
the election act. The Pro-Rancher formation, opposed to the elections, had not proposed
its own slate.

New elections of the communal land administration were held later in May 28, 1979.
This time two groups were competing: the PARM and the PRI. The former represented the
interests of the Pro-Peasant formation, and the latter, the Pro-Rancher formation. The
elections resulted in the victory of the PRI panel. Many informants remembered the election
day:

· When the time of the election came for a new Communal land President,
  there was nobody to replace Sixto Vargas. Then, there was a meeting in the
  house of Sixto Vargas of the Senior villagers ("viejitos"). Most ranchers chose
  me [Ramon Hernandez Martinez]. On the day of the election, the supporters

---

81 In reality, this convocation constituted the second attempt to launch a general assembly.
A first convocation had been announced on January 31, 1979 and proposed the elections for
February 14, 1979 but neither the municipal president nor the communal land administrators
signed the convocation. This demonstrates the reluctance of the Pro-Rancher formation to let
the other group participate in political institutions. However, the Pro-Rancher formation could
not refuse to have an election any longer since they knew that Sixto Vargas’ team had been
in place for almost six years. (A copy of the "Primera Convocación", March 3, 1979. To respect
anonymity, whenever a document was encountered in Pajapan, it will be presented as
"Archives of Pajapan").

82 It is interesting to mention that during the assembly the representative of the SRA
requested an audit of the communal land administration treasury. Sixto Vargas told the Assem-
bly that he had everything in his house and that he had to go there to get them. But he never
came back to the Assembly. After a while somebody was sent to Sixto Vargas’ house to look
for him. He came back saying that Vargas was not in his house and had apparently "disappea-
red". The assembly had to resume without the audit.

83 Archives of Pajapan, March 17, 1986.
the PRI killed a toro and there was a big fiesta and beer.\textsuperscript{84}

- On the day of the elections, the caciques killed a toro in order to get some votes for the PRI. Since many people were hungry they supported the candidate of the PRI. Roman did not accept to form the Vigilance Council, but still after the elections, we kept fighting for the land issues.\textsuperscript{85}

- When the people saw that it was a hard struggle, about 600 "comuneros" showed up. But it was hard to win the election. When the ranchers realized that Roman was going to win, they pressured their day-workers to vote for their candidate. They had a "fiesta" and killed some toros.\textsuperscript{86}

The PARM's panel could have formed the Vigilance Council as the ARFL specifies,\textsuperscript{87} but it refused. Therefore, the elected Communal Land administrators were all from the PRI panel. Nevertheless, it did not take long before the newly elected president of the Communal land Commission (Ramon Hernandez Martinez) contacted Roman Hernandez Antonio: "A week after his elections, Ramon Hernandez came to visit me and asked that we work toge-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{84} Interview with Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 29, 1987.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Interview with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28, 1987.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Interview with Santos Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, October 02, 1987.
\item \textsuperscript{87} Article 40 of the ARFL stated that the minority panel during the elections would form the Vigilance Council. This clause was modified by Decree in December 1983, and now the Vigilance Council needs to be elected by the General Assembly as with the Communal Land Commission. According to Chavez Padron, this modification was done to avoid divisions and conflicts within the ejidos and the communities (Chavez Padron, 1987: 95).
\item \textsuperscript{88} Because of this, some comuneros ended up in the Vigilance Council without really wanting it: "They (the opponents of the PRI) were trying to elect Roman. They were working with the PARM. They went into the elections, but the majority did not vote for them, because the PARM was against the municipal authorities and the majority of people were favorable to the PRI. Before this election, Simon Antonio, local PRI Committee President asked me to go to Sixto Vargas' house. There, the ranchers told me that I was going to form the Vigilance Council because so far, I had not been corrupted ("manchado") by politics. I accepted thinking that if Ramon Hernandez Martinez was going to win, Roman Hernandez Antonio and the PARM would form the Vigilance Council. The problem came when Roman did not accept to unite with Ramon, then I had to be on the Vigilance Council (Interview with Pablo Martinez Tino, Pajapan, October 01, 1987)."
\end{itemize}
ther. This seems to indicate that the Pro-Peasant formation was becoming more and more successful in organizing opposition against the Pro-Rancher formation.

Some ranchers had joined the Pro-Peasant formation through the PARM. This indicates that the consolidation of the Pro-Peasant formation went hand in hand with a weakening of the Pro-Rancher formation. The support of certain ranchers for the Pro-Peasant formation, and thus for land redistribution, seemed to have been the result of divisions within the Pro-Rancher formation. Some ranchers realized that the land would have to be redistributed sooner or later.

The Communal land Administrators election was followed by the formation of an coalition between Pascual Pablo, leader of the PPS in Batajapan, and Roman Hernandez Antonio from the PARM.

In July 1979, a letter was sent to the Mexican President by the Pro-Peasant formation. This letter followed an assembly reuniting 151 comuneros listed in the Presidential Resolution and 128 comuneros not registered. The assembly denounced the monopolization of the communal land by 68 landholders, and requested the redistribution of the communal land. It also requested that a census up-date be conducted in order to give agrarian rights to the 128 comuneros not listed in the Presidential Resolution. This letter clearly demonstrates

---


90 Basilio Huervo Abad, Donaciano Huervo Abad, Santos Hernandez Martinez, and Gudielio Antonio Hernandez.

91 Pascual Pablo recalled the history of the PPS; "The PPS arrived in Batajapan in 1973. It came here in the context of the elections of a Federal Deputy who was trying to get the support of the population. From 1973 until 1979, I was collaborating with the work of the PPS, but it was hard since the people ("pueblo") were very loyal to the PRI" (Interview with Pascual Pablo, Pajapan, September 19, 1987).

92 Archives of Pajapan, July 02, 1979.
the alliance that existed within the Pro-Peasant formation between the registered comuneros
and those who wanted a census update to be carried out.

Later in 1979, an election for new municipal administrators was organized. For this
election, the PARM and the PPS were aligned and ran under the banner of the PPS. This was
because the Regional Committee of the PPS in Acyucan offered better logistical support for
the electoral campaign. Roman Hernandez Antonio explained: "the PARM said they could not
struggle, this is why we went with the PPS". The PPS presented Santos Hernandez Martinez
as their candidate for municipal president who was one of the ranchers supporting the land
reform.

During this period, the comuneros were informed of the possible expropriation of their
land and the construction of a major industrial project in the vicinity of Pajapan. It seemed,
according to an informant, that this may have worked against the PPS;

In these days, we could hear about the Industrial Harbour. The people were
feeling that they should go with the PRI to protect their interests. This was
the time that the PPS lost the municipal elections.

The municipal elections were held in October, and the PRI won. It was clear, however,
that the opposition had become stronger than ever. The next chapter discusses the results of
the 1979 elections, when the first contacts were made by the Mexican government with the
communal land administration and the municipal administration to inform them that the land
was about to be expropriated.

In 1979, in Pajapan, the PARM and the PPS intensified their activities to denounce the
concentration of lands before the Mexican Government. By mid-October 1979, the State

representative of the "Dirección General de Derechos Agrarios" requested information about legal protective measures (habeas corpus, "amparo") issued by the "Director General de Asuntos Agrarios" of the SRA in Mexico. These requests appeared to be related to the activities of Pascual Pablo, as he explained in an interview:

I went directly to the SRA in Mexico. I went in September and October 1979. And from there to Xalapa to the General State Attorney ("Procurador General de Justicia del Estado") to free the small peasants who were being harassed by the ranchers. There, they gave me 'protection mandates'.

Apparently the rancher, Epifanio Morales, ordered the arrest of a group of comuneros whom he accused of having killed one of his animals and cutting firewood on his fenced land. This illustrates the on-going conflicts that existed between the Pro-Rancher and the Pro-Peasant formations.

In November 1979, a new order was given by the General Director of the Communal land Division of the SRA in Mexico to send personnel to Pajapan to implement the Presidential Resolution. Similar orders were then given by Chief of the Southern Zone Brigade to an engineer Arturo Vargas to make some revisions in cooperation with the Regional Agrarian Office of Chinameca. During a general assembly held on November 27,

---

95 General Directorate of the Agrarian Rights.

96 General Director of Judicial Affairs.


99 A representative of the SRA in Mexico, A. De Jesus Castillo Cruz was sent to revise the execution of the Presidential Resolution. Castillo Cruz encountered some deficiencies in the topographic calculations (i.e. detailed mapping of the communal lands) (ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, September 11, 1979; and, ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. Letter, November 07, 1979).

100 On November 22, 1979, the General Director of the Communal Lands Division of the SRA in Mexico wrote to the State Agrarian Delegate to order the execution of the Presidential (continued...)
1979, the communal land and municipal administration approved the revisions\textsuperscript{101}. This time the delimitations of the boundaries and the tographic measures were accepted by the administrative units of the SRA\textsuperscript{102}. These revisions completed the delimitation of the boundaries of the communal land. However, the distribution of the agrarian rights for the comuneros listed in the Presidential Resolution as well as a census update had yet to be completed.

The announcement of the expropriation of 5,154 hectares of the communal land was to dramatically influence the struggle of both political formations in redefining a new political project and the corresponding alliances. The expropriation also favoured the Pro-Peasant formation. The next chapter provides a detailed analysis of the political struggles surrounding the expropriation.

D. POLITICAL DYNAMIC

This chapter delved into the political struggles revolving around the distribution of the communal land. The analysis of the class structure presented at the beginning of the discussion showed an increasing internal differentiation of classes. A five class typology was developed on the basis of a fundamental conflict between the ranching classes (dominant classes) and the peasant classes (subordinate classes). This conflict was reflected in the

\textsuperscript{100}(...continued)

Resolution. The latter answered five days later stating again that the Presidential Resolution has been executed since November 1976 and that there was no need for any revisions (ASRAM. Expediente C-26 Bis. Letter, November 22, 1979; and ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414. Letter, November 14, 1979).


\textsuperscript{102} ASRAM. Expediente 276.1/2414; and ASRAM. Expediente C-26 Bis. December 06, 1979, January 22, March 07, and May 06, 1980.
political formations; the Pro-Rancher being dominant and the Pro-Peasant being subordinate. The dominant formation comprised the ranchers who had control over most local political institutions and many linkages with the regional economic and political forces. Its political project was the expansion of the ranching activities and the concentration of the land. Regional State institutions supported the political project of the formation, by delaying the procedures which would have lead to: 1) the execution of the Presidential Resolution; 2) the census update and; 3) the change of the Communal Land Administrators. The Presidential Resolution actually changed very little in the actual distribution of land.

The landless workers, small peasants and the middle peasants did not organize into a formation until the second half of the 1970s. The Pedro Florentino confrontation helped to organize the subordinate classes. The Pro-Peasant formation did not have control over local institutions. Its strength came from the number of comuneros supporting it. Although, the Pro-Peasant formation had few outside contacts, its alliance with a national opposition party became a key element in its move to organize. By the end of the 1970s, this formation was sufficiently developed to challenge the Pro-Rancher formation. Nevertheless, the land tenure system and the political structure remained unchanged.

Class conflict prevailed during this period which was characterized by: 1) one dominant homogenous formation controlling the political institutions, in alliance with the regional forces (ranchers, Southern Veracruz Ranchers Association, Regional PRI Committee, State Deputies, etc.) and promoting its political project (control over land and political institutions); 2) one subordinate formation including the majority of the comuneros, with little control over the political institutions and few external linkages (apart from the opposition political parties, i.e., PPS and PARM); 3) the State supporting the dominant formation (although contradictory positions were taken at the regional and national levels, the former
in support of the Pajapan dominant formation, and the latter in conformity with the Law).

These characteristics suggest that by the end of the 1970s, the conditions that lead to the emergence of a peasant movement were present. Nevertheless, it is difficult to determine whether a peasant movement was actually formed at the end of the 1970s. There was however, a growing mobilization among the subordinate classes toward control of the local political institutions and for a land reform, the two being closely related.

It should be noted that agrarian laws were used by both political formations to justify their political project. Likewise with the Mexican bureaucracy many of the delays in the execution of the Presidential Resolution was a consequence of bureaucratic requirements while also being subject to political influence.

The ranching classes coopted some of the landless working for them as day-workers. The Rock Extraction Incident illustrated how the low cost of this labour force was of importance to the ranchers. It explains why the Municipal President took as a radical measure as the taxation of 50% of the wage offered to the workers. The cancellation of this project allowed the ranchers to regain control over their day-workers who were left with little bargaining power. The letter signed by 203 comuneros denouncing the 1976 census, the election of Ramon Martinez Hernandez as Communal Land Commission President, and of ranchers as municipal presidents illustrate the control the ranchers had over the electoral process and their ability to coopt their day-workers to vote for the ranchers' candidates.
CHAPTER IV

THE EXPROPRIATION AND THE REDISTRIBUTION

OF THE COMMUNAL LAND, 1979-1983

The previous chapter indicated that the Pro-Peasant formation (composed of the landless workers, the small peasants, and the middle peasants) fought to secure access to land. It also demonstrated that the establishment of the boundaries of the communal land and the change of the communal land administrators did not threaten the control over most of the communal land by the Pro-Rancher formation (composed of the small ranchers and large ranchers). Moreover, by the end of the 1970s, the request for land redistribution and for a census update were never addressed because of the internal opposition by the powerful Pro-Rancher formation and the reluctance of the State Delegation and Regional Office of the SRA to undertake the technical work required.

The next two chapters examine how the expropriation of 25% (5,154 hectares) of the communal land for the construction of an industrial complex by the Mexican Government created the possibility for redistribution of the non-expropriated land. These chapters describe and analyze the political dynamics from the end of 1979 when the first contacts were established by the Mexican Government with the communal land administrators to inform them about the coming expropriation and the payment for the expropriated land and the final of land redistribution and in 1982.

The present chapter covers the period between the announcement of the expropriation in October 1979 and the General Assembly of November 02, 1980. The first section describes the project for the construction of the industrial port and the subsequent land expropriation.
The second presents the class structure of Pajapan at that time. The third shows how the Pro- Peasant formation was able to obtain a land redistribution. Finally, the last section summarizes the previous sections and examines the political dynamics involved in the land redistribution. During this period, the same Pro-Peasant and Pro-Rancher formations continued to confront each other as they had in the 1970s.

A. THE INDUSTRIAL PORT OF THE LAGUNA DEL OSTION AND THE EXPROPRIATION

Planning for the Industrial Port "Laguna del Otion" began in 1978. The project was part of a plan to construct four industrial ports: Altamirano, Lazaro Cardenas, Salina Cruz and Laguna del Otion. These industrial ports were being promoted by Jose Lopez Portillo's administration in the "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano"\(^1\) approved by Federal Executive Decree on May 12, 1978\(^2\) as part of the Federal Government's policy for the integrated development of Mexican coastal regions (Gaceta Oficial February 14, 1979)\(^3\).

Through its program of industrial port construction, the Federal Government aimed:

1) to assist in a more adequate demographic redistribution of the population in the national territory to permit an urban and industrial deconcentration;

2) to develop modern and efficient harbours permitting the development of all means of communication; to eliminate the conflicting zones which create inflationary pressures. Therefore, these harbours would encourage the regional development and utilization of the existing coastal resources;

3) to propitiate the establishment of efficient systems for the management, conservation, and transformation of primary goods, including those produced in the coastal region and those

\(^1\) National Plan of Urban Development

\(^2\) Published in the Diario Oficial, May 19, 1978.

\(^3\) The request was earlier published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación on January 28, 1980. A copy of the Diario Oficial de la Federación was sent from the Agrarian State Delegate, Hesiquio Bravo Fernandez to Ramon Hernandez on April 15, 1980 to inform him of the request of expropriation (Archives of the Centro de Estudios Agrarios / Xalapa (hereafter referred to as ACEAX). Letter, April 15, 1980).
distributed all over the national territory;

4) to equip the industrial ports with installations to provide for the movement and storage of large quantities of national as well as imported primary and semi-manufactured goods (Gaceta Oficial, February 14, 1979: 4).

Under the National Plan of Urban Development, the "Programa de Estímulos para la Desconcentración Territorial de las Actividades Industriales" selected the Coatzacoalcos region as one of the priority zones for the following reasons: 1) its excellent geographic location at one end of a isthmic corridor; 2) its newly constructed regional airport; 3) its easy access to the main centers of internal consumption due to the existing regional transportation system, 4) the existence of a maritime bridge of approximately five kilometers spanning the Coatzacoalcos river, and; 5) the existence of population centers (Coatzacoalcos, Minatitlan, Cosoleacaque, Pajapan, Pajaritos, La Cangrejera and the future Morelos Complex) which are available to give sufficient integrated support to the zone (Gaceta Oficial, February 14, 1979: 4). The zone was also chosen for its great potential for growth because of the abundant sources of primary and hydroelectric energy, its large sulphur and potassium deposits and its contiguous location to a tropical land-and-cattle farm zone offering enormous potential for development (Government of Mexico, 1979).

The construction of the Industrial Port Laguna del Otion necessitated the expropriation of part of the communal land of Pajapan. On October 10, 1979, the "Secretaria de Asuntos Humanos y Obras Publicas" requested from the SRA, the expropriation of 5,154 hectares of land including the buildings and goods on these lands belonging to the Municipality of Pajapan. Among the legal bases permitting such an expropriation, it is worth noting that Art.112, Fraction VI of the ARFL considers the creation, improvement, conserva-

---

4 Program of Impulsion to Industrial Activities National Decentralization.
5 Secretariat of Human Settlements and Public Works (hereafter referred to as SAHOP).
tion and the growth of population centers and their means of subsistence to be in the public good (Chavez Padron, 1987: 143). The expropriated land and goods were to be used for the construction of the Industrial Port of "Laguna del Otion. In its request, the SAHOP committed itself to paying the corresponding indemnization as prescribed by Art.343 of the ARFL and also guaranteed that each ejidatario affected by the expropriation would receive two urban lots within the Industrial Port urban zone.

The scale of the project can be illustrated by a description of the planned industrial park. It would necessitate the use of 500 hectares located within the expropriated zone to be developed over time (100 hectares in 1979, 200 in 1980 and 200 in 1981). The document states that

the proposed area is located 30 km, west of Coatzacoalcos in the Municipality of Pajapan. The land tenure is communal with a small portion of private property, which creates less of a problem for its immediate acquisition (Government of Mexico. 1979 [emphasis mine]).

The Government assumed that the communal land tenure system would be easier to expropriate compared to private properties. The industrial zone would be divided into six zones in the following proportions (Government of Mexico, 1979):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Utilization</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Zone</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Zone</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Green Spaces</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicraft Zone</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial and Civic Zone</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Areas</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The zone would have the following services: drinkable water, sewer, electricity, telephone, natural gas, paved streets and street lights. The economic and social justifications for the industrial park were:

1) to support the industrial development of the region in agreement with the National Plan of Urban Development;
2) to favour the development of specific areas according to the strategies of each population center;

3) to equilibrate the industrial-urban development of the region of Coatzacoalcos;

4) to control the pollution of the city of Coatzacoalcos;

5) to use in a rational manner the human, economic and financial resources of the region;

6) to reduce rural dispersion and urban concentration through the creation of sources of employment together with a socio-economic infrastructure contributing to the improvement of the standard of living in the city (Government of Mexico, 1979: 9).

This document estimated the total cost of the industrial park at 75 billion pesos, of which, 7.500 billion would go towards the expropriation of lands (15 pesos per square meter), 56.500 billion would be allocated for construction of the infrastructure, and the remaining 11.000 billion would be used for the engineering works (Government of Mexico, 1979: 6). The expropriatory decree permitting the acquisition of the communal land was signed on April 23, 1980 and published in the Diario Oficial, on July 10 of the same year. The following section will analyse the class structure of Pajapan before proceeding with an examination of the reaction of the Pajapeños to the expropriation and planned industrial project.

B. THE CLASS STRUCTURE

Chevalier and Buckles (1988) have analysed the economic structure of Pajapan during the 1970s and 1980s. According to their estimates, prior to the land redistribution, 16,013 hectares of arable land were occupied by Pajapeños and the total number of cattle was approximately 11 thousand. Landless workers without cattle of their own constituted 61% of all households. Small peasants represented 20% of the households; they had access to par-

---

ceels of lands between 1 and 12 hectares and may have owned between 1 to 4 head of cattle. Middle peasants controlling parcels of land between 13 and 24 hectares with up to 9 head of cattle formed 11% of the total households. Small ranchers constituted only 4% of all households. They had parcels of lands between 41 and 99 hectares and their herds consisted of 10 to 24 head of cattle. Finally, the medium and large ranchers made up 4% of the all households controlled more than 40 hectares each and owned more than 25 head of cattle\(^7\) (see Figures VII and VIII).

Chevalier and Buckles (1988) also estimate the proportion of communal land controlled by each class. The small peasants occupied 11% of the estimated 16,013 hec. of arable lands, the middle peasants 31%, the small ranchers 11%, and the large ranchers 58%.

**TABLE 7: Control of the Communal Land in 1979**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lands (hectares)</th>
<th>Cattle (head)</th>
<th>Households (%)</th>
<th>Total (hectare) (%)</th>
<th>Social Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 12</td>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 24</td>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 40</td>
<td>10 - 26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 99</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 100</td>
<td>&gt; 50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,476</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16,013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

\(^7\) Of these, a few households controlled tracts of land of over 500 hectares and up to 500 head of cattle.
FIGURE VII: Landlessness in the 1970s

FIGURE VIII: Pre-Reform Land Tenure

According to table seven, the Pro-Peasant formation (landless workers, small and middle peasants) encompassed 92% of all households but had access only to 29% of the communal land. In contrast, the Pro-Rancher formation (all ranchers) made up 8% of all households and controlled 71% of the communal land. These figures illustrate the tremendous inequality of the land distribution at the end of the 1970s. This unequal land distribution was to be challenged following the announcement of the expropriation.

C. ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL STRUGGLES

This section shows how the expropriation and resulting political struggles led to a significant change in the distribution of the communal land. It will also demonstrate how the ranching classes reacted to the land expropriation and elaborated new political strategies.

1. The Municipal Elections of 1979

The previous chapter described the process that led to the elections of new communal land administrators in 1979. In October of the same year, new Municipal Authorities as well as a new PRI Committee President were elected all of them representative of the ranching classes. The PPS presented an opposition panel during these elections and obtained sufficient votes to win the position of "regidor único" (sole alderman). The panel of the PPS comprised the following candidates: for municipal president, Santos Hernandez Martinez, for trustee, Donaciano Huervo, and for alderman, Alejo Martinez. The three of them were either large ranchers or small ranchers. The presence of ranchers in the opposition party suggests an internal division within the Pro-Rancher formation and the support of some ranchers for land redistribution. An informant mentioned that at one point, at least four small ranchers and
three large ranchers supported the PPS\(^8\). Apparently, these ranchers perceived the land reform as a necessary measure to redress the highly unequal distribution of land. In addition, the smaller ranchers may have started to feel threatened by the on-going expansion of the larger ranchers. According to Santos Hernandez Martinez, the PPS obtained approximately 530 votes and the PRI 1,000. He explained these results in the following terms:

The PRI received the majority of the votes because those who voted for the PPS were only the villagers of Pajapan whereas those who voted for the PRI were from the hamlets: Chocolapa, Peña Hermosa, and Minzapan. These hamlets were not aware that struggles for land distribution were going on in Pajapan. Some of these hamlets are also "ejidos", they were not as concerned by the land redistribution and therefore they supported the PRI\(^9\).

Even with the growing opposition that was developing in the village of Pajapan against the domination of the Pro-Rancher formation, the latter continued to be able to maintain its control over important official positions, as shown by Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official Positions</th>
<th>Earlier Functions</th>
<th>Social Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNAL LAND ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Raimon Hernandez Martinez</td>
<td>Sec.Com.Lands Com.</td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Gonzalo Dominguez Hernandez</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: Camilo Ciriaco Martinez</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigilancy Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Pablo Martinez Tino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Eleutorio Cruz Reyes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal: Wenceslao Martinez Osorio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Abel Hernandez Martinez</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind.Uni.: Pedro Martinez Vargas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin. Sup.: Sebastian Silvestre Morales</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. Sup.: Alejo Martinez Osorio</td>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRI COMMITTEE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President: Emiliano Trujillo Antonio</td>
<td>Municipal President</td>
<td>Rancher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: same as Table 2, Chapter 2
Sources: same as Table 2, Chapter 2 except for Gaceta Oficial, Numero Extraordinario, Tomo CXXI, Num.142, 27 de Noviembre 1979: p.120-121.

\(^8\) Interview with Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, October 04, 1987.

\(^9\) Interview with Santos Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, October 02, 1987.
As in previous elections, the ranching classes composing the Pro-Rancher formation still controlled the official positions. Rumours of the coming expropriation may even have favored the Pro-Rancher formation. One informant explained why: "In the days when we heard about the industrial port, the people felt that they should support the PRI in order to protect their interests".10

2. The Announcement of the Expropriation

The timing of the first indications of the expropriation is widely debated in Pajapan and form part of the political culture of the village. It is difficult to determine with any precision what the Pajapeños knew and when they learned about the expropriation. It is clear, however, that during the second half of 1979, there were many rumours circulating in Pajapan about the coming expropriation. According to informants and to a letter sent from the Director of Land and Water of the SRA in Mexico, the first contacts between the representatives of the different government offices responsible for the expropriation, and the Pajapan Communal land Administrators were made on October 31, 1979 during a meeting in Jicacal.11

The communal land administrators and some inhabitants of Jicacal were the only ones present at the meeting in Jicacal.12 According to the ex-representative of the "Fondo Nacio-


nal para el Desarrollo Portuario\textsuperscript{13} one of the main agencies responsible for the construction of the Industrial Port. "[t]he first meeting was held in Jicacal because we had already made contact in Las Barrillas\textsuperscript{14} (Las Barrillas is an ejido beside Pajapan's communal land). The first meeting in Jicacal marked the beginning of a series of controversies surrounding the expropriation. The reactions of the comuneros of Jicacal that attended this meeting were quite positive when they learned that an expropriation was coming:

In 1979 [...], Fidel Hernandez, Jicacal Municipal Agent, convened an Assembly during which he told us that there was going to be an expropriation (nobody even knew what an expropriation was). Fidel told us that this month, people from Acayucan had come to talk to him about a very big project. I [Narcisso Cruz] understood that Fidel was in favour of that project. He said that for the well-being of his people, he was not going to negotiate. He told us that we should accept since we were going to be paid. The people went home with a smile on their faces because they felt they were going to receive a lot of money\textsuperscript{15}.

In Pajapan, however, the reactions were not as positive. When Ramon Hernandez, President of the Communal Land Commission, returned to Pajapan, he organized a General Assembly to announce that an expropriation was coming. The comuneros reacted negatively to the announcement, especially the ranchers who were concentrated on the lands about to be expropriated.

During the Assembly, Ramon Hernandez was accused of having sold the communal land, receiving money from the government officials and signing papers authorizing the expropriation\textsuperscript{16}. An informant described what happened during that General Assembly.

\textsuperscript{13} Port Development National Fund (hereafter referred to as FONDEPORT).

\textsuperscript{14} Interview with Francisco Morosini, Ex-Director of the FONDEPORT Office in Coatzacoalcos, Coatzacoalcos, October 14, 1987.

\textsuperscript{15} Interview with Narcisso Cruz, Pajapan, September 27, 1987.

\textsuperscript{16} Interviews with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Santos Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 28, and October 02, 1987
We brought Ramon to the park and asked him why he signed these papers. He said that he had been strongly pressured to sign. Pascual Pablo and Roman Hernandez of the PPS then said, let us change him now. The people wanted to put Ramon in jail because he had signed these papers without telling the people. Ramon was saying that the evil was done, therefore: the papers were signed.

During that Assembly, the comuneros requested Ramon Hernandez, Communal land Commission President, to insure that any further meeting about the expropriation be conducted in the village of Pajapan. For many landless peasants, the future industry represented a possibility of employment and therefore, an improvement in their economic situation. whereas for the ranchers the expropriation was a direct threat to their interests since they were the ones controlling the land. In response to the accusations of having sold the communal land during the assembly in Jicacal, Ramon Hernandez and Pablo Tino, Communal land Commission and Vigilance Council presidents respectively, argued that:

- They (government officials) came to tell us that there was going to be an Assembly in Jicacal. During that Assembly, we were told that the expropriation had been done and that Sixto Vargas had signed papers permitting the expropriation. I did not sign any.

- In October 1979 (October 15), "Petroleos Mexicanos" asked us to go to a meeting in Jicacal. There we were told that there was going to be an expropriation. Sixto has already signed a paper in which he was stating that he agreed on the expropriation....During that assembly nothing was signed.

Whether papers were signed or not during that Assembly is ultimately of little importance since on that date the Expropriatory Decree had not yet been issued, and the comuneros of Pajapan could not stop the project. To make the matters worse, the comuneros

---

19 Mexican Petroleum (hereafter referred to as PEMEX)
20 Interview with Pablo Martinez Tino, Pajapan, October 01, 1987.
did not know how much they were going to be paid for the land tenure and for the goods within the expropriated zone. Following the announcement of the coming expropriation, the ranchers:

organized themselves and went to the Regional Ranchers Association in Coatzacoalcos and looked for assistance because they did not want to lose any of their lands. In these days, the ranchers owned all the communal land.

3. **The General Assembly of January 26, 1980**

The next meeting with government officials was held in the village of Pajapan on January 26, 1980. This time it was a General Assembly open to all the comuneros. For the occasion, several officials from different government offices were present: SAHOP, SRA, SARH, "Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Transportes", "Secretaria de Presupuestos y Programación" (hereafter referred to as SPP), PEMEX, and FONDEPORT. There were also representatives from the CNC and the "Coordinadora Nacional de Pueblos Indigenas" who claimed that they represented the interests of the comuneros. This general assembly was primarily an information session during which the different officials explained, with maps and sketches, the project of the Industrial Port of the "Laguna del Ostion" - its different components and its impact on the community - as well as the expropriation of 5,154 hectares of the communal land. The officials explained that the lands would be expropriated through a Presidential

---

22 Transports and Communications Secretariat (hereafter referred to as SCT).
23 Secretariat of the Budget and Planning.
25 National Coordination of Indigenous People (hereafter referred to as CNPI).
Decree, according to ARFL (Art. 112 to 127)\textsuperscript{27}. The comuneros were told that they would receive an indemnization for both the land and the private goods on the lands ("bienes distintos a la tierra") and "they were going to be paid according to the market value of the lands"\textsuperscript{28}.

The officials promised important changes in Pajapan. They affirmed that the industry would bring more people to Pajapan and more employment for the youth, therefore, the young people would not have to go to the cities to look for employment\textsuperscript{29}. One informant remembered that "PEMEX promised 34 different sources of employment!\textsuperscript{30}. The comuneros were also told that Pajapan would receive a secondary school, a new Municipal Palace and a market. The officials also promised that they would pave the streets and develop public services.

After the presentations by the different officials, Sergio Martinez Aleman\textsuperscript{31} submitted a list of 21 requests from the inhabitants of Pajapan. Martinez Aleman explained; "I submitted my 21 points because we (the comuneros) told the officials that we were not opposed to the industrial harbour but we needed protection\textsuperscript{32}.

\textsuperscript{27} Chavez Padron, 1987: 143-156.
\textsuperscript{28} Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.
\textsuperscript{29} Interview with Demetrio Bautista Hernandez, Cosoleacaque, October 19, 1987.
\textsuperscript{30} Interview with Simon Antonio Antonio, Pajapan, October 07, 1987.
\textsuperscript{32} Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan. September 23, 1987. The ex-director of FONDEPORT Office in Coatzacoalcos confirmed the promises that were given by the officials, "during that assembly, the comuneros made up a list of 21 requests to be fulfilled by the Government" (Interview with Francisco Morosini, Ex-Director of the FONDEPORT Office in Coatzacoalcos. Coatzacoalcos, October 14, 1987).
The 21 points included the following requests; employment for the comuneros expropriated, resettlement of these comuneros in zones with electricity, sewer and drinkable water, a rock pulveriser for making cement, a primary and secondary school, and a technical school to prepare the comuneros to work in industry, etc. (Martinez and Rodriguez 1984: 13). It is worth noting that according to Martinez Aleman, those who prepared the list of points with him were Ramon Martinez, Abel Hernandez, Emiliano Trujillo, Roman Gonzalez and José Luis Antonio, all ranchers and key political actors in the village (except perhaps José Luis Antonio).

At the end of the assembly, a vote was conducted to determine if the people agreed with the project. A comunero who attended the meeting gave the following description of this vote;

The representatives then said that they were to conduct an inquiry to know if people wanted the expropriation. During that Assembly, the ranchers said "no", but the poor peasants said "yes" because they wanted work. Then the people voted and the majority voted yes. The ranchers were opposed because they were making a lot of money out of their cattle.33

The Communal Land Commission President also acknowledged the opposition of the ranchers; "about 250 ranchers were standing in front of the church and said that they did not want the expropriation."34

As mentioned above, some ranchers had however prepared a list of requests. This seemed to indicate that some of the ranchers were aware that they could not stop the expropriation but tried at least to ensure some benefits. Finally, it should be noted that the CNPI representative, Maximo Bautista, told the comuneros to refuse the expropriation but apparently nobody listened to his advice and instead they voted in favor of the expropriation.

---

34 Interview with Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 29, 1987.
The reaction of each political formation was quite distinct. The Pro-Rancher formation opposed the expropriation since the ranchers were not interested in losing access to the land, particularly since they controlled most of it. One informant stated that: "In these lands [expropriated lands], it was pure ranchers who were occupying them. The expropriation did not directly affect the peasants." The Pro-Rancher formation tried to gain the support of the landless workers, the small peasants, and the middle peasants to gather more strength to oppose the expropriation. The efforts of the ranchers were, however, in vain. The two political formations had therefore diametrically opposed positions towards the expropriation. The Communal Land Commission President had a similar perception; "I understood that the community was divided in two formations: the ranchers against the expropriation and the small peasants and landless workers in favor of the expropriation." The Pro-Peasant formation supported the expropriation since its members felt that they were going to have access to employment and better economic opportunities. A member of that formation stated that "many people were happy about the industrial port, they felt that they would be able to get a job." The differing views of these formations towards the expropriation added to the existing tension concerning land monopolization. Indeed, the Pro-Peasant formation continued and even intensified its activities to obtain a land redistribution.

35 Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 26, 1987. The following ranching families were mentioned: The Morales (Epifanio, Alfonso, and Agustin), Pascacio Silvestre, Emiliano Trujillo Antonio, Sergio Martinez Aleman, Luis Martinez, Guadalupe Hernandez (just a small piece), Isidro Lopez, Aciano Martinez.

36 Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 17, 1987.


4. The Expropriatory Decree and the Reaction of the Comuneros

On April 23, 1980, the Presidential Expropriatory Decree\textsuperscript{39} was signed by President Jose Lopez Portillo and published in the Diario Oficial on July 10, 1980. The issuance of the Decree followed three events: 1) the execution of the technical works that identified 5,154 hectares to be expropriated; 2) the notification of the Communal Land Commission President about the expropriation on October 31, 1979, and; 3) the publication of the requests for the lands in both the Diario Oficial and the Gaceta Oficial of the State of Veracruz (respectively on January 28, and February 14, 1980 respectively.

The Decree established the compensations to be offered to the comuneros of Pajapan. The amount paid for the land tenure was 8,500 pesos per hectare for a total of 43,801,193.52 pesos\textsuperscript{40}. According to the Presidential Decree, 182 comuneros were to receive payments for their goods on the expropriated land totaling 8,626,708.80 pesos. Thus, the total compensation offered for the expropriation (land tenure + private goods) amounted to 52,427,902.32 pesos.

\textsuperscript{39} The draft of the expropriatory Presidential Decree was prepared by the General Direction of Lands and Water of the SRA and completed on February 27, 1980. The initiation of the file was done on October 31, 1979, and the Communal Land President was notified on the same day (October 31). The technical and informative works establishing the boundaries of the expropriatory zone were performed by Pablo Luis Vasquez Trujillo who submitted his report on February 06, 1980. The evaluation of the private goods and the value of the lands expropriated were completed on February 15, 1980. This evaluation was conducted by the Direction of "Catastro" of Federal Property (ACEAX, February 27, 1980).

\textsuperscript{40} The amount given for each hectare of land was fixed by the Direction of the Landholdings of the Federal Property, dependency of the SAHOP. It was done in February 1980. "Dictamen Positivo, Expediente 56-5471" (ACEAX, February 27, 1980).
The goods on the lands included rolls of wire used to fence a parcel of land, poles used to hold the fences, fruit and palm trees, the wells and, in the cases of the hamlets, the value of the houses. The size of compensation for the private goods varied greatly from one comunero to another, the highest being 499,040.00 pesos and the smallest 150 pesos (refer to Appendix E for the list of persons who received an indemnization over 50,000 pesos).

Established by the ARFL, the Expropriatory Decree specified how the compensation was to be paid. For the land tenure, the total amount, 43,801,193.52 pesos would be deposited in the name of the community at the "Banco de México" (Bank of Mexico) and concentrated in the "Financiera Nacional de Industria Rural" (Rural Industry National Finance)\(^41\). For the private goods, the 8,626,708.80 pesos would be paid directly to the comuneros affected by the expropriation\(^42\). The Expropriatory Decree also established that 258,664.00 pesos would go to the "Fundo Común" (Commun Fund) of Jicacal for the expropriated primary school. Finally, the Decree stated that each comunero who had his parcel or house expropriated would receive two lots in the urban zone of the Industrial Port and 20% of the public services in the new settlement.

The Expropriatory Decree divided the comuneros even further. One informant recalled the reactions that followed the publication of the Decree: "when we learned about the expropriation on July 10, 1980, the people reacted negatively because not everyone was to

\(^41\) As specified by the Article 125 and 126 of the ARFL, if the project, for which the lands were expropriated, was not completed within a period of 5 years the lands would be placed in the patrimony of the Trusteeship for the Support of the Rural Industry ("Patrimonio del Fideicomiso de Apoyo a la Industria Rural") without having the comuneros to return the money paid. (Chavez Padron 1987: 154-156).

\(^42\) As established by the Article 124 of the Agrarian Reform Federal Law (Chavez Padron 1987: 153).
receive a compensation. Then, the confrontations became harsh.\textsuperscript{43} Part of the negative reaction was triggered by the fact that instead of receiving 15 pesos per square meter, as stated earlier, they would only receive 0.85 pesos! A regional leader of the CNPI closely involved with the local formation in Pajapan affirmed that, "the people only started to wake up when they realized how little money they were about to receive."\textsuperscript{44} The tensions also increased because not all the comuneros would receive compensation for their private goods. The compensation for the goods on the lands would be provided only to a limited number of comuneros (mostly ranchers) who occupied the communal land. This created more resentment against the ranchers and added to the pressure for land redistribution. There was also some initial confusion about how the compensation for the expropriated land would be paid. Once the Pro-Peasant members discovered that they would not receive the money directly, they opposed the Municipal and the Communal Land Administrators. The Pro-Peasant members felt these administrators had not fought enough to insure the comuneros adequate compensation and because the compensation was going to the "Bank of Mexico" and not directly to each of the comuneros.

At the same time, the Pro-Peasant formation intensified its struggle for the redistribution of the 14,000 hectares unaffected by the expropriation.\textsuperscript{45} It began with a General Assembly on June 29, 1980. The Assembly was originally convened to discuss the reallocation

\textsuperscript{43} Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{44} Interview with Maximo Bautista Hernandez, Soteapan, October 10, 1987.

\textsuperscript{45} Their pressures had some impact at the State Level. A letter sent from the Governor of Veracruz, Rafael Hernandez Ochoa to the Private Secretary of the Mexican President requested the intervention of the President to regularize the land tenure of the "Indians" ("Indígenas") of Pajapan on the 14,000 hectares at unaffected land, and also to guarantee their employment as workers in the future industries (ASRAM, Expediente 276.1 / 2414, April 29, 1980).
of land to the comuneros affected by the expropriation and to give access to land to other comuneros (inhabitants with an agrarian right) who did not have access to land. Three propositions were made during that Assembly. The first was elaborated by the Chief of the Agrarian Regional Office of the SRA who proposed the formation of 100 comuneros to complete the 905 comuneros mentioned in the Presidential Resolution. All these comuneros would be located within the non expropriated zone. Finally, he proposed to use the compensation received for the expropriated land for productive investments according to a program devised themselves. This program could include agricultural investments, a hotel, a rock pulveriser to make cement, etc.\footnote{ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. "Acta de Asamblea", June 29, 1980.}

Pascual Pablo, the local representative of the PPS, responded to the Chief's proposal stating that the PPS supporters did not agree with it. Instead, the PPS wanted the comuneros affected by the expropriation to receive directly both their compensations for the land tenure and for the goods on these lands directly and then, lose their agrarian rights. The most likely reason for such a proposal was that the supporters of the PPS thought that the only ones affected by the expropriation were the ranchers who were controlling the expropriated land.

The third proposal came from the municipal president. He proposed to maintain the total number of comuneros at 905, therefore maintaining access to land in the non-expropriated zone for those affected by the expropriation. He also suggested that compensation for the expropriated land be equally shared amongst all 905 comuneros included in the Presidential Resolution of 1968. Once the three proposals were presented a vote was held. The counting of the votes, however, was suddenly interrupted because of the protests of many comuneros. These comuneros started to shout that they were tired of being

\footnote{"Acta de Asamblea", ASRAX, Expediente C-26 Bis, June 29, 1980.}
misled and cheated by the municipal and communal land administrators. The comuneros requested: 1) the establishment of the limits of the non-expropriated land; 2) the redistribution of these lands into equally divided plots for each of the 905 comuneros; and 3) an envoy of engineers to execute the survey and parcel the non-expropriated land. Because these protests, the General Assembly was stopped after the Chief of the Regional Agrarian Office promised to voice their requests to the State Delegate of the SRA in Xalapa.

This Assembly demonstrates the tensions dividing the community. It also shows that the conditions for a land redistribution were favorable. The Pro-Rancher formation, was losing some of its political power due to increasing militantism of the Pro-Peasant formation which was gathering increasing support. To maintain political power, the Pro-Rancher formation was placed in a situation where it was forced to make concessions to its oppositional political formation, the Pro-Peasant. The Pro-Rancher formation also wanted to minimize their losses due to the expropriation.

In response to the requests made during the assembly, the State Delegate of the SRA sent a letter to the municipal administrators and to the representatives of the PPS. In this letter, the State Delegate contended that it was neither possible to survey the non-expropriated land because the definitive plan of the boundaries had not yet been approved (see Chapter 2) nor to parcel the communal land because the Presidential Resolution of 1968 did not mention the creation of productive units ("unidades de dotación")\(^\text{48}\). This response was supportive of the Pro-Rancher formation and was misleading since the definitive plan had already been approved earlier of March 1980\(^\text{49}\). The State Delegate's refusal to parcel the non-expropriated land was also unjustified since neither Art.52 nor 130 indicated that it is

\(^{48}\) ARSAX, Expediente C-26 Bis, no date.

\(^{49}\) ARSAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, March 07, 1\(^{\circ}\)80.
necessary to specify the term "productive units" to create individual parcels of lands (Chavez Padron 1987: 107 and 161).

Following the June 29 Assembly, commissions of comuneros went to the CNC in Mexico to denounce the fact that about 100 comuneros had not been considered in the expropriatory decree although they owned private goods on the expropriated land. The CNC pressured the Secretary of the SRA urging him to send the required personnel to Pajapan to conduct an investigation and undertake the inventory of the private goods of some 100 ranchers. One comunero recalled the actions of the ranchers during that period:

the ranchers were going to the different dependencies and telling the civil servants that they should oppose the expropriation. They were also holding meetings at the Local Ranchers Union. They were requesting money from each rancher in order to give the money to the State Delegate of the SRA, so he would also oppose the expropriation.

These commissions to the CNC are a good reflection of the attitude of the ranching classes towards the expropriation. Since they could not stop the project, they tried to reduce their losses. Even the ranchers who did not own private goods in the affected zone feared the imminent land redistribution and tried to capitalize on the possibilities of receiving compensation. The Pro-Peasant formation fought back with the August Rebellion.

5. The August Rebellion: An Advance Toward the Land Redistribution

With the removal of Sixto Vargas and the municipal elections in 1979, the struggles for land redistribution had been led by Pascual Pablo and the other leaders of the PPS in Pajapan. The Pro-Peasant formation used the PPS as a political vehicle to voice demands for land redistribution. An informant recalled that "in 1980, the majority of villagers were suppor-


tended the PPS—52.

The failure of the Municipal and the Communal Land Administrators to follow up the demand for land redistribution, the negative response from the State Delegate to the requests made during the June 29 Assembly, and the anger created by the way the compensations for the expropriation were to be paid, resulted in the August Rebellion. It was a rebellion in the sense that the members of the Pro-Peasant formation, exasperated by what was happening decided to invade the Municipal Palace and to change the communal land administrators and the municipal authorities. The communal land commission president affirmed that "[t]he people of the PPS wanted the money and the land redistribution—53.

On August 13, the Pro-Peasant formation united with a few ranchers to organize the Municipal Palace invasion—54. The ranchers supporting the rebellion were those who were to receive any compensation for the goods on the expropriated land because they were not included in the Expropriatory Decree. They were dissatisfied with the way the compensations were to be paid. They were not as committed to a land redistribution since most of them later joined with the CNPI to oppose the land redistribution. Therefore, it was more a momentary alliance with the Pro-Peasant formation because of their dissatisfaction with the compensation payments.

One informant affirmed that one of the ranchers supporting the PPS killed a toro for people to eat before taking over the Municipal Palace. According to his description, it seemed that the take-over was almost done in a "festive s•rite". The killing of a toro may also have

52 Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.
been a way to gather enough people to invade the Municipal Palace.\footnote{\textit{Interview with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28, 1987.}}

Between 400 and 500 comuneros organized on August 14th, to invade the Municipal Palace (Bouyssse-Cassagne 1987: 30; \textit{Unos más Uno} (Mexico), August 15 and 16, 1980; \textit{El Día} (Mexico), August 17, 1980). When they arrived at the Municipal Palace, the "columna volante" was there to protect it. The municipal authorities had heard about the invasion and had requested the intervention of the "columna volante". When the rebels saw the "columna volante", they sat on the other side of the park and watched. At 10:30pm, the rebellious comuneros decided to try to invade the Palace but they were repelled by the tear gas of the "columna volante". Two comuneros were captured, Donaciano Huervo Abad and Valentino Antonio Martínez (two ranchers), and taken to the regional prison in Coatzacoalcos\footnote{\textit{Uno más Uno} (Mexico), August 15, 1980; and Interview with Santos Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, October 02, 1980.}. The reaction of the comuneros to these arrests was to to block all the roads providing access to the village;

> When they [the comuneros] saw what was happening, Don Miguel Pereyra and Celestino Martinez told the people that they had to take arms to defend themselves and block the roads. At that moment, the caciques [ranchers of the Pro-Rancher formation] fled the village and went to hide themselves in the mountains.\footnote{Interview with Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.}

Other comuneros went to Minatitlán and Coatzacoalcos to alarm the public opinion in an effort to force the government to react. This strategy was effective because several newspapers covered and publicised the confrontation\footnote{See: \textit{Uno más Uno} (Mexico), August 15, 16, and 22, 1980; \textit{El Día} (Mexico), August 17, 1980; \textit{Diario del Istmo} (Coatzacoalcos), August 17, 21 and 22, 1980.}. Furthermore, the government sent representatives to Pajapan to negotiate with the insurgent comuneros. These officials were
from the Federal and the State Government and one from the SRA in Xalapa. On their arrival in Pajapan, they promised the liberation of the two prisonners and ordered the removal of the "columa volante" from the Municipal Palace. The comuneros then calmed down and sat with the representatives to present their requests:

We told them that we wanted the communal land to be redistributed and the payment of an individual compensation for the expropriated land. The officials promised us that they would do all they could do to obtain a land redistribution.\(^59\)

The Pro-Peasant formation requested that the compensations (43,801,193,52 pesos) for the lands deposited at the "Financiera Nacional de Industria Rural" be paid equally to each comunero instead of being used for investment programs. The comuneros also requested a new evaluation of the expropriated land since they expected to be paid at least 15 pesos per hectare and not the 0,85 pesos as mentioned in the Expropriatory Decree.

The August Rebellion constituted a major advance toward the land redistribution because for the first time, representatives of the Government were forced to sit with the Pro-Peasant formation and negotiate. It was also a significant move against the domination of the Pro-Rancher formation which was not able to control the movement and even inspired fear such that some of them fled the village or hid themselves. In the days following the August Rebellion, the ranchers decided to resist the expropriation and allied themselves with the CNPI leaders in Mexico and put foward a legal action ("amparo").

6. The "Amparo" and the Intervention of the CNPI

The CNPI started to play an important role in Pajapan when the expropriation became known by the villagers. The CNPI however, had been active in the region since the early

1970s with the work of Maximo Bautista from Soteapan, a neighboring municipality\(^60\). When the expropriation was announced in Pajapan, representatives of the CNPI went there to advise the villagers about the possible consequences and impact of the expropriation and the construction of the industrial port. A regional advisor of the CNPI affirmed that "[T]he municipal and the communal land administrators asked for information about the impact of the project on Pajapan". The informant also stated that he told the people "that the advantage was more employment for villagers and the disadvantage was that villagers would get the less well-paid jobs since most of them were illiterate\(^61\).

The ex-Director of the Regional Office of FONDEPORT acknowledged the role of the CNPI during the early stages of the expropriation; "the participation of the CNPI was important in assisting the comuneros against the project\(^62\). One of the main impacts of CNPI's involvement was its role in the elaboration of the "amparo\(^63\). The "amparo" was promoted by the Pro-Rancher formation dissatisfied with the compensation payments, both for the land tenure and for the goods on the land.

The ranchers put the "amparo" with the Communal Land Commission with the idea of bargaining and not to defend the interests of the community. When they put the "amparo", Genaro Dominguez was named the official advisor for

---

\(^{60}\) Maximo Bautista worked for the SRA in Mexico City for six years (1970-1976) and according to an informant, this is where he started to work with Genaro Dominguez Maldonado, founder of the CNPI and central figure of this organization. Prior to the expropriation, Maximo had established contacts with Sixto Vargas, the Pajapan communal lands commission resident (1973-1979) but these did not develop extensively.


\(^{62}\) Interview with Lic. Francisco Morosini, Ex-Director of the FONDEPORT Office in Coatzacoalcos, Coatzacoalcos, October 14, 1987.

\(^{63}\) Although there is no direct translation for this legal term, an "amparo" is more or less the equivalent of a demand for protection ("habeas corpus") except that an amparo can be applied to lands as well as, in this case, the expropriated land.
Pajapan\textsuperscript{64}.

The demand for an "amparo" was elaborated on September 18, 1980 by Genaro Dominguez Maldonado, main leader of the CNPI and a Julio Alonso Loya, a legal advisor. The request for the "amparo" was based on the premise that the expropriatory decree violated the guarantees contained in the General Constitution of the Republic of Mexico\textsuperscript{65}. The "amparo" was advanced against the following authorities; "Presidente de la Republica"\textsuperscript{66}, "Secretario de la Reforma Agraria"\textsuperscript{67}, "Subsecretario de Asuntos Agrarios y Organizació\textsuperscript{68}, "Director General de Procedimientos Agrarios"\textsuperscript{69}, "Director General de Tenencia de la Tierra"\textsuperscript{70}, "Delegado Agrario en Veracruz"\textsuperscript{71}, "Secretario de SAHOP"\textsuperscript{72}, "Director de Catastro de la Propiedad Federal"\textsuperscript{73} and "Comisión Nacional de Avalúos"\textsuperscript{74} The two main reasons given to justify the request for an "amparo" were: 1) that 176 comuneros who had private goods in the expropriated zone were not considered in the Presidential Decree; and 2) that the compensation given for the expropriated land did not equal the value of the land. It should be noted that

\textsuperscript{64} Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.

\textsuperscript{65} "Amparo", Archives of the "Comisión Nacional Coordinadora de Puertos (hereafter referred to as ACNCP). Mexico, September 18, 1980.

\textsuperscript{66} President of the Republic.

\textsuperscript{67} Secretary of Agrarian Reform.

\textsuperscript{68} Sub-Secretary of the Agrarian and Organization Affairs of the SRA.

\textsuperscript{69} Director of Agrarian Procedures.

\textsuperscript{70} General Director of the Land Tenure.

\textsuperscript{71} Agrarian State Delegate in Veracruz.

\textsuperscript{72} Secretary of SAHOP.

\textsuperscript{73} Director of Federal Property.

\textsuperscript{74} National Commission of Evaluation.
at least 50 ranchers were among the 176 names of comuneros who had not received compensation for goods they claimed on the expropriated land. Three articles of the Mexican Constitution (14, 16 and 27) were used to justify the "amparo"\(^{75}\). The "amparo" request concluded by making three main demands; 1) to have this request of an "amparo" judgement formally recognized as such; 2) to initiate all the proceedings leading to a decision as to whether the "amparo" is granted or not and; 3) to suspend construction of the project\(^{76}\).

On September 19, 1980, the "Juez Noveno de Distrito Federal en Materia Administrativa"\(^{77}\) received the demand of "amparo" and admitted it. This meant that the denounced authorities had ten days to respond to the accusations launched in the "amparo" request and were convened to an audience on October 22, 1981\(^{78}\). The Judge also guaranteed a provisional "amparo" that implied the suspension of the expropriatory works\(^{79}\). On the same

---

\(^{75}\) Basically, these articles establish that government authorities, independent of their rank or function are obliged to respect the relevant legal dispositions. In this case, the Art.121 of the ARFL stated that any expropriation of lands or private goods should be compensated by an indemnization that reflects the commercial value of the expropriated goods. Article 124 of the ARFL states that the private goods expropriated should be paid immediately, a requirement that was not observed since 155 comuneros listed in the Presidential Decree had not been paid yet. The Article 14 of the Mexican Constitution that guarantees the right of Audience was also violated since the Communal Lands Authorities were not informed that only 185 comuneros were to receive an indemnization, and thus the Communal Lands Authorities were not able to resort to the constitutional guarantee. Finally, the expropriatory decree violated Article 27 (second paragraph) of the Constitution that stated that any expropriation for public utility has to be executed through indemnization. This was not respected since 176 comuneros affected by the expropriation were left out of the Presidential Decree (Source: "Amargo", Archives of Pajapan and ACNCP, September 18, 1980: 4-6).


\(^{77}\) Ninth Judge of Administrative Matters of the Federal District.


day the authorities who had been accused and the "Ministerio Publico Federal" were informed about this provisional "amparo".

The various government offices involved in the expropriation were not passive in the face of the amparo. On October 10, the Secretary of the SAHOP introduced a demand to cancel the provisional "amparo" judgement because this judgement lacked the necessary motives and legal ground. He argued that the suspension of the work was unjustified based on the Article 124 of the Administrative Law and Articles 103 and 107 of the Mexican Constitution which establish that a suspension can only be granted when there is a public prejudice to the social interest or an action counters the public order. The Secretary also argued that there was a social interest in completing the expropriation but failed to explain what that interest was. On the issue of the land expulsion, the Secretary stated that the litigant party had not shown proof of ownership of the lands that were expropriated. These arguments against the "amparo" led the Secretary to request a revision of the "amparo" judgement.

The same day, October 10, the Sub-Director of the Agrarian and Organization Affairs, the General Director of the Land Tenure and the General Director of the Agrarian Procedures all of the SRA, sent a joint report justifying the expropriation. In the report, these officials argued that the normal procedures for an expropriation were followed. The land and the goods on the lands were evaluated and no comunero affected by the expropriation was

---

80 Federal Public Ministry.

81 This request was made possible by Article 83, sections I and II of the "Amparo" Law (ACEAX, and Archives of Pajapan, October 10, 1980).

82 Archives of Pajapan, ACEAX, and Archives of Abel Jimenez Hernandez, October 10, 1980.

83 "Informe Justificado", ACEAX, October 10, 1980.
omitted. Therefore, the officials requested that the "amparo" judgment be revoked.

Two other reports that justified the revocation of the "amparo" were presented before October 22, 1980 to the Ninth Judge. The first, sent October 20, 1980, was from the Secretary of the SAHOP. In the report, the Secretary explained that the normal legal procedures in the case of an expropriation were followed\textsuperscript{84}. He also argued that of the 176 comuneros mentioned in the "amparo" judgement, 110 were not listed in the Presidential Decree of recognition and titling of the communal land of 1968. They could not be considered as comuneros and, therefore were not eligible for any compensation. The Secretary concluded his report by requesting the negation of the amparo or the cancellation of the "amparo" judgement. The second report was written by the Director of the Landholding of the Federal Property of the SAHOP on October 21, 1981. This report was exact copy of that of the Secretary of the SAHOP. Despite these attempts by the different government agencies involved in the expropriation, the provisional "amparo" granted in the judgement of September 19, 1981 prevailed because the Ninth Judge refused to reconsider his decision. The "amparo" was used as a legal basis for defending the expropriated land.

In the meantime, the comuneros, with the assistance of the CNPI, had arranged for an individual to conduct a new evaluation of the expropriated land. The new evaluation was necessary to sustain the arguments made in the request for the "amparo" concerning the unfair price paid for the expropriated land and for the inclusion of 176 more comuneros in the list of those to receive compensation. On October 14, 1980, the comuneros presented the new evaluation to the Ninth Judge of Administrative Matters of the Federal District\textsuperscript{85}.

The struggle for the "amparo" was a reaction by the Pro-Rancher formation designed

\textsuperscript{84} ACEAI. October 20, 1980.

\textsuperscript{85} Archives of Pajapan, October 14, 1980.
to insure at least some benefits from the expropriation. It was also a measure taken to attract some support from the other comuneros who were not considered in the Expropriatory Decree and were also interested in receiving some compensation.

7. The Assembly of November 02, 1980 and The Emergence of the Populist Formation

The struggle for the "amparo" did not reduce the determination of most members of the Pro-Peasant formation to obtain a land redistribution. Following the August Rebellion, the Pro-Peasant formation waited for the agreement made by the Mexican Government to be carried out. They also exerted strong pressures within Pajapan to initiate the redistribution of the non-expropriated land.

After the August Rebellion, it also became clear to most of the Pro-Rancher formation that the non-expropriated land would have to be redistributed. They realized the land redistribution was also the only way for them to ensure at least minimal access to some land since the ranchers had lost some important sections of the lands to the expropriation. By the end of October, it seemed that the Pro-Rancher formation had accepted the land redistribution. Sergio Martinez Aleman, a rancher and a key political figure, explains:

Two or three days before that assembly [on November 2, 1980], we [some ranchers] realized that we needed to give up the lands. Then at the Assembly, I asked the peasants what they wanted: the land redistribution or the payment of the compensation. They answered the land redistribution. So I told them, first let us fight the land redistribution and after fight the payment of the compensations. From then on, the people supported me so that everybody

86 The pressures made by the PPS continued as the letter sent on October 7, 1980, by the PPS Peasant Politics Secretary to the Agrarian Delegate in Xalapa demonstrates. In this letter, the Secretary requested that the Delegation send an official to Pajapan to resolve the problems of land tenure in Pajapan (ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. Letter, November 18, 1980).
could get a equal part of land\textsuperscript{87}.

The ranchers' new support for the land redistribution marked a major shift in the political dynamic within Pajapan. By supporting the land redistribution, the small ranchers and large ranchers formerly monopolizing the lands were able to recuperate some of their lost credibility and support from the subordinate classes, i.e., the landless workers and the small and middle peasants.

The General Assembly held on November 2 was attended by the majority of the comuneros. It confirmed officially the change in attitude of the ranchers and made possible the land redistribution. The five point agreement adopted during that general assembly, however, went far beyond the redistribution of the non-expropriated land:

1) The majority of the comuneros attending the Assembly agreed to carry out an inventory of the goods ("bienes distintos") in the expropriated zone;

2) The private goods will be indemnified to all the 905 comuneros in addition to the indemnification of the land tenure;

3) It will be respected that the inhabitants of the hamlets Jicacal, Mangal, Nuevo Mangal and other hamlets receive compensation for their goods such as houses, fruit trees, wires held within their hamlets as well as their goods on the expropriated land;

4. The non-expropriated land will be redistributed in equal parts amongst the 905 comuneros;

5. The comuneros on the official list, who had died, will have their agrarian right transferred to their families. The transfer will be confirmed by a certificate issued by the communal land commission president. This will enable the newly certified comuneros to receive indemnities for both the private goods and the land tenure. In the case of comuneros who no longer reside in Pajapan or who have abandoned the land because they have chosen other employment or are ejidatarios in another ejidatarios will lose their agrarian rights and the General Assembly will establish who will be substituted by considering those who really cultivate the land\textsuperscript{88}.

\textsuperscript{87} Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{88} ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. "Acta de Asamblea General Extraordinaria". November 02, 1980.
D. SUMMARY

The General Assembly of November 2, 1980 marked the success of the Pro-Peasant formation. At this time a new political alliance was emerging made up of most of the members of the Pro-Peasant formation and most of the ranchers of the Pro-Rancher formation. There were only a few dissenters on both sides.

An informant explains what was happening; "Abel Hernandez, Municipal President, made an agreement with the ones of the PPS to redistribute the lands. The PRI leaders made an agreement with the PPS to gather strength again. By establishing an alliance with the PPS which represented the interests of the Pro-Peasant formation, the PRI leaders, representing the Pro-Rancher formation, were trying to regain support of the majority within the community. This support was crucial for the "amparo" that had been promoted earlier in September by the Pro-Rancher formation. By conceding to the land redistribution, the ranchers directly affected by the expropriation were ensuring themselves access to the non-expropriated land. They were also able to promote a new inventory of the goods on the expropriated land which was to benefit them because they controlled most of this land. By making it one of the agreements of the Assembly, they were able to pressure the Mexican Government to negotiate with the ranchers for the inclusion 176 comuneros listed in the "amparo". In addition, the alliance was a means of regaining popularity and political support among the comuneros associated with the Pro-Peasant formation. The alliance of ranchers and peasant classes was not, however, able to unite all of the comuneros. As will be shown in the next chapter, an opposition formation developed which was opposed to the expropriation and to the land redistribution. The next chapter will analyze the formation of new political formations and how the land redistribution affected the class structure.

---

89 Interview with Camilo Ciriaco Martinez, Pajapan, September 22, 1987.
CHAPTER V

THE POPULIST AND RESISTANT FORMATIONS

The General Assembly of November 2, 1980 marked a turning-point in the political history of Pajapan. For the first time since the mobilization of the Pro-Peasant formation, the ranchers agreed to a redistribution of the communal land. The previous chapter explains why the ranchers made such concessions. On the one hand, they had to agree in order to ensure themselves access to land, especially those who had land in the expropriated zone. On the other hand, it was a way for the ranchers to gain support among a large part of the Pro-Peasant formation. This support was needed to obtain a better bargaining position with the Mexican Government so that the 155 comuneros mentioned in the “amparo” could receive compensation.

This new ‘popular’ alliance gathered together most of the comuneros of Pajapan. Nevertheless, the non-fulfillment of some of the agreements of the November 2, 1980 Assembly and the opposition to the land redistribution by some ranchers led to the formation of another formation, the Resisting group. The political struggles that characterize the period that lasted from the days following the November 2, 1980 Assembly until the completion of the land redistribution and the payment of land tenure in November 1982 were determined by the conflicting positions of the Populist formation and the Resisting formation.

This chapter analyzes how these two new political formations struggled for political power in Pajapan. In order to comprehend the process of political struggle, the first section of this chapter examines each formation. The second section examines the dynamics of the political sphere. The third and last section attempts to synthesize the period covered in
chapters 4 and 5 starting with the municipal elections of 1979 and finishing with the compensation payment of November 26, 1982. This final section examined the relationship between the land tenure, class structure, political formations and political dynamics.

A. THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS

The announcement of the expropriation had a significant impact on political formations. During the second half of the 1970s, the gradual emergence of the Pro-Peasant formation became the first serious threat to the hegemony of the Pro-Rancher formation. The announcement of the expropriation of 25% of the most fertile land created significant unrest among the classes comprising these two political formations. In general, the expropriation benefitted the Pro-Peasant formation and it weakened the Pro-Rancher formation, forcing some ranchers to support the idea of land redistribution. The expropriation also made some of the middle peasants, who had been part of the Pro-Peasant formation, oppose the land redistribution because for them it meant the loss of some of their lands. After the General Assembly of May 07, 1981, the new Populist and Resistant political formations began to confront each other.

1. The Populist Formation

i) Class Composition

The Populist formation emerged in the Fall of 1980, after the publication of the Expropriatory Decree and the invasion of the Municipal Palace by the members of the Pro-Peasant formation. This faction comprised most ranchers of the Pro-Rancher formation and most landless workers, small peasants and middle peasants of the Pro-Peasant formation. The emergence of the Populist formation was a direct result of the expropriation and the classes
forming it were antagonistic.

ii) Internal and External Linkages

The Populist formation controlled most of the political institutions within Pajapan. Because it was comprised of most of the members of the previous Pro-Rancher formation, the new Populist formation continued to control the municipal and communal land administration, the local PRI Committee and, the local Ranchers Association. As a result of its fusion with most members of the Pro-Peasant formation, the Populist formation controlled the PPS Committee, at least until the 1982 Fall elections (to be discussed later). The land redistribution implied the creation of 37 lots for 25 comuneros. Most, if not all of the chiefs of these lots belonged to Populist formation. In addition, the expropriation had led to the creation of two labour unions in Pajapan, both of which were under the control of this formation.

Externally, the Populist formation continued to benefit from the support of the Regional Ranchers Union, the Regional PRI Committee, and between 1980 and 1982, the Regional PPS Committee. It can also be argued that the Regional and State Delegation of the SRA supported the demands of this formation. Finally, the Regional Office of the "Central de los Trabajadores Mexicanos" (hereafter referred to as CTM) also offered support.

iii) Political Project

The interests promoted by this formation reflected a radical change in the power relations within the community. The main political objectives of the formation were: 1) access

---
1 "Sindicatos de Trabajadores de la Construcción, Excavación, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana "Delegación Pajapan" and "Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Construcción, Similares y Conexos del municipio de Pajapan" (respectively Union of Workers in Construction, Excavation and Similar Activities of the Mexican Republic "Pajapan Section" and Union of Workers in Construction Industry and Similar Activities of Pajapan.

2 Mexican Workers Central.
to land; 2) a census update; 3) payments of compensation for land tenure but, more important the compensation payments for goods on the expropriated land; and 4) control over local political institutions.

Within this formation, the specific political goals of the ranchers were: 1) to ensure the highest payments possible for their expropriated goods; 2) to maintain access to at least some of the land; 3) to ensure that they would benefit from the arrival of industry by controlling local commercial activities, and; 4) to maintain their control over the local political apparatus.

The payment for their expropriated goods was little compensation for what the ranchers really lost with the expropriation. Nevertheless, it was a way to reduce their losses. The ranchers were also interested in maintaining and expanding their control over local commerce and political institutions. This control gave them access to additional economic resources (local taxes, government investments, etc.) and was a way to guarantee that their interests were not threatened by other classes in Pajapan.

2. **The Resistant Formation**

i) **Class Composition**

The Resistant formation was a conjunctural alliance of segments of classes opposed to the expropriation. Interestingly, it was not the large and small ranchers who had land in the expropriated zone who opposed the expropriation but those on the non-affected lands. The small and large ranchers were joined by some middle peasants who had lands in the non-expropriated zone and some landless workers who had not been considered during the census update for the redistribution of the land.
ii) **Internal and External Linkages**

The Resistant formation did not benefit from the same hegemonic control of the local political institutions exercised by the Populist formation. This formation had but two political levers in Pajapan. The first was the local CNPI Committee which served as the political platform. The other lever in the formation was the participation of the communal land commission treasurer, Camilo Ciriaco within the formation. His presence gave credibility to the demands promoted by the formation.

Externally, the essential feature of this formation was its linkage with the CNPI. Although present in the region since the 1970s, the CNPI really consolidated its base in Pajapan, during the expropriation. At one point, after the publication of the expropriatory decree, the CNPI also assisted the ranchers trying to get higher compensation payments.

The Resistant formation received the support of the national and regional offices of the CNPI. Genaro Dominguez Maldonado, national CNPI leader, had some influence over the SRA in Mexico City, but not enough to influence the State Delegation or the Regional Office of the SRA. These latter offices were inclined to favour the Populist formation. The Resistant formation because of its contacts with the CNPI, however, was able to publicise its claims and influence the scholars and journalists who examined the struggle of this formation in Pajapan. It also had, to a certain extent, the sympathy of the "Instituto Nacional Indigenista"³ (hereafter referred to as INI) which produced a film on the project ‘Laguna del Ostion’. The INI even invited representatives of the CNPI to the premiere of the film.

---

³ National Indigenous Institute.
ii) Political Project

The central political objectives of the Resistant formation were to stop the land expropriation and to oppose the industrial port project. The ranchers and middle peasants opposed the expropriation because they were not going to receive compensation for their goods on the land since their plots were in the non-expropriated area. In additionally, they were going to lose some of the lands they controlled in the non-expropriated because of the land redistribution. The landless workers who were not on the list of comuneros supported this formation because even with the land redistribution, they would remain landless.

Figure IX illustrates the linkages of both the Populist and the Resistant formation.

This section examines how the land was actually redistributed and how compensation payments were made. It also illustrates how the political formations fought against each other.
During the days following the Assembly of November 2, 1980, the comuneros recounted their private goods in the expropriated lands which took the month of December. In the meantime, some members of the PPS who sought the redistribution of land decided to begin the process of dividing the non-expropriated land into small plots.

1. The Shooting of Tomas Martinez Encarnacion and the Involvement of the SRA in the Land Redistribution

At first the land redistribution was undertaken by the members of the PPS without the intervention of the SRA. The redistribution was started because no such steps had yet been taken by the SRA. These actions created many tensions because some ranchers were not willing to let their lands be redistributed:

After the Assembly of November 2, the people started to take their share. The engineer said that everybody can take 14 hectares of land. Then, we [PPS members] started redistributing the lands. When we arrived at the ranchers' parcels, they told us that they would stop us with machine guns.

In fact, on January 17 and 19, the ranchers opposed to the land redistribution formally denounced the activities of the PPS member in the communal land. The mounting tension resulted in the shooting, of one PPS members involved in the land redistribution on February 2, 1981:

At first, the ranchers were threatening us. It culminated when Tomas Martinez Encarnacion was shot at by Plutarco Pereyra who was a day-worker of two ranchers: Roman Gonzalez Cruz and Apolinario Hernandez Martinez. On that day, we [PPS members] suspended the land redistribution.

---


5 ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. Letter, January 21, 1981.

6 "There were also other conflicts with the ranchers of San Juan: Wenceslao Martinez Morales and other ranchers from there" (Interview with Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987).
Another comunero involved in the locally organized land redistribution described what happened when Tomas Martinez Encarnacion was shot and the impact it had on the SRA:

We were able to divide the lands up to the mountain, at the edge of the San Martin. When we reached that point, Plutarco Pereyra shot Tomas Martinez Encarnacion. The impact of such a thing was to force the government to react and to send people to divide the lands⁷.

This violent confrontation forced the SRA and the State Government to react and to begin the land redistribution. At this time, the national media was following the struggles of the comuneros of Pajapan, especially since the construction of the industrial port had been widely publicised by the Mexican government⁸. Following the shooting of Tomas Martinez, a meeting was held on February 6, at the State Government Palace in Xalapa. Representatives of the State Government, the SRA in Xalapa, FONDEPORT, SCT, PPS, PRI and CNPI Committees and the Municipal and Communal Land Administrators were present at that meeting⁹.

Six crucial agreements came out of that meeting:

1. Delimitation of the boundaries of all the communal land of Pajapan;
2. Delimitation of the boundaries of the expropriated zone;
3. Census of all the private goods expropriated;
4. Localization of the production unit for formations of 25 comuneros;
5. Inquiry on the usufruct of the communal land;
6. Delivery to each comunero of one parcel of land in the lots¹⁰.

---

⁷ Interview with Santos Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, October 02, 1987.

⁸ The Laguna del Otion was to become the largest petrochemical development of its kind in all Latin America. See: El Día (Mexico), January 4 and 9, and February 3 and 5, 1981; Uno más Uno (Mexico), January 17, 1981.

⁹ Interviews with Francisco Morosini, Ex-Director of the FONDEPORT Office in Coatzacoalcos, Coatzacoalcos, October 14, 1987 and with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 16, 1981.

¹⁰ ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. Letter, February 03, 1982 and Memorandum, March 16, (continued...)
The significant outcomes of this meeting were the official recognition of land redistribution and a new evaluation of the goods on the expropriated lands. When asked why such agreements were made, the Agrarian Sub-Delegate of the SRA explained:

The existence of important internal problems of land monopolization by a few ranchers, made the SRA agree to create formations of 25 "comuneros". The need to pacify the community was the main reason for the creation of such formations. The SRA decided to redistribute the land when it discovered that only a minority of comuneros were cultivating the land. When needed, the SRA seeks political solutions, even if they are not written. It looks for the human aspect primarily.\(^1\)

The sensitivity of the issue and the public image of the Mexican Government were more than likely the factors that influenced the decision to undertake the technical works and divide the communal land into lots. The Mexican government was also interested in the removal of the "amparo" even though it had not stopped the construction of the industrial port.

Four days after the meeting in Xalapa, the members of the Local Ranchers Association appointed Emiliano Trujillo, already PRI Committee and ex-Municipal President, as the official representative of the ranchers. Trujillo was commissioned by the Association to oversee the new evaluation of the goods on the expropriated lands.\(^2\)

On February 20, 1981, an engineer of the SRA was sent by the Chief of the Southern Brigade to undertake, in conjunction with the SAHOP, the FONDEPORT, the PPS and representatives of Jicacal, and the communal land administrators, a new inventory of the private goods in the expropriated zone. It seems that the work related to the establishment of the

\(^{10}\) (...continued)
1982.

\(^{11}\) Interview with Agrarian State Sub-Delegate of the SRA, Xalapa, October 22, 1987.

lots did not begin as promptly. By the end of April, the division of the lots had not been undertaken because the engineer had only established the boundaries of the expropriated and non-expropriated land. The division into lots was soon to become a central point of struggle and brought to light the conflict between the two newly formed Populist and Resistant political formations.

2. The Extraordinary General Assembly of May 7, 1981 and the Emergence of Two Antagonistic Political Formations

On May 7, 1981, high-ranking representatives of the government, including: the Director of the Federal Property of the SAHOP; "Subdirector de expropiaciones y contratos de la Dirección General de Asuntos Jurídicos y Legislación"\(^{13}\); "Jefe del Departamento Jurídico de Expropiaciones del Gobierno del Estado"\(^{14}\); and the "Asesor del Gobierno del Estado"\(^{15}\), arrived in Pajapan with an agreement already formulated between the community, the SAHOP, SRA and the State Government.

The agreement had in two parts. The first part aimed at providing the legal groundwork for the expropriation and the compensation payment. It also acknowledged that a provisional "amparo" was granted to the comuneros on September 19, 1980 because 155 comuneros had not been considered in the Expropriatory Decree. This agreement included the 155 comuneros as well as 182 already mentioned in the Presidential Decree.

The second part of the agreement included the following clauses:

1. Upon the signing of the agreement, the SAHOP accepts officially to give

\(^{13}\) Sub-Director of Expropriations and Contracts of the General Director of Judicial and Legislative Affairs.

\(^{14}\) Chief of the Judicial Department of Expropriation of the State Government.

compensation to the 155 comuneros affected by the expropriation but not included in the Expropriatory Decree;

2. The SAHOP promises to request from the SRA of an agrarian certificate for these 155 comuneros, so that they could be included in the list of the comuneros affected by the Expropriatory Decree;

3. The SAHOP contracts to the SRA, the restitution of the remaining land once the limits of the expropriated zone are established with precision;

4. The SAHOP will pay the private goods of the 155 comuneros omitted in the expropriatory decree;

5. The Community agrees to withdraw its "amparo" 332/80 and to sign the withdrawal enclosed in the agreement;

6. The SAHOP will pay within a period of four weeks the compensation for goods on the expropriated land;

7. The SRA accepts to sanction the present agreement and the act of the Assembly;

8. For interpretation and completion of the present agreement, the different parties agree to submit it to the Federal Courts in Mexico.\textsuperscript{16}

The agreement was signed by the comuneros, the Communal LandAdministrators and the government representatives. The act of the Assembly basically restated the different clauses included in the agreement just described above. There are, other details included in the act, however, that are worth mentioning. The first was that only 216 comuneros were present at the Assembly, far from the majority. The second was that two engineers of the SRA would be staying in Pajapan after the Assembly to survey the "production units" ("unidades de producción", i.e. the lots of 350 hectares). The third was that Ramon Hernandez Martinez, communal land commission president, requested an investigation of the complaints denouncing some comuneros that were to receive a Compensation even though they were not affected

\textsuperscript{16} "Convenio", ACNCP. Mexico: May 07, 1981. It is should be noted that the agreement was pre-signed by the following high ranks officials; General Director of the Judicial and Legislative Affairs, Director of the Catastro of the Federal Property both of the SAHOP, Agrarian Delegate for the State of Veracruz and an honour witness for the Governor of the State of Veracruz, Agustín Acosta Lagunes.
by the expropriation. In addition, the SRA would permit compensation for the land tenure to be paid individually to the 905 comuneros rather than being used for a productive investment program\textsuperscript{17}. Finally, the total of the compensations for the goods of the lands was increased to 55,575,000 pesos instead of the 8,626,708 pesos originally proposed in the Presidential Decree of April 1980\textsuperscript{18}. The number of comuneros to receive a compensation was also raised from 182 to 364 (Diario del Istmo (Coatzacoalcos), May 1981; El Día (Mexico), June 29, 1981).

This Assembly was another important step in the settlement of the conflicts over the land expropriation. The ranchers who had elaborated the longer list of comuneros affected by the expropriation had won. It was also a victory for the Mexican government because the "amparo" was withdrawn. Even if the government had to pay more comuneros, the total amount of the compensation was insignificant compared to the investment in the entire project.

The agreement adopted during the Assembly went partly against earlier ones (for example the one of the November 2 Assembly). Compensation for the expropriated private goods was going to be paid individually and not divided equally divided among all of the 905 comuneros. The only compensation to be received by all comuneros was for the land, a small amount compared to the compensation for the goods on the land. Nevertheless, the agreement was an advance toward the land redistribution because two engineers stayed in Pajapan to establish the 37 lots. Finally, it meant a set back for the supporters of the CNPI who resisted the expropriation and had argued that the comuneros who had goods in the non-expropriated lands should also be compensated because they were losing goods through

\textsuperscript{17} "Acta de Asamblea", ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. May 07, 1981.

\textsuperscript{18} ACNCP. Mexico, December 31, 1985.
the land redistribution.

After the May 7 Assembly, the two engineers started to divide the non-expropriated land into 37 lots that would accommodate 25 comuneros each. An informant described how the land redistribution was initiated:

After the lots were delimited, the groups of 25 comuneros started to be formed. First, it was considered who already had land in these lots and then after the groups were completed with the other names. Those who already had a parcel in the lot were sure to secure the best location. Once the work of one lot was finished, another one was started. The technical works of the engineers were started in May and finished in July. Then, the engineers left.\(^{19}\)

In Pajapan, an agreement was reached during a General Assembly that the lots would be divided into 25 individual parcels of 12.5 hectares each. An informant explained;

In a General Assembly, the people said that it was not possible to cultivate the lands on a communal basis because not everybody would do as much. Therefore, we opted for an ejidal regime of land exploitation and we requested that the lands be divided into equal parcels.\(^{20}\)

The individual redistribution was carried out by the comuneros themselves without the aid of the engineers. This resulted in many confrontations between the comuneros. There were many criticisms directed against Ramon Hernandez Martinez, communal land commission president, for locating the ranchers in the areas with better soil.\(^{21}\) Some ranchers gained more than others:

The ranchers who were smart organized the redistribution of their lands in such a way that their mothers, sons, and their day-workers were around their own small parcels. This is how they were able to continue their ranching

---

\(^{19}\) Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.

\(^{20}\) Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\(^{21}\) An example of such discomtent is the letter sent by Pascual Pablo, local PPS representative, to the Agrarian State Delegate on June 22, complaining about Ramon Hernandez Martinez, the communal lands commission president was only locating the ranchers in the lots measured by the engineers working in Pajapan (ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. June 29, 1981).
activities\textsuperscript{22}.

The land redistribution also required that a census update be conducted. This update had been requested since the 1970s\textsuperscript{23} but it had not been completed. This time, however, the CNPI pressured the General Direction of Land Tenure of the national SRA office in Mexico and obtained some results. The Sub-Director of the Communal Land of this division requested on September 11, 1981 that an engineer be sent to Pajapan to undertake a census update\textsuperscript{24}. The Regional Agrarian Office Chief of San Andres Tuxtla and the Southern Agrarian Brigade Chief were in charge of elaborating the census update. It was concluded during an Extraordinary General Assembly on September 28, when the updated list of comuneros was established\textsuperscript{25}. The update stated that 288 comuneros formerly in the basic 1967 census had died or were not cultivating the land. Therefore, 288 new comuneros replaced the former.

Several informants remembered this Assembly;

There was an assembly organized to determine who was to receive an agrarian right since some had left or died. 288 new agrarian certificates were given. The expert came from San Andres because he was more neutral since he did not know the community and the ranchers. The people did not trust the official of the Regional Office because they thought he was allied with the ranchers. The expert did a very careful investigation. Nobody was able to buy an agrarian right. The process was checked by those of the PPS. After 15 days, the list of agrarian rights was given to each Chief of lots\textsuperscript{26}.

\textsuperscript{22} Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 17, 1987.

\textsuperscript{23} See chapter 3 and the letter sent to Agustin Buendia Castillo ordering him to go to Pajapan to regularize the agrarian rights of the comuneros and the one sent to the Manager of FONDEPORT in Mexico (ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, Letter, December 04, 1979).

\textsuperscript{24} ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, Letter, September 10, 1981. It appears that nothing had happened by the beginning of October 1981 since the CNPI continued to pressure the General Direction of the Land Tenure to obtain the census update (ASRAM, Expediente 276.1/2414, Letter, October 07, 1981).


\textsuperscript{26} Interview with Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 29, 1987.
The agrarian rights updating process did not please everyone, however, as the following informants explain:

It is with the land redistribution that the certificates were issued. Many who had died gave their land to their children or to their wife, if not, it was given to a cousin. The process of giving agrarian certificates was done according to the documents. There were 288 new agrarian certificates given. According to some people, the majority of the Agrarian Certificates were bought. The person interested in the certificate would go to the house of the Communal Land Commission President. There was implicit agreement between the ranchers and the communal land president to redistribute amongst themselves the agrarian certificates\(^{27}\).

Normally, the agrarian right had a successor. Sometimes not, if the successor did not cultivate the lands. The ranchers were able to insure control of several rights by going to the Communal Land Commission President and getting a new agrarian right for their relatives. Some that were legitimate (official) successors did not receive agrarian rights. This was the manner in which the ranchers were able to insure the control of 2 or 3 agrarian rights. The leaders of the PPS did the same thing. Even in this organization for the poor there were rich people promoting their specific interests. When the time came to give the new agrarian right, they put their relatives in the vacant spot. Everything was negotiated with Ramón\(^{28}\).

On October 12, the "Frente Estudiantil Revolucionario"\(^{29}\) protested against the census update carried out by the engineers. This organization was made up of young CNPI members in Pajapan\(^{30}\). In a letter, members of the Front denounced the arbitrary actions of the communal land commission president for selling and extorting agrarian rights in prejudice to the community\(^{31}\). The CNPI member also went to the State Delegation of the SRA to

\(^{27}\) Interview with Salvador Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 16, 1987.

\(^{28}\) Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.

\(^{29}\) Revolutionary Student Front.

\(^{30}\) Four of the seven signatories were also signatories of a letter sent by the CNPI members of November 23, 1981.

\(^{31}\) Archives of Pajapan, Letter, October 12, 1981.
denounce the census update. In response to the letter and the complaints from the CNPI, the "Subdirector de la Tenencia de la Tierra" explained to the Agrarian Delegate that a new census update had to be undertaken. A week later, the same Sub-Director ordered a technician, to go directly to Pajapan to carry out the census update in cooperation with the Agrarian State Delegation. Nevertheless, it seems that within Pajapan the opposition was not strong enough to obtain a revision of the census update because it was never carried out.

The CNPI had fought from the beginning against the expropriation and an internal redistribution of the non-expropriated communal land. It had gathered support among the ranchers when the "amparo" was initially promoted in September 1980. The CNPI became unpopular after the May 7, Assembly when the agreement was signed to withdraw the "amparo". In exchange, the different government agencies had agreed to include 155 new names on the list of those to receive compensation. This satisfied a large portion of the middle peasants and ranchers supporting the "amparo". The large majority comuneros who had initially supported the "amparo", left the CNPI after the May Agreement was signed since they had gotten what they wanted. By mid-1981, the CNPI was left with few supporters.

Nevertheless, the CNPI was successful in promoting its struggle against the expropriation in the media. Indeed, the issue was well known across the country, not only because of newspaper and magazine coverage but also because a film produced by the INI on the project of the Industrial Port of the Laguna del Ostion. On August 4, 1981, the film was premiered at a press conference during which representatives of the CNPI presented their

---

33 Sub-Director of the Land Tenure Directorate.
grievances. One of the CNPI representatives described the event:

In the movie, we (CNPI members) were saying that the villagers were struggling to defend the lands. We were saying that we wanted, with the support of other organizations, to defend our land and revoke definitively the project of the Laguna del Ostion. The teachers supporting the CNPI were saying that the expropriation was not to the advantage of the community since the Laguna was producing five different species of sea food: oyster, shrimp, fish, crab and jaiva (a type of crab). These were the products we depended on to eat and if we lost the Lagoon, we would not have anything to eat. We were also claiming that we were not receiving any compensation for the Laguna.\footnote{Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987.}


The members of the Resistant formation rallied around the CNPI and continued to fight against the expropriation and for the maintenance of the "amparo". They opposed the individual redistribution. In a letter addressed to the Mexican President on November 23, 1981, the CNPI put forward three denunciations:

1) the redistribution of the individual parcels in the non-expropriated zone that occurred during an Extraordinary General Assembly on November 15;

2) the amount of compensation given for the expropriated lands, "a miserly 0.85 pesos per square meter";
3) the violation of the guarantees obtained in the "amparo" judgement by the "Compañía General del Norte".\footnote{North General Company. A construction company that began to work in the expropriated lands (Archives of Pajapan. Letter, November 23, 1981).}

The first complaint demonstrates the opposition of the members of the CNPI in Pajapan to the loss of their parcels of lands. They justified their opposition by accusing those who had received large compensations and the communal land authorities of trying to invade the non-expropriated area by redistributing the land. This letter was signed by 37 villagers (see list in Appendix G), of which none appear to have received a major financial compensation. This confirms the earlier statement that the supporters of the CNPI had land in the non-expropriated zone and were not interested in seeing the communal land redistributed (14 of the 37 were either small ranchers or ranchers).

The same day, another letter was sent to the Secretary of the SRA in Mexico City by Pajapeños and the legal advisor for the CNPI. The letter requested that an investigation of the land redistribution process be undertaken in Pajapan. The authors of this letter argued that;

the communal land authorities and the rich of Pajapan have started to redistribute the land that the poorer comuneros had been cultivating since time imemorial. This has created tensions between the comuneros formally included in the census (905) of 1968 and 4,000 comuneros not surveyed who are requesting a census update to regularize their situation.\footnote{ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. November 23, 1981.}

The issue of confrontation between those surveyed and those not surveyed seems to have been used by the CNPI to create the impression of controversy than as a real problem. No other informants or documents mentioned these conflicts. Indeed, the informants emphasize the resistance and opposition of the members of the CNPI to letting their lands be
redistributed. Moreover, if there were 4,000 comuneros not surveyed, then more than the 37 actual signatories would have supported the CNPI.

The struggle for the elaboration of a new census update continued into early 1982. On February 12, 1982, the CNPI representatives met with the official of the State Delegate of the SRA to try to delay the redistribution of the non-expropriated land until an agreement between those in favor of the land redistribution (Populist formation) and those opposed to it (Resistant formation) could be reached. The representatives also reiterated their request for the elaboration of a new census update.

Tensions within Pajapan increased through the month of February. On the one hand, the Resistant formation (mostly CNPI members) were not willing to give up their land and was also arguing that comuneros were chased off of the plots of lands they used to cultivate and did had not received any compensation from the comuneros taking over their lands.

Enrique Hernandez Lira, an employee of the SRA who often went to Pajapan during that period, prepared a very insightful memorandum for a meeting held on March 16, 1982.

---

39 Interviews with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Pablo Martinez Tino, Santos Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 17, 23, 26, 29, and October 01, 02, 1987.


42 An example of the reluctance of some individuals was illustrated in the letter sent to Amadeo Huervo Abad by an official of the SRA ordering him to give up the individual parcel of land held by other comuneros that he still controlled. The official threatened Huervo Abad with the loss of his agrarian right (ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. Letter, February 03, 1982).

43 Genaro Antonio, a Pajapan CNPI representative affirmed, "There was also a young guy called Domingo Cruz Candelario who was being forced out of his fields without having his crops paid: yucas, camotes, etc." (Interview with Genaro Antonio Hernandez, Pajapan, September 21, 1987).
at the SRA State Delegation in Xalapa. This document describes the evolution of the land redistribution process and the increase in tension in Pajapan. Lira explains that he went to Pajapan on January 21 and 28 1982 with two representatives of the State Government to proceed with the sixth agreement reached on February 1981 whereby each comunero would receive one parcel of land ("unidad de producción") in one of the 37 lots. He said that the preference for the location of the parcel within the lots was given to those who were already cultivating the land. He went to say that he encountered a group of approximately 20 ranchers with agrarian rights who were monopolizing more land than they were supposed to (≈12 hectares). This group of ranchers did not want to give up the land they controlled even though Lira had sent them an order in February to vacate the land within 30 days\(^{44}\).

On February 12, 1982, the representatives of the CNPI, Genaro Antonio, Casimiro Martinez and Genaro Dominguez went to the State Delegation of the SRA in Xalapa to request the delay of Lira's work until an agreement could be reached with the different groups within Pajapan. Following this request, a meeting was held on February 16 with representatives of the different groups (i.e. Populist and Resistant formations members). During that meeting, it was decided that there would be a survey of the private goods in the non-expropriated zone but this survey was stopped on March 08. The communal land administrators blocked the survey because they argued that it was delaying the individual redistribution. They also stated that this delay was due to a small formation of ranchers (i.e. Resistant formation) who had controlled lands before the land redistribution and were not willing to redistribute them. These ranchers were cutting the fences of the comuneros who

---

\(^{44}\) The CNPI reacted to this order by depositing at the Fourth District Judge of Coatzacoalcos Office a complaint. This argued that the provisional "amparo" judgement of 1980 stated that things should remain in the original setting until a final resolution on whether the expropriation was permitted or not (Archives of Pajapan. Letter, March 18, 1982).
had started to fence their parcels. The formation represented by Genaro Antonio (representative of the CNPI in Pajapan), claimed that their landholding should be respected in its totality, not only in the area that legally belonged to them. Lira concluded his memorandum by stating that many of the ranchers (i.e. Populist formation) who previously monopolized large extensions of land in the non-expropriated zone had removed their fences and adjusted themselves to the legal limit (~12 ha.). Finally, Lira explained that there were only a few cases of comuneros who had to give up coffee or fruit trees in production. These comuneros had made agreements with the new occupants regarding production for the next two or three years.  

Following the halt of the individual redistribution on March 08, the Agrarian State Delegate convened the different parties (CNPI versus Communal Land and Municipal administrators and PPS leaders) for a meeting on March 16, 1982 with officials of the State Government. During that meeting, it was agreed that a period of 15 days would be given to the State Delegation of the SRA and the State Government representatives to develop a solution to the conflict over the land redistribution. On March 25, 1982, the representatives of the CNPI in Pajapan wrote to the Secretary of the SRA in Mexico to denounce the land redistribution and the fact that some comuneros were forced off part of the land they had previously controlled. The letter requested a census update that would include all the persons cultivating the lands. From this letter, it can be argued that the CNPI was trying to obtain the support of those who had a plot of land in the non-expropriated zone but who were not included in the census update. In the same letter, the work of Enrique Hernandez

Lira was formally denounced as being responsible for creating divisions within the community.

The tensions between the two formations degenerated in early April 1982. The first violent confrontation occurred on April 03, when Santos Dionisio Angel was put in jail by the supporters of the PPS, members of the Populist formation48. Following this first confrontation, 24 of the 37 chiefs of lots, the communal land authorities, and ‘peasant sector organization’, led by the PPS published a formal denunciation of the Resistant formation. The denunciation was written on April 06, 1982 after a march in the village organized by the peasant sector organization against the actions of the CNPI members. The denunciation identified the ranchers and the peasants supporting the CNPI (see Appendix H). Further, it listed all the violations and acts of vandalism (stealing of wire rolls and polls, poisoning of cattle, and armed threats) committed by the CNPI members.

The conflicts continued with the detention of Pascual Hernandez Angel (a CNPI member) on April 16, 1982 and reached a peak on April 25, 1982 when some members of the Populist formation, led by Erasto Priciliano and Pascual Pablo, decided to detain many members of the Resistant formation. A member of the CNPI recalls what happened:

Erasto Priciliano and Pascual Pablo of the PPS organized the comuneros and started to mobilize them. They came to my house but I was not there. They broke into my house. Casimiro Martinez and Teodoro Silvestre went to the SRA in Xalapa to request its intervention. Camilio Ciriaco and Valentin Antonio escaped to Coatzacoalcos. These two wanted to defend the land they had controlled before the land redistribution. On April 28, I went to make an "amparo" (demand of protection) at the office of the Fourth Judge in the name of the CNPI. The copies of the "amparo" were sent to Pajapan and then we could not be detained anymore49.

Camilio Ciriaco remembered well that:

There were five companions who were jailed that day. Pascual Pablo with his supporters came with rocks and stones to chase us (CNPI members). In those

days, Pascual Pablo was getting along well with the Municipal President.\textsuperscript{50}

The day after the detention, the CNPI representatives (Casimiro Martínez and Teodoro Silvestre) denounced the aggression of the day before. They also requested the intervention of the State Delegate of the SRA and the elaboration of a census update to avoid further confrontation\textsuperscript{51}. On April 29, 1982, the Sub-Director of the Land Tenure Division of the SRA in Mexico City wrote to the State Delegation reiterating his request made for a census update. This request was followed by an audience with the CNPI representatives earlier that day\textsuperscript{52}. It was never followed up however. The reluctance of the State Delegation to carry out orders from Mexico City demonstrates that the Delegation was supportive of the Populist formation.

On April 29, thirteen CNPI members demanded protection from: the public ministry officials, the commandant of the State police, the municipal president and the trustee of Pajapan, the municipal police commandant, and the Judge of the Fifth District of Acayucan. The demand for protection was related to the confrontation of April 25 and the actions of the municipal police commandant and the people of Pajapan who attacked the CNPI members the previous Sunday.\textsuperscript{53} The request for protection mentioned that the CNPI members were having a meeting when the Pajapan police and other comuneros came armed with revolvers, rifles and machetes. They threatened to kill the CNPI members for blocking the land redistribution and they detained Moises Hernandez Eligio and Silverio Martinez Dominguez. Later that evening, the same formation broke into the houses of various CNPI members and stole money.

On April 30, CNPI members wrote a letter addressed to the Mexican President, the

\textsuperscript{50} Interview with Camilo Ciriaco Martínez, Pajapan, September 22, 1987.

\textsuperscript{51} Archives of Pajapan. Letter, April 25, 1982.

\textsuperscript{52} Archives of Pajapan. Letter, April 29, 1982.

Secretary of the SRA and to the public in general denouncing the expropriation of the most fertile communal land\textsuperscript{54}. They also denounced the fact that those who controlled the land before the expropriation were the ones to receive the highest compensation. Finally, they made four specific demands: 1) the suspension of all the construction works of the Laguna del Ostion until the expropriated lands were indemnized at a fair price; 2) the involvement of the community in the design of the Laguna del Ostion project in order to ensure respect for the culture and the natural resources of the region; 3) to stop fooling the comuneros into withdrawing the "amparo"; and 4) the punishment of the comuneros who assaulted the CNPI members\textsuperscript{55}. The CNPI obtained the protection of the Federal Justice on May 4, 1982 when a provisional "amparo" judgement for their protection was granted\textsuperscript{56}.

Overall, the CNPI was not able to attract many supporters. One of them suggested that "with the CNPI, we were about 50\textsuperscript{57}. Its resistance to land redistribution was not viewed favorably by many comuneros who got access to an individual plot of land after many years of landlessness. The CNPI did not receive support from landless workers, although the organization was requesting the elaboration of a new census, perhaps, because it opposed also to the Industrial Port. These workers may have hoped to be employed by the industry. Nevertheless, the CNPI members of Pajapan continued to try to gain popular support. On May 26, 1982, they published a handout inviting the Nahua and Popolucas communities and general public to participate in the "Septimo Encuentro Campesino\textsuperscript{58} of the CNPI on June

\textsuperscript{54} Archives of Pajapan. Letter, May 01, 1982.

\textsuperscript{55} Archives of Pajapan. Letter, May 01, 1982.


\textsuperscript{57} Interview with Camilo Ciriac Martinez, Pajapan, September 22, 1987.

\textsuperscript{58} Seventh Peasant Encounter.
S and 6. During this encounter, the problems of Pajapan and the Industrial Port of the Laguna del Ostion were going to be discussed.\textsuperscript{59}

The fact that the Treasurer of the Communal Land Commission, Camilo Ciriaco Martinez, supported the CNPI gave some credibility to their requests\textsuperscript{60}. It should also be mentioned that not all the supporters of the CNPI were opposed to land redistribution. Some middle peasants who supported the CNPI were willing to accept land redistribution if it meant parcels of 20 hectares which would imply all land, including the expropriated zone.

When the CNPI arrived here, Genaro Dominguez was saying that the expropriated lands should not be given up. The CNPI was saying that the expropriated lands should be occupied. Then, there were two formations created within the villages, those who wanted all the lands to be redistributed, 20 hec. per comuneros. This was the CNPI group. The other group, the majority wanted the unaffected lands to be redistributed, 12 hectares each. I fenced my 20 hectares so it would force the others to fence land in the expropriated zone.\textsuperscript{61}

This position also indicates that the Resistant formation (i.e. CNPI supporters) was divided between the ranchers who were not interested in land redistribution and the middle peasants who were willing to accept parcels of 20 hectares. This potential division did not manifest itself directly, however, because nothing came of their protests. After the conflict of April 25, 1982, the CNPI members became less vocal in Pajapan: "After that incident, things quietened down\textsuperscript{62}.

\textsuperscript{59} This handout is signed under the name "Pajapan Independent Comuneros" (members of the CNPI) (Archives of Pajapan. Handout, May 26, 1982).

\textsuperscript{60} Interview with Camilo Ciriaco Martinez, Pajapan, September 22, 1987.

\textsuperscript{61} Interview with Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapan, September 28, 1987. Another informant specified a bit further the intentions of the CNPI's supporters; "The CNPI wanted the private goods be paid equally to all the peasants. It also wanted a better price for the land tenure and finally the elaboration of agreements on the way the land should be redistributed" (Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 26, 1987).

\textsuperscript{62} Interview with Camilo Ciriaco Martinez, Pajapan, September 22, 1987.
4. The Payment of the Land Tenure

On June 23, 1982, the Communal Land Administrators requested the Fourth District Judge of Coatzacoalcos to guarantee a definitive "amparo". In 1981, the "amparo" file was transferred from the Ninth District Judge to the Fourth District because the former felt that the "amparo" was in the domain of the latter. This request was made because the compensation for the land tenure had not yet been given to the comuneros. This time, however, it was done without the assistance of the advisor of the CNPI.

Another strategy used by the community to obtain the payment of the land tenure and also to ensure that the industry brought some benefits to the community was to stop the construction of the Laguna del Osten. On October 6, 1982, the "Sindicatos de Trabajadores de la Construcción, Excavación, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana "Delegación Pajapan" and the "Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria de la Construcción, Similares y Conexos del municipio de Pajapan" decided to strike since the Companies sub-contracted by PEMEX had not yet submitted a collective work agreement. The following day, a general assembly was organized that brought the comuneros and the youth who had initiated the strike together. During the assembly, the unity between the workers of the two unions and the 905 comuneros was made official. Both parties would stop all construction work at the

---

64 This was confirmed by the Communal Lands Commission President, Pablo Tino Martínez (Interview, Pajapan, September 20, 1987).
65 Union of Workers in Construction, Excavation and Similar Activities of the Mexican Republic "Pajapan Section".
66 Union of Workers in Construction Industry and Similar Activities of Pajapan. Both unions were members of the Mexican Workers Confederation ("Confederación de los Trabajadores de México", hereafter referred to as CTM).
industrial port until the following demands were met:

1) the payment of compensation for the expropriated land;

2) the withdrawal of the "amparo" would not take place until the Federal Government and the Companies involved in the construction of the industrial port signed an agreement stating that public works would be carried out in Pajapan;

3) PEMEX and the other hiring companies respect the laws and rights of the unions of Pajapan 68.

The public works requested were the following: 1) the pavement and drainage of the main streets of Pajapan; 2) the pavement and drainage of the main streets of San Juan Volador; 3) the construction of primary and secondary schools, colleges and kindergartens within the Municipality; 4) the construction of hospitals, a post office and telegraphs in Pajapan; 5) the construction of a municipal park, children's park and sport fields in the village and the hamlets of Pajapan; 6) construction of a path to connect the hamlets of Tecolapa and Batajapan; 7) the construction of a public market in the village of Pajapan; 8) improvements in the supply of drinking water and electricity and 9) the pavement of the roads connecting the municipalities of Coatazacoalcos, Jaltipan, Cosoleacaque and Minatitlan 69. All these demands had to be fulfilled before the comuneros would sign the withdrawal of the "amparo" and lift the strike. On the same day, another declaration stated that the workers of the two unions would support the comuneros in their strikes and vice-versa.

The villagers pointed out that the government and the companies were forced to negotiate:

The youth, we organized an union to defend our interests. We were members of the CTM. When we realized that we were not being paid, we decided to stop the work of the company. We and the small peasants stopped the work of the trucks because the school had not yet been constructed. We stopped the truck that were carrying the rocks for the project. We blocked everything and

68 ACEAX. October 07, 1982.

69 ACEAX. October 07, 1982.
had published pamphlets for publicity. We stopped the works and detained the representatives of this company. We received the support of the Municipal and Communal Administrators.\(^\text{70}\)

An important political actor, ex-municipal secretary and future municipal president, Sergio Martinez Aleman, explained why and how the strike happened and what was resolved:

We struck because we (the comuneros) were seeing the beginning of the work for the industrial harbour but we did not see any advantage for the population of the village. The most important request for us was the professional high school. The people gave us very strong support. We filled the municipal park with all the big trucks. An engineer came here to negotiate. He told me "Give me ten loads of truck, and you will have your school". After seven, the engineer came back to tell me that the school would be constructed. It took three days and they started building it.\(^\text{71}\)

The strike lasted for twenty days and accelerated the payment of the land tenure partly because the comuneros were offering to withdraw the amparo upon the realization of their demands.

On November 26, a General Assembly was held in Pajapan for the payment of the land tenure to the 905 comuneros listed in the census update. Officials from the SRA, SAHOP, "Fundo Nacional de Fomento Ejidal"\(^\text{72}\) and PEMEX\(^\text{73}\) and 900 comuneros were present at the Assembly. A consensus was reached under which the comuneros would sign an agreement for the withdrawal of the "amparo" upon acceptance of their cheques. The agreement consisted of ten points:

1) the 905 comuneros were subjected to the redistribution of equal parcels of the non-affected lands;

2) the SAHOP promised to permit the adequate education of the comuneros and their

---


\(^{71}\) Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 30, 1987.

\(^{72}\) National Fund of Ejido Trusteeship (hereafter referred to as FIFONAFE).

\(^{73}\) "Acta de Asemblea General Extraordinaria", ACEAX; Archives of Abel Jiminez Hernandez, Expediente Pajapan; ACNCP, Mexico; Archives of Pajapan, November 26, 1982.
sons by providing the community with the necessary public services;

3) the SAHOP agreed to provide the community with kindergartens, primary schools, technical schools, secondary schools and colleges and also pavement, electricity, drainage and a public market for the village of Pajapan;

4) the SAHOP agreed to approach the various agencies for the necessary communication services (post office, telegraph, etc.);

5) the SAHOP promised to ensure that the means of communication within the municipality and between municipalities would be well maintained;

6) SAHOP, PEMEX and the entreprises contracted to carry out the construction work agreed to give preference to the local labour force;
7) the SAHOP agreed to provide the technical training for the construction of the Industrial Port;

8) all the preceding clauses applied to all the hamlets of the Municipality;

9) the SAHOP agreed to initiate all the public works mentioned below as soon as the work for the Industrial Port of the Laguna del Otion was started; and

10) the SAHOP engaged itself to finance the public works.\textsuperscript{74} As it can be seen, these were a repetition of the six strike demands of October 7, 1982.

The Assembly lasted until the early morning of the next day, but still not all the comuneros received their cheques. The Communal Land President recalled that day in the following terms:

In November 1982, the comuneros were paid 90,900 pesos each. When they were receiving their cheques, they had to sign a paper without realizing that meant the withdrawal of the "amparo". By midnight, the government officials stopped paying the comuneros.\textsuperscript{75}

The next day a list of 16 names made up of those who had not been paid, among them, the Communal Land Commission President\textsuperscript{76}. During or soon after that Assembly, a letter addressed to the Fourth State District was written to withdraw the "amparo" request and


\textsuperscript{75} Interview with Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 20, 1987.

\textsuperscript{76} Archives of Pajapan. "Lista", November 27, 1982.
cancellation of the "amparo" judgement that granted a provisional "amparo". It appeared, however, that the Communal Land President did not sign the official withdrawal that was going to be elaborated the next day in Coatzacoalcos. Instead, he went to see the lawyer of the community to put an "amparo" against all the agreements signed the night before and to complain that some comuneros had not been paid\textsuperscript{77}. This was to serve as a basis to re-initiate the struggle for the "amparo" in 1983\textsuperscript{78}.

This Assembly and the withdrawal of the "amparo" did not please the CNPI members who wrote a long letter on December 3, 1982, to the Mexican President requesting his intervention to protect the communal land from being expropriated\textsuperscript{79}. The letter related the history of the struggles of the comuneros of Pajapan and how the process of land monopolization that developed in the 1970s had led to many problems. It described in detail the process of expropriation, the conflicts, and the repressions CNPI members suffered while struggling against the expropriation. The letter finished with a request to the President to intervene against the expropriation since "working the land is the only thing that we (the comuneros) know how to do"\textsuperscript{80}.

Three days later, the CNPI members addressed a letter to the State Agrarian Delegate requesting that he cancel all the agreements passed during the General Assembly on November 26, 1982. The letter argued that most of the comuneros were illiterate and had been manipulated when they received the cheques for the land tenure and signed the

\textsuperscript{77} Interview with Gabriel Hernandez Antonio, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.

\textsuperscript{78} ACNCP, n/d.

\textsuperscript{79} Archives of Pajapan. Letter to the Mexican President. December 03, 1982, 6p.

\textsuperscript{80} Archives of Pajapan. Letter to the Mexican President. December 03, 1982, p.6.
withdrawal of the "amparo"\textsuperscript{81}. The letter also claimed that paying the comuneros for the land tenure directly was against the law which specified that compensation be used for productive investment programs\textsuperscript{82}.

Each comunero received about 91,000 pesos for the land which was more than the original Presidential Decree had presented (if they had been paid directly after the publication of the expropriatory decree, each comunero would have received 47,600 pesos). The Sub-Delegate of the State Delegation of the SRA explained why:

The money for the land tenure was not given first. It went to FIFONAFE where it generated interest. Since the money remained for quite some time in FIFONAFE, it generated a lot of interest. By the time, the peasants were paid, they received 82,333,000 pesos instead of 43 million\textsuperscript{83}.

The payment of these cheques was well remembered by the community. The comuneros did various things with the money, "Some bought cattle, others built a house in concrete, others drank it all"\textsuperscript{84}. The payment of the land tenure had a uniting effect on the village.

A final political phenomenon has to be examined. In August 1982, municipal elections were held in Pajapan. These elections clearly demonstrate the control of the Populist formation over the municipal administration. They also reveal the division among the PPS

---

\textsuperscript{81} Archives of Pajapan. Letter. December 06, 1982.

\textsuperscript{82} Article 123 of the Federal Agrarian Reform Law establishes that "If the expropriation is partial and occurs for lands exploited collectively, or of common use, the indemnization received by the community would be directed to the acquisition of lands to complete the ejido or for direct productive investments, within a rural development plan, elaborated by the General Assembly and approved by the Agrarian Reform Secretariat" (Chavez Padron 1987: 153).

\textsuperscript{83} Interview with Lic. Ordinola, Agrarian Sub-delegate of the State Delagation of the SRA, Xalapa, October 22, 1987.

\textsuperscript{84} Interview with Ramon Hernandez Martinez, Pajapan, September 20, 1987.
members between those who had allied (or had been coopted by the PRI members) during
the struggles for the land redistribution and the payment of the goods on the land and those
who had not.

The elections went smoothly. After November 1980, the alliance between the PPS and
the PRI's leaders characterized the Populist formation. Pascual Pablo and Erasto Prisciliano,
important figures of the PPS, became allied with the PRI's leaders. An informant described
how the PRI went to find the support of the PPS:

Before nominating the candidate, the PRI met with the supporters of the PPS
to tell them that they should be united in the work. They (PRI organizers) told
the PPS leaders "Let us work together. If you support Sergio Martinez's candi-
dacy, you will get the Trustee position". The PPS decided to unite with the
PRI, but not all of the PPS members followed.85

Only some of the PPS supporters went with the PRI. For many comuneros, the
payment of the land tenure and the land redistribution were perceived as the result of the
actions of the members of the PRI, especially Sergio Martinez Aleman. The latter had already
held important functions in the community (Municipal Secretary, Secretary of the Local
Ranchers Association and President of the PRI Municipal Committee). He was also highly
regarded by most comuneros for the key role he played in negotiating with the Mexican
government and promoting specific demands for the villages (i.e. the list of 21 points in
1980). The PPS was divided with some of its key leaders supporting the PRI members of the
Populist formation:

Pascual Pablo sold himself to the PRI because they gave them the position of
sindico; Erasto Prisciliano. We of the PPS, were about 200. We did not want
to go with the PRI because they were doing illegal things. The people of the
CNPI supported Don Tomas.86

86 Interview with Juan and Pedro Pereyra Fonseca, Pajapán, October 04, 1987.
After the alliance between some of the leaders of the PPS and the PRI, new leaders emerged within the PPS. Tomas Martinez Incarnacion, (who had been previously shot at the beginning of the land redistribution in 1981) was proposed as Municipal President candidate:

I conducted a political campaign. My other candidates were Anacleto Cruz Trujillo and Juan Pereyra Fonseca, the designated substitutes were Lazaro Palomino, Jose Cruz Martinez and Andres Reyes Martinez. It seemed that there were no frauds for this election. Because of the quantity of votes I received, I remained as alderman.\textsuperscript{87}

From what was mentioned by the informants, these Municipal elections went "smoothly.\textsuperscript{88} The PRI won the elections but the PPS received the position of alderman. As had been agreed with the formation of the PPS who joined the ranks of the PRI, Erasto Priciiano was elected trustee ("sindico"). The members of the CNPI supported the PPS because they were more opposed to the PRI and the leaders of the PPS who had gone with the PRI. Some form of consensus was established and the confrontations between the political parties were not as fundamental as they had been during the struggle for land redistribution. Indeed, Sergio Martinez Aleman, the newly elected Municipal President, stated that Tomas Martinez Encarnacion of the PPS "was a hard worker. We (he and I) were able to work together.\textsuperscript{89}

C. LAND REDISTRIBUTION, CLASS STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL DYNAMIC

The expropriation significantly modified the economic and political organization of Pajapan. It served as the catalyst in the struggles for the land redistribution. The land redistribution brought significant changes in the pattern of land tenure and the class structure was also modified. Out of the 19,158 hectares, 4,390 hectares were effectively expropriated

\textsuperscript{87} Interview with Tomas Martinez Encarnacion, Pajapan, October 01, 1987.
\textsuperscript{88} Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 26, 1987.
\textsuperscript{89} Interview with Sergio Martinez Aleman, Pajapan, September 23, 1987.
(although the Presidential Decree stated 5,154 hectares), 3,280 hectares were used for the urban zone and for a forest reserve\textsuperscript{90}, and approximately 11,488 hectares were used to create 905 parcels of 12.25 hectares. Chevalier and Buckles (1988) estimated that approximately 6,100 hectares were effectively redistributed and the remaining 5,388 hectares, stayed in the hands of the comuneros who controlled them before the reform.

The analysis of Chevalier and Buckles (forthcoming) illustrates the modifications in land tenure and the class structure. They estimate that the land reform distributed land to one fourth of the villagers who had been landless. In addition, approximately 47% of the 905 comuneros who received a parcel of 12.25 hectares were landless before the land redistribution. For these workers, the land redistribution gave them the opportunity to return to subsistence agriculture and produce surplus for market exchange. Some were even able to become small ranchers.

Among those who had had land before the redistribution, only 175 (18% of the comuneros) lost access to lands. Chevalier and Buckles found that these households were mostly middle peasants or small ranchers who held parcels of less than 18 hectares prior to the reform. They were probably individuals not included in the 1968 Presidential Resolution and who were not able to get on the census update of 1981. It is likely that they were supporters of the CNPJ opposed to the results of the 1981 census update. Table nine, taken from Chevalier and Buckles (forthcoming), illustrates the changes in land tenure patterns.

\textsuperscript{90} ASRAX. "Memorandum", March 16, 1982.
## TABLE 9: Losses and Gains of Lands by Social Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>hectares</th>
<th>Pre-Reform Hac.</th>
<th>Lost</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Gained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landless Wor.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>1,956</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Peasants</td>
<td>1 - 12</td>
<td>712</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+ 368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Peasants</td>
<td>13 - 24</td>
<td>1,128</td>
<td>-468</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Ranchers</td>
<td>25 - 40</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>-523</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Ranchers</td>
<td>41 - 99</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>-611</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Ranchers</td>
<td>&gt; 100</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>-715</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,169</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,317</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.6</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2,324</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


After the land redistribution, the cattle population was drastically reduced. According to Chevalier and Buckles, the total number of cattle fell from 11,000 to 7,000 or 8,000. For the ranchers the compensation for the land tenure and for the private goods was very little in comparison to what they lost. Two ranchers explained their views on these payments:

- They paid each comunero 91,000 pesos. It was not even enough for the fence and the fruit trees that we lost. Those who had their lands in the expropriated lands were paid the land tenure and the private goods and were given one parcel. Those who had their lands in the non-expropriated lands lost everything. The industrial port affected everybody, we lost millions of pesos.\(^{91}\)

- There were many ranchers who went down after that (the land redistribution). The total number of cattle decreased significantly. They started to sell their cattle. They tried to put as many cattle as possible in the small plot of land.\(^{92}\)

Table ten shows the changes in the onwership of cattle:

---

\(^{91}\) Interview with Andres Martinez Antonio, Pajapan, October 05, 1987.

\(^{92}\) Interview with Pedro Martinez Vargas, Pajapan, September 17, 1987.
TABLE 10: Changes in the Cattle Ownership per Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>Pre-Reform #Comun. %</th>
<th>Post-Reform #Comun. %</th>
<th>% of diff. Incr. or Dec.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Peasants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12 hectares</td>
<td>49 32.2</td>
<td>65 36.1</td>
<td>+ 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 4 head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Peasants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 40 hectares</td>
<td>86 40.8</td>
<td>47 26.1</td>
<td>- 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 24 head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Ranchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 40 hectares</td>
<td>24 15.8</td>
<td>54 30.0</td>
<td>+ 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 24 head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Ranchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 99 hectares</td>
<td>12 7.9</td>
<td>8 4.4</td>
<td>- 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49 head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Ranchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 100 hectares</td>
<td>5 3.3</td>
<td>6 3.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 50 head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>583 100.0</td>
<td>180 100.0</td>
<td>+ 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The land redistribution allowed approximately 18% of the comuneros, who did not have cattle before, to enter into cattle-raising activities while the number of small ranchers increased significantly. This can be explained by the major reduction in the number of herds of the medium and large ranchers and the expansion of some small and middle peasants. The former were unable to retain their entire herd and the latter invested their compensation payments in cattle-raising activities.
Table eleven also elaborated by Chevalier and Buckles shows that approximately 64% (n=373/583) of the comuneros remained in the same class (i.e. cases in bold), 20% (n=116/583) experienced upward mobility and 16% (96/583) downward mobility after the land redistribution. Overall, the land redistribution had a levelling effect on the class structure of Pajapan in terms of access to land and cattle ownership. Nevertheless, 70% (n=408/583) of all comuneros continued to be excluded from ranching activities. Table twelve presents the social mobility experienced by the different classes.
TABLE 12: Social Mobility Experienced by Each Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>No Mobility</th>
<th>Upward Mob.</th>
<th>Downward Mob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#Comm. %</td>
<td>#Comm. %</td>
<td>#Comm. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land. Workers*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 7 hectares 0 head</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Peasants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12 hectares 1-4 head</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Peasants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 24 hectares 5-9 head</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Ranchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 40 hectares 10-24 head</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Ranchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 99 hectares 25-49 head</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Ranchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 100 hectares 50 head</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Survey N=583. The large ranchers (>100 hectares) are undersampled.
*: The landless workers Workers category includes the poorer small peasants who had access to less than 7 hectares of land prior to the redistribution and who did not own any head of cattle after the redistribution.

Among the landless workers and poorer small peasants who controlled less than 7 hectares of land, 20% (n=88) experienced upward mobility (these comuneros now constituted 50% (n=88 /175) of the cattle-owning comuneros). Only small segments of the other classes benefitted from the land redistribution, 25% (n=12/49) of the small peasants, 23% (n=14/62) of the middle peasants, 8% of the small ranchers and none of the medium and large ranchers. Indeed, aside from the landless workers and poorer small peasants, most members of the other classes suffered from the land redistribution: about 50% (n=25/49) of the small peasants experienced downward mobility, about 64% (n=32/62) of the middle peasants, about 67% (n=16/24) of the small ranchers, about 92% (n=11/12) of the medium
ranchers, and 60% of the large ranchers.

The land redistribution permitted many landless workers to return to subsistence agricultural activities, while forcing many ranchers to return to small scale commodity production and diversify their economic activities into commercial ones instead of ranching. The small and middle peasants experienced considerable mobility, both upward and downward. Those that lost land and probably, allied themselves with the Resistant formation in an effort to block the land redistribution or gain redistribution of 20 hectare parcels.

The ranchers' struggle for better compensation for private goods by promoting an "amparo" and re-negotiating the payments was a way for the ranchers to reduce their losses. These compensations, however, certainly did not equal the significant losses experienced by these classes. For many ranchers, the individual land redistribution was a new obstacle to their expansion. They supported it because they had few alternatives. The land redistribution was the result of the increasing militancy of the landless workers and the small peasants allied with sectors of the middle peasantry and small ranchers. All these classes were seriously threatened by the on-going expansion of the large ranchers. The internal tensions were greatly aggravated by the expropriation. The large ranchers discovered that they could do little against the project because of the importance of the project and the political determination to implement it. Therefore, the ranchers tried to minimize their losses. This was why the Populist formation appeared. Nevertheless, some small ranchers and middle peasants who had land in the non-expropriated part and who could not receive compensation formed the Resistant formation. They were not able to block the expropriation and experienced important losses. The August Rebellion seriously challenged their hegemony over the land and, at the same time, the intervention of the Mexican government favored the Pro-Peasant formation. The expropriation gave the chance to the Pro-Peasant formation to be heard by
various state agencies. It should be remembered that in the context of the expropriation, the Mexican Government was trying to reduce the resistance against the project and the resulting coverage by the media.

Table thirteen illustrates the overall change in the class structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>Pre-Reform</th>
<th>Post-Reform</th>
<th>% of diff.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#Comun. %</td>
<td>#Comun. %</td>
<td>Incr.or Dec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landl. Workers*</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>0 head</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 7 hectares</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Peasants</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12 hectares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 4 head</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Peasants</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 24 hectares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9 head</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Ranchers</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 40 hectares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 24 head</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Ranchers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 99 hectares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49 head</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Ranchers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 100 hectares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 50 head</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*: The Landless Workers category includes the poorer, small peasants who had access to less than 7 hectares of land prior to the redistribution and who do not own any head of cattle after the redistribution.


The class structure was modified in two ways: first the number of medium and large ranchers and second was reduced and second, the number of small peasants was increased. It could be argued that the political dynamics of the post land redistribution period would center around two poles. The first pole would comprise the comuneros who were not included in the census update and interested in getting access to land. Their strategy would be to get
access to land by requesting access to the expropriated lands. The second pole would comprise the small ranchers interested to expand further by renting parcel of land or occupying land in the expropriated zone.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has analyzed the political struggles over land in Pajapan between 1948 and 1983. The analytical framework developed in chapter I was applied in each historical period to identify the prevailing political dynamics. In this part of my analysis, I summarize the findings of the case study and briefly present the actual political situation in Pajapan. I evaluate also the adequacy of the analytical framework for understanding rural politics and locate this analysis within the existing literature on Pajapan. Finally, I propose a possible agenda for further research on peasant struggles.

In all historical periods examined, control over land was the central reason for political struggle. Local political institutions were instrumental in controlling land, therefore, these struggles also revolved around the control of these institutions. Each political formation was aimed then, at defining the modalities of access to land and controlling political institutions. The types of interactions between political formations resulted in distinctive dynamics.

Early struggles (1948-1968) revolved around the definition of the land tenure system. During this period, two dynamics were intertwined: "caciquismo" and factionalism. Each of these dynamics was the result of the domination of one formation over the other. When the Municipal Authorities and the Agrarian Committee dominated local political institutions, caciquismo prevailed. The two groups were organized around two caciques who played a central role in the political life of Pajapan. The Municipal Authority formation rallied with Guillermo Salinas Mendoza, the mestizo municipal secretary, and the Agrarian Committee with Juan Grande. Both formations supported the development of the ranching industry and land
concentration. In opposition to the cacique's domination over land and political institutions, the two other formations, the Communal Land Committee and the Lot Administration formed a coalition in 1955 to struggle for recognition and titling of the communal lands. Between 1955 and 1964, the Coalition imposed a political dynamic characterized by factionalism. During these years, Guillermo Salinas was not able to re-establish his domination nor was the Agrarian Committee able to create an ejido. It is important to note that elements of "caciquismo" and factionalism overlapped during this period.

Between 1948 and 1968, regional and national forces conditioned political struggles in Pajapan. For example, the development of the cattle industry in Southern Veracruz had a direct impact on Pajapan. The intervention of Amadeo Gonzalez Caballero in local affairs during the elections of Juan Grande and the failed attempt to assassinate Guillermo Salinas are further illustrations. The domination of the PRI in all Mexico also influenced Pajapan's struggles since those who wanted access to political positions had to be allies of the PRI. The local PRI Committee was controlled by members of either the Municipal Authority or the Agrarian Committee thereby excluding members of the Coalition. During this period, the Mexican government supported requests from all political formations but there was no clear position on the part of government. Each formation identified and used whichever government agencies would provide it with the bureaucratic support it needed. Overall, throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, ranching activities and land monopolization intensified. These two interconnected processes led to class struggles in the second period.

Between 1968 and 1979, the political dynamic was characterized by class conflict over the distribution of communal land. Recognition and titling of the communal land in 1968 did not prevent the ranchers from appropriating the land. In contrast with the earlier period, the ranchers united in the 1970s to secure control over all the political institutions. In the mean-
time, increasing numbers of landless workers and poor peasants organized into the Pro-Peasant formation. This political formation emerged after a series of short-lived rebellions. By the late 1970s, the formation was fighting for land redistribution and political power. External linkages played an important role for both Pro-Rancher and Pro-Peasant formations. The Pro-Rancher formation received support from regional and state political forces, such as the regional PRI Committee, the Southern Veracruz Ranchers Union, and some State Deputies. The Pro-Peasant formation had links with opposition parties. The Mexican government at the regional and state level supported the ranchers' expansion by delaying procedures for the execution of the Presidential Resolution. Overall, the state paid little attention to what was happening in Pajapan. It was only with the construction of the Laguna del Ostion industrial port that the Mexican government suddenly became interested in the community. The government intervened directly in Pajapan only when its own interests were at stake.

By the end of the 1970s, a peculiar conjuncture developed in Pajapan. Internally, opposition to the ranchers had never been as strong with the Land Redistributing formation requesting the removal of Sixto Vargas and challenging the PRI's domination over the municipal administration. Externally, the announcement of the industrial port meant the expropriation of 5,154 hectares of top quality land in the communal area, most of which was controlled by ranchers. The industrial port construction project received the support of the Pro-Peasant formation. They saw in the project employment possibilities and a unique opportunity for land redistribution. The ranchers opposed the project. When they discovered how little they would receive for compensation, they promoted an "amparo". The CNPI assisted the ranchers in promoting the "amparo". Paradoxically, with its pro-indigenous defence position and an egalitarian rhetoric, the CNPI supported the dominant class of Pajapan. It was the ranchers who benefited the most from the "amparo" in that they added about 160 names
to the list of comuneros to receive compensation payments.

The ranchers' acceptance of the land reform in November 1980 has to be understood within its context. The pressures from the Pro-Peasant formation were a serious threat to the ranchers' control over political institutions. The ranchers needed to maintain control over these institutions in order to maximize their benefits from the construction of the industrial port (controlling public investments and potential sub-contracting) and minimize their losses from the expropriation (negotiating the list of names to receive a compensation payment). Finally, the ranchers were losing large tracts of land and had to ensure themselves at least minimal access to land in the non-expropriated zone.

With the acceptance of the land reform, the political dynamic was changed. An inter-class alliance led to the creation of the Populist formation led and controlled by ranchers. These ranchers capitalized on their support for the land distribution to coopt and maintain their domination over local politics. Not all members of the two earlier formations went with the Populist formation. Both the Pro-Peasant and Pro-Rancher formations were faced with a dissenting group comprising members of different classes. An important feature of this resistance movement was its close relationship with the CNPI who assisted the formation in resisting the expropriation and land redistribution. The emergence of these two political formations marked a return to factionalism.

In 1983, the Project of the Laguna del Oston was officially cancelled (the construction of which had slowed down since the end of 1982) and in 1984, the Mexican President announced that the expropriated land was to be returned to the comuneros of Pajapan. The project had been cancelled because of difficulties in construction. Since the Presidential declaration, the return of the expropriated land has become the center of local conflicts. The axis of conflict has been modified such that the struggles are now between the comuneros of
the village of Pajapan against the non-comuneros\textsuperscript{1} of Pajapan and three hamlets (Jicacal, El Mangal and Palma Real) allied with the comuneros of these hamlets. The comuneros and non-comuneros of these hamlets have requested access to the expropriated land. In reaction to the opposition from the comuneros of Pajapan (mainly the ranchers), the comuneros and non-comuneros of these hamlets decided in 1987 to request the creation of three ejidos (one for each hamlet). One of the central political issues is: whether the hamlets will be able to convince the Mexican government to create three ejidos and whether the comuneros of Pajapan will let them establish these ejidos.

The expropriated land is now occupied by many non-comunero squatters and ranchers who continue to be the dominant political figures in Pajapan. Their control over local political institutions ensures them direct contacts with the Mexican government. Finally, another determinant factor is the emergence of a peasant organization within the hamlets. This organization is assisted by the "Coordinadora Plan de Ayala" (CNPA), a nationwide independent peasant organization. It is too early to evaluate the impact of the hamlets' organization, nevertheless, it represents a key element in the understanding Pajapan's present political struggles.

The model developed in the first part of this thesis throws light on Pajapan's political struggles by integrating political and economic dimensions. The concept of political formation accounts for groupings of individuals that can not be explained solely on the basis of either class interests or factions. The notion of political formation also demonstrates the role of internal and external linkages in shaping political struggles.

The analysis of Pajapan's political history shows the contradictory actions of the Mexican government. Although, in most cases, the government promoted the interests of the

\textsuperscript{1} Those who were not granted parcels of 12 hectares.
ranching class (i.e. the agrarian bourgeoisie), it did not hesitate to threaten the ranchers' interests by expropriating part of the communal land. At the same time, there were distinctions between actions carried out at the national and state levels. The national level seemed to act more autonomously by supporting some of the requests of the Communal Land Committee and at other times supporting the Municipal Authorities. In contrast, the state level was more responsive to regional interests by defending, for example, the Agrarian Committee in the 1950s, or between 1968 and 1979 by delaying the execution of the Presidential Resolution.

Another issue that this thesis has raised was the question of the peasant movement. In Pajapan, the emergence of peasant-based movement only occurred in the 1970s. This movement developed as a result of the land concentration and increased class differentiation within Pajapan. The peasant movement and the formation of the Pro-Peasant formation, however, did not evolve into a revolutionary movement or in a truly constituted and organized peasant movement. The outcome of the growing conflicts between ranchers, peasants and landless workers was directly determined by the expropriation which created favourable conditions for a land redistribution policy. This goes to show how important concrete historical, social and political conditions are to the understanding of class struggle. The rapid cooptation of the Pro-Peasant formation raises general questions about peasant movements in Mexico. When can one speak of a peasant movement that is not reducible to purely conjunctural factors? I suggest, based on our Pajapan case study, that a peasant movement implies struggle for land, control of political power and participation in the process of social transformation. In this sense, the peasant organization of the hamlets for the creation of ejidos is closer to a peasant movement. This organization is struggling for access to land and for political autonomy while also participating in a larger peasant movement.
This research adds to existing work on Pajapan. Past work has been characterized either by a culturalist emphasis (Garcia de Leon 1976), an ecologist approach (Stuart 1978), or by a synchronic perspective looking almost exclusively at the expropriation period (Baez-Jorge 1980; Coll 1981; Lara Ovando and Hernandez Leobardo 1983; Lara Ovando 1987; 1907, Pensamiento Crítico 1982; Aurelio Carballo 1984: Martinez and Rodriguez 1984). Other studies such Bouysse-Casagne (1981), Martinez (1978), Nahmad Molinari(1985, 1987) concentrate more on the economic transformations of the community and less on political struggles. By putting political history at the center of the present research, it became possible to identify the different political dynamics, the influence of regional forces and the contradictory interventions of the State. For these reasons, the present analysis uncovered and presented new dimensions of Pajapan's political history that add to previous research.

The history of Pajapan raises some general questions with regard to political struggles for land. The notion of determination in the last instance of the economic sphere is inapplicable to political struggles in rural communities. It is only by combining a class analysis with an understanding of the political sphere that one can account for these struggles. An alternative approach is to consider political struggles in rural communities as the result of a class structure, the relative autonomy of the political sphere, the contradictory actions of the state and the influence of regional and national forces. The economic and political conditions under which a peasant movement develop are more difficult to determine. I suggest peasant movements are the result of: 1) historical and conjunctural factors; 2) state intervention in the rural sector, usually on behalf of the bourgeoisie; 3) the active resistance of the peasantry to its full proletarianization and the inability of peripheral capitalism to fully integrate the peasant; and 4) the tendency of peasant movements to dissolve once access to land is obtained or to become part of a larger social movement.
Further research on both Pajapan and Mexican peasant movements is necessary to evaluate the generalizations presented in this thesis. Analyses on the role of cultural dimensions in political struggles are also required for a better understanding of indigenous communities such as Pajapan.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Public Archives:

Archivo de la Reforma Agraria (formerly Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización). Expediente 276.1/2414. Mexico, D.F.

Archivo de la 14ta Delegación de la Secretaría de Reforma Agraria. Expediente C-26 Bis. Xalapa, Veracruz.

Archivo de la Comisión Nacional Coordinadora de Puertos. Mexico, D.F.

Private Archives:

Archivo del Centro de Estudios Agrarios. Xalapa, Veracruz.


Archivos de Pajapan, Veracruz.

Official Documents:


Gobierno de Mexico. 1979 Programa de Puertos Industriales, Declaratoria de Zona Industrial, Estado de Veracruz, Municipio de Coatzacoalcos y Pajapan. Mexico: SAHOP.


Newspapers:

Uno Más Uno. Mexico, D.F.

El Día. Mexico, D.F.

El Diario del Istmo. Coatzcoalcos, Veracruz.

SECONDARY SOURCES


Alegría, R.T. 1952. "Origins and Diffusion of the Term 'Cacique'". In Selected Papers of the XXIX International Congress of Americanists, ed. Sol Tax, Chicago:


_______. 1979a. La explotación del trabajo campesino por el capital. Mexico: Editorial Macehual and ENAH.


______. 1975b. "¿Modos de producción articulados o lucha de clases?", *Historia y Sociedad* 5: 37-68.


Bonfil Battalla, Guillermo. "Del indigenismo de la revolución a la antropología crítica", in Arturo Warman et al. (eds). *De eso que llaman antropológica mexicana*. Mexico: Nuestro Tiempo.

Bouysse-Cassagne, Thérèse. 1980. *Le bruit de la lagune, histoire de la création d'un port*


_____. 1980. La batalla en el Mexico rural. Mexico; Siglo Veintiuno.


________. 1968. "Eighteenth Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte", Selected Works. Moscow:


Schryer, Frans J., Sally Humphries and John Fox. 1986. "Peasant Militancy in the Huasteca (Class Conflict and the Civil-Religious Hierarchy)". Unpublished Manuscript, Guelph: University of Guelph (Spring).


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF THE VILLAGE OF PAJAPAN

LIST OF THOSE WITH ANIMALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Pigs</th>
<th>Poultry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juan A. Martinez</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higinio Cuervo</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clemente Antonio</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosaline Lara</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejo Martinez(39)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santos Hernandez</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcadio Hernandez</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagino Hernandez</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maclovio Antonio</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernesto Priscillano</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domasio Martin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenceslao Martinez</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emiliano Martinez</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Pantaleon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrique Candelario</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francesca Alvarez</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santos Hernandez</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32 individuals with some poultry (2 to 54)

Number of inhabitants: 520
Head of household: 108
Single female over 16: 8
Number of peasants with communal rights according to census: 118

SURVEY OF SAN JUAN VOLADOR

Number of inhabitants: 170
Head of household: 38

Total number of heads of cattle: 40
No one with more than 5.

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS SURROUNDING THE PUBLICATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL
RESOLUTION

(Summary of the procedures leading to the presidential resolution, as stated in the dictamen
of the Agrarian Councillor for the State of Veracruz)

January 7, 1952: Oficio #105-00045: First Request made by the General Directorate of
Indigenous Affairs to the Department of Agrarian and Colonization
Affairs, on behalf of a numerous group of "comuneros" of Pajapan for
the recognition and titling of the communal lands.

February 9, 1952: Oficio #175311: The General Directorate of Lands and Waters,
Communal Lands Section declared initiated the file of recognition and
titling of Pajapan Communal Lands, under the number 276.1/2413.

April 23, 1956: Juan Martinez Incarnacion and Guillermo Morales from Pajapan
submitted to the State DAAC the following documentation:
- original letter written by Juan Silva and other on April 18, 1956.
- a notebook containing the First Testimony of the "escrituras" #4 817
  written on January 30, 1952.
- a receipt from the payment made on February 1952.
- a document-holder containing 4 sheets of the Primary Titles of the Lot
  #1, dated as 1884;
- a document-holder containing 4 sheets of the Primary Titles of the lot
  #2, dated as September 23, 1890
- a document-holder containing 3 sheets of the Primary Titles of the Lot
  #3, dated as September 24, 1890.
- a plan ("en tela") corresponding to the division of the communal
  lands of San Juan Pajapan.
- a document-holder containing 4 sheets, First Testimony of the
  "escrituras" 4 818 written on January 30, 1952, corresponding to the
  Lot #3.
- a carbon copy of the above document
- a proof of payment dated as February 28, 1952
- 4 sheets of the Primary Titles of the lot #4, dated as September 24,
  1890.
- a document-holder containing 4 sheets of the First Testimony of the
  "escrituras" 4 819 dated as January 30, 1952 corresponding to the lot
  #5
- a carbon copy of the above document
- a proof of payment
- 4 sheets of the Primary Titles of the Lot #5, dated as September 24,
  1890.
- 63 sheets, a book containing the Titles corresponding to the Titles of
  the lands of Pajapan.
- 3 plans corresponding to the division of the lands of San Juan
  Pajapan.
April 30, 1956: Memorandum #753: The Directorate of Lands and Waters, Communal Lands Division, submitted to the Judicial Department (presently General Directorate of Judicial Affairs) all the documentation.

May 13, 1956: Aniceto Antonio and Ines Martinez are officially named Communal Lands representants.

June 8, 1956: Memorandum #624: Judicial Department testified the validity and authenticity of the documents.

Julio 23, 1956: Memorandum #935: Judicial Department submitted to the Directorate of Lands and Waters the "dictamen paleografico" in relation to the Primary Titles that protects the communal lands of Pajapan.

January 19, 1957: Oficio #175166: The Directorate of Lands and Waters, Communal Lands Division gave orders to Eng. José Luis del Moral to go to Pajapan to execute the technical works necessary to the continuation of the file.


March 12, 1958: The revisor Eng. Francisco J. Navarro does a revision of the technical works of Eng. José Luis del Moral and opines that they are acceptable and has no specific observation to add.

June 12, 1958: Oficio #177040, the Directorate of Lands and Waters, Communal Land Division commissioned the Eng. José R. Victoria to complete the complementary technical works.

October 2, 1958: Eng. José R. Victoria renders its report in which he affirms that the Pajapeños in an Assembly told him that all the technical works had been done earlier by José Luis Del Moral and that no other works were necessary; that there was no conflict of boundaries, no conflict within the communal lands with ranchers, that each lot has its own elected administrators whom are charging 265.05 as tax for the land tenure, that all the "comuneros" affirmed that they was no conflict of boundaries with the "Ranch El Moral". The enginer adds at his report the copy of the act of the assembly, a plan on which there is a note stating that no problem of boundaries exists with the above mentioned ranch. The engineer concludes affirming the process of recognition and titling of the communal lands can proceed.
March 14, 1963: According to the communal lands legal procedure of January 6, 1958, the communal lands request is published in the State Official Journal, No. 31, on March 14, 1963.

July 13, 1966: Oficio #519402: The General Secretary of Agrarian Affairs ordered the Delegate of the DAAC in Xalapa to mandate officials to execute the supplementary technical and informational works.

Abril 12, 1967: Oficio #5145: the Delegate sends the Ing. David Rivera De la Torre to comply with the supplementary technical and informational works.

May 20, 1967: Execution of the technical works by the Eng. David Rivera de la Torre during which new communal lands representatives are elected; Rufino Jauregui Morales and Santos Martinez Antonio.

June 19, 1967: Ing. David De la Torre delivers his report stating that: Pajapan is located approximately 48 km. from Coatzacoalcos, its principal center of supply being Coatzacoalcos, that people speak a mixture of "mexicano" (nahualt) and spanish. It then goes on describing the way the people dress, the shoes they use, the type of climat, the likeliness of cyclones, the type of crops produced, that the cattle-raising activities have been significantly increased in the region due to the good quality of the land for pastures, that there is no industry, that the standard of living is regular due to the cattle and poultry that people have, that a day-worker ("peon") receives a salary of 25 pesos. The total number of inhabitants is 4 112, among which 788 are head of household, 113 are bachelor over 16. During his visit, the following minutes were taking:
- Proceedings of the election of a Census representant;
- Proceedings of the closing of the census works;
- Proceedings of conformity of the boundaries with the ejido "De la Pena Hermosa", Municipality of Mecayapan, Ver.;
- Proceedings of conformity of the boundaries with the ejido "Tatahuicapan", Municipality of Mecayapan, Ver.;
- Proceedings of the election of Communal Lands Representants.

APPENDIX C

LIST OF THE MAIN LAND MONOPOLIZERS BEFORE 1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAMES:</th>
<th>SUPERFICIE (hectares)</th>
<th>CABEZAS (head)</th>
<th>SOURCE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>(iii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Guadalupe HERNANDEZ</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1 500</td>
<td>1 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Epifanio MORALES</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Peacuel MARTINEZ</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Peascacio SILVESTRE</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Euloffo ANTONIO HERNANDEZ</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Wenceslao MARTINEZ</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Procopio DOMINGUEZ</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Galisto MARTINEZ XOLO</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Emiliano TRUJILLO ANTONIO</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Roman GONZALEZ CRUZ</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Pedro FELICIANO</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Enrique CRUZ</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Jose CRUZ</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Alfonso MORALES ANTONIO</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Braulio CALEANA</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Vicente ALONSO</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Alfonso LORENZO</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Camilo CIRIACO</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Juan ANTONIO (Juan Grande)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Amado MARTINEZ</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Julian MARTINEZ</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Santos MARTINEZ</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Apolon MARTINEZ</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Francisco TRUJILLO</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Simon ANTONIO</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Domingo MARTINEZ</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Wenceslao MORALES</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Florentino PATRACA</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Pedro FLORENTINO</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Felix MARTINEZ</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Jose MANUEL</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Pedro RAMOS</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Oscar BENCOMO</td>
<td>1 300</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Higinio HUERVO ABAD</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Moises HERNANDEZ ELIGIO</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Luis MARTINEZ</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Valentin ANTONIO MARTINEZ</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Constantin ANTONIO MARTINEZ</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Maclavio ANTONIO FERNANDEZ</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Aniceto HERNANDEZ</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Agustín MORALES</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Francisco ANTONIO(Ch.)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Santos MORALES</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Josuedo HERNANDEZ ELIGIO</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Alejo MARTINEZ OSORIO</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Ramon HERNANDEZ</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Euloffo FLORES</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Sebastian SILVESTRE</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Hilario CANDELARIO</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Euloffo Martinez Hernandez</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. V.P. (mestizo)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Pablo Martinez Osorio</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. N.H.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Clemente Antonio</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Sergio Martinez Aleman</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Isidro Lopez</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Aciano Martinez</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Emiliano Abad Flores</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Leonarde Abad Sanchez</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOTAL 14,530

### APPENDIX D

**PANEL PRESENTED BY THE PARK FOR THE ELECTIONS OF THE COMMUNAL LAND ADMINISTRATION IN MARCH 1979**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Substitute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communal Land Commission</td>
<td>Roman Hernandez Antonio</td>
<td>Cirilo Reyes Orellano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Fernando Sanchez Hibiano</td>
<td>Santos Martinez Incarnacion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Maximino Florencio Martinez</td>
<td>Pedro Abad Sanchez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Hilario Martinez Reyes</td>
<td>Pedro Fernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigilance Council</td>
<td>Pablo Dominguez Hibiano</td>
<td>Donaciano Huervo Abed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Juan Pereyra Fonseca</td>
<td>Tomas Martinez Incarnacion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Saturnino Martinez Hernandez</td>
<td>Miguel Antonio Eligio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal I</td>
<td>Basilio Huervo Abed</td>
<td>Santos Hernandez Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal II</td>
<td>Marcelino Hernandez E.</td>
<td>Gudielo Antonio Hernandez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The distinction between rancher and small rancher is based on: my interviews; the list of land monopolizers issued by the SRA in Xalapa, Bouysse-Cassagne's list of ranchers (1981); and the genealogical information gathered by Jacques Chevalier and Daniel Buckles (1986). Those identified as ranchers were either identified by interviewers or listed in the SRA or in Cassagne. The small ranchers are those only mentioned in Chevalier and Buckles' genealogical trees. The rationale for such selection was that the three former sources (interviews, SRA, and Bouysse-Cassagne) attempted to point out the large ranchers ("grandes ganaderos") whereas the genealogical trees identify all those considered as ranchers (whatever their size). Some individuals are not classified due to lack of data.

**Sources:** Interviews with Juan A. Martinez Jauregui, Esteban Martinez Bautista, Sergio Martinez Aleman, and Nikanor Trujillo, Pajapan, September 14, 17, and 23, and October 01, 1987; Antonio Hernandez (1979); ASRAX, Expediente C-26 Bis, "Informe sobre la comunidad Pajapan (antecedentes), July 07, 1976; Bouysse-Cassagne (1980); Chevalier and Buckles (1986); Gaceta Oficial, Numero Extraordinario, Tomo CIX, Num.139, Martes, 19 de Noviembre 1973.
APPENDIX E

LIST OF COMUNEROS TO RECEIVE COMPENSATION GREATER TO $ 50,000 pesos ACCORDING TO EXPROPRIATORY DECREE OF ABRIL 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Compensation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vicente Martinez Martinez</td>
<td>499,040.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eleucadia Morales Gonzalez</td>
<td>386,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Andres Patraca Martinez</td>
<td>338,708.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Apolinar Rosas</td>
<td>311,660.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Amado Martinez Antonio</td>
<td>296,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alejandro Patraca Morales</td>
<td>187,950.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sixto Vargas Lorenzo</td>
<td>173,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Antonio Apolonio</td>
<td>170,168.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Emilio Martinez</td>
<td>144,820.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Wenceslao Osorio Santos</td>
<td>140,550.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Isabel Cruz Martinez</td>
<td>139,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Santos Martinez Morales</td>
<td>136,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Domingo Martinez Ramos</td>
<td>132,550.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Simon Ciriac De la Cruz</td>
<td>120,758.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Lazaro Palomino Patraca</td>
<td>112,175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Fidel Hernandez Hernandez</td>
<td>110,749.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tomas Martinez Martinez</td>
<td>110,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Santo Lerdo Martinez</td>
<td>91,199.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Estefana Martinez</td>
<td>87,350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Santiago Hernandez Martinez</td>
<td>86,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Higinio Antonio Jauregui</td>
<td>85,152.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Nazario Cruz Cruz</td>
<td>83,730.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Alberto Morales Hernandez</td>
<td>83,040.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Epifanio Hernandez Antonio</td>
<td>82,750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Alberto Morales Hernandez</td>
<td>83,040.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Santiago Cruz Morales</td>
<td>81,470.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Pablo Martinez Lopez</td>
<td>80,920.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Amado Martinez Martinez</td>
<td>76,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Concepcion Martinez Martinez</td>
<td>75,980.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Florentino Martinez Morales</td>
<td>75,014.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Tomas Antonio Hernandez</td>
<td>74,450.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Margarito Fernandez Martinez</td>
<td>73,904.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Juan Martinez</td>
<td>73,645.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Pablo Morales Bautista</td>
<td>71,150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Alfonso Morales Antonio</td>
<td>68,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Maria Lorenzo Hernandez</td>
<td>66,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Gudelio Antonio Hernandez</td>
<td>66,234.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Marcos Reyes Martinez</td>
<td>65,825.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Juan Antonio Martinez</td>
<td>59,255.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Inoncencio Martinez Martinez</td>
<td>58,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Agustin Cruz Bruno</td>
<td>58,2/2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Pedro Abad Sanchez</td>
<td>58,265.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Ventura Martinez Facundo</td>
<td>57,900.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
44. Francisco Palomino  55,750.00
45. Adolfa Dominguez Martinez  54,800.00
46. Arcadio Apolonio Florencio  54,575.00
47. Cirilo Martinez Lopez  53,400.00
48. Pascual Martinez Flores  51,560.00
49. Tomas Fernandez Martinez  51,027.00
50. Isidro Martinez Lopez  51,000.00
51. Jose Antonio Hernandez  50,350.00

Note: The names in bold are small and large ranchers.

APPENDIX F

COMUNEROS WHO WERE ADDED TO THE LIST OF COMUNEROS TO RECEIVE AN COMPENSATION AND LIST OF COMUNEROS WHOSE COMPENSATION PAYMENTS WERE MODIFIED

New Names of Comuneros to Receive Compensation

1. Martín Martínez Martínez*
2. Toribio Hernandez Florencio*
3. Apolonio Martínez Nepomuceno*
4. Francisco Apolonio Jauregui*
5. Benjamín Reyes Abad*
6. Antonio Osorio Hernandez*
7. Hilaria Martínez Domínguez*
8. Elías Martínez Lorenzo*
9. Antonio Facundo Agapito*
10. Crisanto Domínguez Joaquín*
11. Romualdo Príncipeo Hernandez*
12. Silverio Martínez Morales**
13. Ernesto Hernandez Morales**
14. Eufrocinio Antonio Hernandez**
15. Martín Ignacio Martínez**
16. Meliton Ausencio Lorenzo**
17. Eugenia Morales Martínez**
18. Fidencio Morales Reyes**
19. Anselmo Hernandez Martínez**
20. Pedro Osorio Martínez**
21. Raymundo Morales Cruz**
22. Clemente Antonio Montiel***
23. Domingo Hernandez Trujillo***
24. Magdaleno Martínez Martínez****
25. Sebio Ramos Reyes****
26. Andrés Hernandez Agapito*****
27. Juan Huervo Abad*****
28. Olegrario Huervo Abad*****
29. Pablo Trujillo Ramos*****
30. Diega Osorio Domínguez*****
31. Donaciano Huervo Abad*****
32. Apolonio Martínez Nepomuceno*****
33. Maximino Martínez Martínez*****
34. Antonio Facundo Agapito*****
35. Fidel Martínez Antonio*****
36. Macaria Martínez Hernandez*****
Names of comuneros that had their compensation modified (increased)
1. Ausencio Vargas Lorenzo* (confirmed)
2. Narciso Huervo Abad* (confirmed)
5. Venancio Hernandez Agapito*
6. Florentino Martinez Morales*
7. Luis Morales Martinez*
8. Hesequio Reyes Martinez**
9. Marcos Reyes Martinez**

Name of a comunero who claimed that the name used in the earlier evaluations was wrong, his real name being:
1. Santos Martinez Morales* (instead of Francisco Martinez Morales)

Name of a comunero whose evaluation is to be done separately:
1. Manuel Martinez Reyes**

*: Evaluation conducted by José Benigno Silva Fuentes in July 1981
**: Evaluation conducted by Fortino Dominguez Alarcon in October 1981
***: Evaluation conducted by Enrique Hernandez Lira in December 1981
****: Evaluation conducted by Enrique Hernandez Lira in February 1982.

Bold: The names in bold are most likely middle peasant, or small and large ranchers. They claimed 12 hectares or more of lands in the expropriated zone.
APPENDIX G


1. Camilo Ciriacio Martinez
2. Genaro Antonio Hernandez
3. Moises Hernandez Eligio
4. Melecio Cruz Candelario
5. Miguel Pereyra Martinez
6. Santos Dionisio Angel
7. Pedro Pereyra Fonseca
8. Miguel Antonio Eligio
9. Maclovio Antonio Hernandez
10. Valentin Antonio Martinez
11. Casimiro Martinez Eligio
12. Dionicia Candelario Martinez
13. José Cruz Martínez
14. Teodoro Silvestre Trujillo
15. Hilario Candelario Angel
16. Pascacio Gabriel Vargas
17. Lucas Dionisio Jiménez
18. Domingo Cruz Candelario
19. Furmencio Candelario Jiménez
20. Santiago Martinez Martinez
21. Epifanio Pantaleón Francisco
22. Gildardo Pantaleón Francisco
23. Estanislas Pantaleón Reyes
24. Pablo Gabriel Francisco
25. Graciano Trujillo Nepamuceno
26. Gerónimo Martinez Martinez
27. Felix Martinez Martinez
28. Eduardo Candelario Jiminez
29. Emilian Martinez Eligio
30. Esteban Hernandez Martinez
31. Santos Cruz Reyes
32. Pablo Porfirio Florencio
33. Ausencio Florencio Benitez
34. Constantino Antonio Martinez

Rancher
Rancher
Rancher
Small Rancher
Small Rancher
Rancher
Rancher
Rancher

APPENDIX H


Ranchers:
1. Valentin Antonio Martinez
2. Moises Hernandez Eligio
3. Silverio Antonio Hernandez
4. Amado Hernandez Hernandez
5. Santos Dionicio Angel
6. Maclovio Antonio Fernandez

Peasants:
1. Genaro Antonio Hernandez
2. Hilario Candelario Angel
3. Pascual Hernandez Angel
4. Miguel Antonio Eligio
5. Jacinto Hernandez Eligio
6. Francisco Antonio Tiburcio
7. Santos Cruz Reyes
8. Casimiro Martinez Martinez
9. Santos Martinez Domingues
10. Roberto Hernandez Martinez
11. Pedro Morales Eligio
12. Pablo Gabriel Francisco

Note: The comuneros classified as peasants in the letter were probably for the majority middle-peasants who had areas of lands in the expropriated zone.

Source: ASRAX. Expediente C-26 Bis. April 06, 1982
END
17.02.90
FIN