

Community Variations and Network Structure in the Social Functions of Compadrazgo in Rural Tlaxcala, Mexico

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The functions of *compadrazgo* (ritual kinship) have been widely discussed in the Mesoamerican literature (Paul 1942; Mintz and Wolf 1950; Foster 1953; Sayres 1956; Deshon 1963; Ravicz 1967; Thompson 1971). In this article we analyze an important aspect of *compadrazgo* which has not been discussed in the literature: its comparative social functions, as illustrated by data from rural Tlaxcala. The complexity of the *compadrazgo* system involves many types of relationships and several significant variants in its social functions and discharge. We show how these variations are related to kinship structure, on the one hand, and to the degree of secularization in moral-religious ideology, on the other. In rural Tlaxcala, the shared ideological core of *compadrazgo* centers on moral-religious obligations that are essentially temporary in nature and in their social manifestations. An important variant in the social functions of *compadrazgo* is the extent to which these ties and obligations are transformed into relatively permanent relations of social reliance, and the concomitant degree to which *compadrazgo* networks become the basis for the formation of quasi-corporate social units, which are crucial to an understanding of a wide range of rural communities. But before undertaking this task, it is necessary to provide some background on the general structure of *compadrazgo*, its syntagmatic sketch, and its temporary and permanent dimensions.

By rural Tlaxcala we do not mean to include all 44 independent *municipios* comprising the state of Tlaxcala, Mexico, but rather the 21 *municipios* which surround La Malintzi volcano, the most prominent feature in the Tlaxcala-Pueblan Valley (Nutini and Isaac 1974:28). Since before the Conquest this has been the heartland of the Tlaxcalan region, and today includes about two-thirds of the entire population of the state, which is over half a million. Culturally and ethnically, the heartland of Tlaxcala is probably the most homogeneous area of the Central Mexican Highlands. More specifically, the analysis will be concerned with the *compadrazgo* system of the rural sector of these 21 *municipios*, constituting more than 75 per cent of the total population, settled in nucleated

and seminucleated communities varying from small hamlets with 400 to 500 people to large villages with 4,000 to 5,000.¹

The ethnic and somatic composition of rural Tlaxcala is predominantly Indian, and there still persists a strong identification with the Indian past. No more than 15 per cent of the total population can be strictly classified as Indian, yet, culturally speaking, another 20 per cent must be so classified. In such a situation the concepts of Indian and Mestizo have little or no conceptual importance in structuring inter-ethnic relations. In fact, the majority of rural Tlaxcalan communities have remained traditional in the sense that, although there have been many modernizing changes during the past 100 years or so, the institutional, integrative core of community life—which includes a sacred-oriented ideology and world-view, the *mayordomía* (cargo) system, the *ayuntamiento religioso* (local religious government), barrio organization, certain elements of kinship and compadrazgo, and a folk religion characterized by Christo-paganism—has proved remarkably resistant to secularization (Nutini and Isaac 1974:366-372). Linguistically, rural Tlaxcala has approximately 25,000 bilingual speakers of Nahuatl and Spanish, and some 2,000 monolinguals in Nahuatl. In summary, rural Tlaxcala may be characterized as an ethno-cultural continuum in which Indian, transitional, and Mestizo communities share a high common cultural denominator.

COMPADRAZGO IN RURAL TLAXCALA: AN OUTLINE OF THE LOCAL PARADIGM

There are 31 well established occasions in the life cycle, ceremonial cycle, and socioeconomic cycle of rural Tlaxcalan communities in which couples, a man and/or woman, in some cases children, and frequently groups of individuals, may enter into compadrazgo relationships. Rural Tlaxcalans attach sociological significance to the following clusters of compadrazgo types: *Compadrazgo Sacramental* (Sacramental Compadrazgo); *Compadrazgo No-Sacramental Primario* (Primary Non-Sacramental Compadrazgo); and *Compadrazgo No-Sacramental Secundario* (Secondary Non-Sacramental Compadrazgo). In this manner, the 31 compadrazgo types in rural Tlaxcala are classified as follows:

Compadrazgo Sacramental

- (1) *Bautizo*. Baptism.
- (2) *Casamiento*. Marriage (including ten subsidiary compadrazgo relationships, brought about by the following objects and/or events: three *padrinos* (godfathers) and *madrinas* (godmothers) of *velación* (nuptial benedictions), *arras* (earnest-money), and *anillos* (wedding rings); and seven *madrinas* (only) of *lazo* (ornamental tie), *ramo* (flower bouquet), *libro* (prayer book), *rosario* (rosary), *pañuelo* (scarf) *pastel* (wedding cake), and *cola* (train)).
- (3) *Confirmación*. Confirmation.
- (4) *Parada de Cruz de Entierro* (PCE). Erection of a Burial Cross.
- (5) *Primera Comunión*. First Communion.
- (6) *Compadrazgo Contraído por el Casamiento de los Hijos* (CCCH).
Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted by the Marriage of One's Children.
- (7) *Compadrazgo Contraído por el Casamiento de los Abijados* (CCCA).

Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted by the Marriage of One's Godchildren.

Compadrazgo No-Sacramental Primario

- (8) *Acostada del Niño Dios en Casa* (ANDC). Bedding of the Child Jesus at Home.
- (9) *Acostada del Niño Dios en la Iglesia* (ANDI). Bedding of the Child Jesus in Church.
- (10) *Apadrinación de Ornamentos de la Iglesia* (AOI). Sponsorship of Church Paraphernalia (including the following objects: *palio* (pallium), *imágenes* (images), *sagrario* (cibary), *estandartes* (banners), *altar* (altar), *lienzo de Cristo* (Christ's tunic), *cáliz* (chalice), *ornamentos sacerdotales* (priestly ornaments), *reclinatorio* (pew).
- (11) *Bendición de Santo o Imagen* (BSI). Blessing of a Saint (saint's picture) or Image.
- (12) *Coronación de la Santísima Virgen* (CSV). Coronation of the Holy Virgin.
- (13) *Escapulario*. Scapulary.
- (14) *Graduación*. Graduation (including graduation from: *kinder* (nursery school), *primaria* (grade school), *secundaria* (junior high school), *preparatoria* (high school), *enfermería* (practical nursing school), *taquimecanografía* (secretarial school), *comercio* (business school).
- (15) *Parada de Cruz en el Manantial* (PCA). Erection of a Cross at the Communal Spring.
- (16) *Quince Años*. Celebration of a Girl's Fifteenth Birthday.
- (17) *Sacada a Misa*. Taking a Mother to Hear Mass on the Fortieth Day after Giving Birth.
- (18) *Compadrazgo de Evangelios*. Presenting a Child in Church at the Age of Three.
- (19) *Compadrazgo de Limpia*. Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted by the Ceremonial Cleansing of a Sick Person.
- (20) *Compadrazgo por Bendición de Obras de la Iglesia* (BOI). Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted by the Blessing of Church Repairs or Improvements (including the following additions and/or improvements: *pisos nuevos* (new floors), *ventanales* (windows), *atrio* (atrium), *altares* (altars), *bautisterio* (baptistry), *banquetas* (benches).

Compadrazgo No-Sacramental Secundario

- (21) *Bendición de Casa*. Blessing of a New House (including also the blessing of a new *sitio* (house site), *tienda* (store), *baños* (baths), *tortillería* (tortilla shop), *panadería* (bakery), *taller de costura* (sewing shop), *peluquería* (barber shop).
- (22) *Bendición de Coche o Camión* (BCC). Blessing of a New Car or Truck.
- (23) *Bendición de los Misterios* (BM). Blessing of the Holy Manger.
- (24) *Parada de Cruz*. Erection of a Cross (for a variety of occasions including the inauguration of a certain item of property, ceremonial object, or

thanksgiving or intensification rite such as the following: *telar* (loom), *horno* (baking oven), *temazcal* (steam bath), *molino de nixtamal* (ground-corn mill), *cuezcamate* (storage bin), *tienda* (store), *pozo* (well), *lavadero* (washing place), *campo* (cultivated field), *campanario* (belfry), *sementera* (first seeds), *almiar* (first haystacks).

- (25) *Primera Piedra*. Setting the Foundations of a House.
- (26) *Compadrazgo de Amistad*. Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted for Reasons of Close Friendship.
- (27) *Compadrazgo por Apadrinación en Bodas de Plata* (CABP). Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted on the Occasion of a Silver Wedding Anniversary.
- (28) *Compadrazgo de Aretes*. Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted when the First Pair of Earrings is Given to a Baby Girl.
- (29) *Compadrazgo por el Estreno de Objetos Nuevos* (CEON). Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted by the Handsel of New Utensils (including primarily *coche* (car), *camión* (truck), *muebles* (furniture), *televisión*, (television), *estufa* (stove), *instrumentos musicales* (musical instruments), *arado* (plow), *pala* (shovel).
- (30) *Compadrazgo de Fruta Cuata* (FC). Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted when a Person Finds a Twin Fruit or Vegetable.
- (31) *Compadrazgo de Jícara o Jarrito* (JJ). Compadrazgo Relationship Contracted by Drinking Partners.

Each occasion corresponds to a type of compadrazgo, and each type has specific social, economic, religious, and ceremonial aspects which vary in intrinsic and symbolic importance and in the degree of institutionalization of the event and activities that the types require. These 31 types of compadrazgo are broadly divided into two classes, prescriptive and preferential. Prescriptive types require compliance, and individuals incur religious, social, and sometimes economic sanctions if they do not comply. For the preferential types, as the name indicates, there are no social or economic sanctions for noncompliance. Compadrazgo types are further ranked in overall importance, and sacramental types (1-7) do not necessarily rank higher than all nonsacramental types (8-31).

Compadrazgo is a relationship which is established between two individuals or couples and/or a fixed number of related personnel (kinsmen and non-kinsmen) through the link or mediation of a person, image, object, or occasion (the primary actors). The connecting link is the necessary cause of compadrazgo, for without the mediating entity it is impossible to establish a relationship. But central as it is to the system from a structural viewpoint, the mediating entity is not in itself of primary importance, and when all the functional attributes of compadrazgo have been assessed, this aspect shrinks to relative unimportance. Formally speaking, the subject-object (that is, the *padrino* (a)-*ahijado* (a) [godparent-godchild] dyad) link of compadrazgo plays a structurally passive role, while the subject-subject (that is, the *compadres-compadres* [co-parent/co-parent] dyad) link comes to play the prominent role in the web of compadrazgo behavior.

The structural form of compadrazgo involves a large number of what may be called mechanical aspects, that is, the component parts of every type are integrated, well known to the people, and highly institutionalized. The behavior

of actors of every type involves a high degree of uniformity, and people know what is required in every event and action associated with each type of compadrazgo. In this context, the people make a sharp distinction, regarding the functions of compadrazgo, between primary actors (those immediately involved in the contractual arrangement) and secondary actors (the personnel—kinsmen and nonkinsmen—who by extension are affected by the relationship). This is an important dimension in the analysis of the institution, given the fact that rural Tlaxcalans generally cannot ask kinsmen to enter into compadrazgo relationships.

This brings us to a paramount distinction that rural Tlaxcalans make regarding compadrazgo relationships: the difference between asking and being asked. The structural position of an individual asking another to become his *compadre* is quite different from that of the individual being asked (and by extension all related personnel associated with the main actors). When A asks B, A is requesting that B incur certain economic, social, and religious obligations which will later be reciprocated by A, but which at least initially are often higher for B than for A, and this initial inequality influences the future of the relationship. Further, the person requesting the initiation of the compadrazgo relationship must by definition place himself in the debt of the person being asked, and this too plays a prominent role in molding the future of the relationship. It should be clear that these two aspects are more or less balanced in any individual's total web of compadrazgo, for the average career of compadrazgo relationships shows that in a lifetime an individual is asked to become a *compadre* approximately as many times as he asks others.

Men, women, and children can engage in compadrazgo relationships, both as primary actors or initiators and as mediating entities. The regulation of the system with respect to when, how, and with whom individuals participate in it, and the rules that govern it, are at the core of understanding how the structure of the institution operates in rural Tlaxcala. The different types of compadrazgo are characterized by the structural positions and roles played by men, women, and children.

When compadrazgo is regarded as a system and not simply as a haphazard ensemble of types, another distinction of paramount importance emerges, namely, the distinction between private-individual and public-communal types. The distinction is explicitly recognized by rural Tlaxcalans, and they consciously manipulate it in structuring community action and behavior. Briefly, private-individual types involve a relatively small number of primary and secondary actors (anywhere from five to 25 individuals) and affect a limited number of people. Public-communal types (numbers 9, 10, 12, 15, 20, and 23), affect settlements as a whole and, albeit temporarily, the community can be said to become a social unit tied by the bonds of ritual kinship. Thus, for periods of time that may vary from three days to two weeks, during the time that the principal rites and ceremonies go on and in their recurrent discharge, the community constitutes symbolically—and to some extent in practice—a global ritual kinship unit with specific behavior patterns, its own terminological usage, and clearly delineated duties and obligations.

Analysis of 175 compadrazgo careers covering the last 80 years shows that the average couple in rural Tlaxcala contracts a mean average of 92 asking and 90

being-asked compadrazgo relationships throughout its compadrazgo career, that is, from approximately age 25 to 75. Moreover, there is a mean average of 46 couples with whom these 182 relationships are contracted, so that approximately 4.0 compadrazgo relationships are contracted with the same couple. Thus it becomes evident that compadrazgo is far from being simply a dyadic arrangement between two individuals or couples—and perhaps a number of extensions—but a more complex institution endowed with egocentric as well as exocentric dimensions. In fact, we can properly speak in rural Tlaxcala of networks and webs of *compadres* which clearly transcend egocentric structuring and endure over two or three generations. In such a context, compadrazgo may be viewed as an exocentric system.²

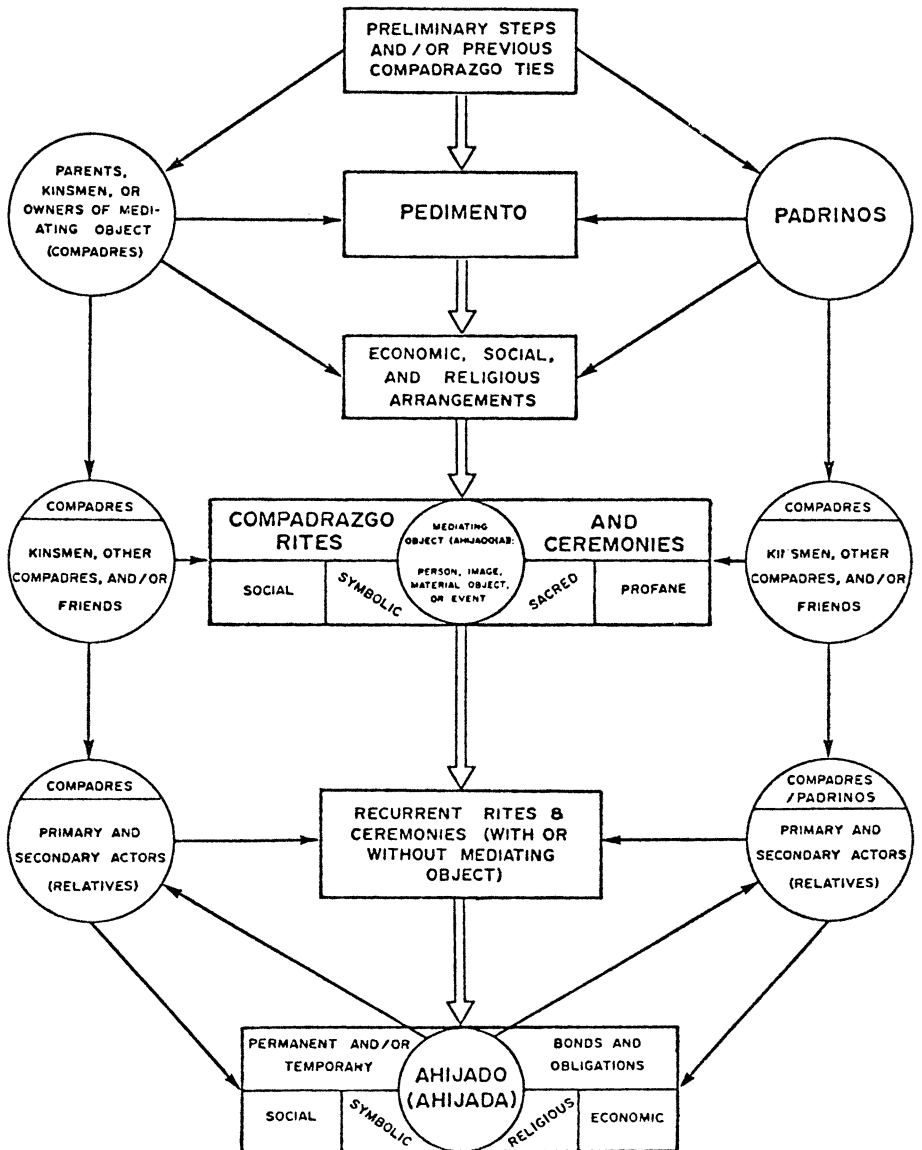
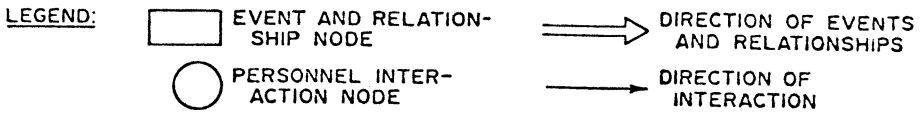
The highest common cultural denominators in the Tlaxcalan area are to be found in social organization and religion and, within these, in the local religious hierarchies, the general organization of ritual and ceremonial, and the compadrazgo system. We can speak of a compadrazgo system for the whole of rural Tlaxcala that is surprisingly uniform in both form and content: the structure of compadrazgo types is basically the same, and what is more important, the ideology governing compadrazgo is virtually identical. The differences are primarily in the incidence of compadrazgo types, which may vary from community to community from a minimum of 16 to a maximum of 34, and in the association of specific types with local social and religious forms, due largely to locally developed traditions and well-established social, religious, and even economic interests.

THE SYNTAGMATIC SKETCH OF COMPADRAZGO

Figure 1 gives a syntagmatic account of events of the formal aspects of compadrazgo types in rural Tlaxcala from inception to final resolution. It indicates the most important ritual and ceremonial nodes of interaction with respect to the events themselves and to the behavioral interaction and participation of primary and secondary actors and related personnel. Thus, the syntagmatic chain of events notes all the occasions with social, religious, and/or symbolic meaning in the formal compadrazgo cycle, while the syntagmatic chain of interaction indicates the personnel associated with each occasion and the direction of the prescribed, binding ties and obligations. The interpretation of Figure 1 says roughly the following.

The preliminary steps and the previous mode of compadrazgo ties determine the selection of *padrinos* and set off constraints both on those asking and those being asked to enter into a compadrazgo relationship. This node leads directly to the *pedimento* (formal request for ritual kinship sponsorship), which is always a structural microcosm of the future compadrazgo relationship, once the manner of the *pedimento* is detailed, and during the verbal exchanges among primary actors. This essentially symbolic and social node is followed by a primarily economic node; that is, the arrangements or preparations made hinge primarily upon the immediate economic obligation which both *compadres* and *padrinos* must fulfill in accordance with the arrangement made in the *pedimento*. This node also has religious and social aspects, but they are usually less important. The arrangements node is in many ways the most important one described in the diagram, given the fact that its economic obligations usually color any future

FIGURE 1: SYNTAGMATIC SKETCH OF COMPADRAZGO



permanent bonds. From the social, religious, and ceremonial viewpoints, however, the *compadrazgo* rites and ceremonies node is the most important in the cycle. It is during these activities that the mediating object becomes the effective link between the primary actors and that the character of the relationship is imprinted for the future. From the observational and analytical viewpoints, the *compadrazgo* rites and ceremonies may be regarded as the axial center of the relationship that defines the structural and functional development of the personnel involved. The recurrent rites and ceremonies node must be interpreted as a reinforcement and intensification of the *compadrazgo* relationship, and this is largely the property of those relationships or types having a primarily symbolic meaning. Recurrent rites and ceremonies may be exercised with or without the intervention of the mediating object, and they may take place from a week to a year after the principal *compadrazgo* activities. The final node is simply the result of the syntagmatic nodal chain just described, and it was noted in the diagram merely in order to accommodate the interaction of personnel associated with that chain.

Three main nodes characterize the direction of personnel interaction within the syntagmatic chain, and these complete the *compadrazgo* cycle with its associated, institutionalized patterns. In the top node the personnel involved are mainly the primary actors themselves; that is, the parents, kinsmen, or owners of the mediating object (who for simplicity of description we have called the *compadres*), on the one hand, and the *padrinos* or sponsors, on the other. The personnel of this node—what we have termed the *compadres-compadres* dyad—are the result of the discharge of the prescriptions and constraints associated with the first three nodes of the syntagmatic chain of events; that is, they make possible the proper discharge of social, religious, and economic obligations leading to the main part of the *compadrazgo* cycle. The second or intermediate node includes all the personnel involved in the discharge of the main *compadrazgo* rites and ceremonies—the *padrinos*, *compadres*, and their respective kinsmen, other *compadres*, and friends or neighbors, all of whom, in descending degrees of importance, participate in the activities of the fourth node of the event chain. This node includes the largest number of primary and secondary actors and related personnel whose participation in the *compadrazgo* cycle is structurally binding. The third or bottom node involves mainly the primary and secondary actors already aligned in the relationship, whose main function is to discharge the recurrent rites and ceremonies of the fifth node of the event chain. Finally, it should be noted that the permanent or temporary bonds and obligations denoted by the last node of the syntagmatic chain of events is binding, and forms an intrinsic part of any *compadrazgo* type, only on the primary and secondary actors specifically denoted by the last personnel node. This is the residue of the *compadrazgo* cycle, and either it becomes an enduring *compadrazgo* relationship or, if temporary, is almost invariably transformed into a different and usually more important relationship.

THE PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY DIMENSIONS OF COMPADRAZGO RELATIONSHIPS

Throughout rural Tlaxcala there are uniform specifications for the customary behavior and the web of duties and obligations, from the preliminary steps to

the central core of rites and ceremonies, for every compadrazgo type in the system. In all nodes after the central core, the situation becomes more fluid and there may be considerable deviation from ideological prescriptions. The prescription for all compadrazgo types in rural Tlaxcala dictates that once a compadrazgo relationship is established it becomes a permanent, lifelong relationship. In practice, however, this is not the case, and several types come to an end after varying lengths of time, and varying degrees of intensity. We do not mean that temporary relationships are terminated in the sense that primary and secondary actors cease to address each other as *compadres*, and there is no more interaction among them. Rather the situation grows cold; that is, only the form remains. When temporary relationships grow cold in varying degrees, there remain certain specified patterns of behavior such as use of the prescribed ritual kinship terms, some formal visiting patterns, and the required canons of social and religious respect, but the real social, religious, and economic bonds of help and *ayuda* (nonreciprocal labor exchange) are no longer active. Thus, we can say that in temporary compadrazgo types the most important aspect of the relationship is the central core of rites and ceremonies and the steps leading to it, while in permanent compadrazgo types the subsequent stages are of equal (in the long run, of greater) importance. Temporary compadrazgo relationships have a primarily symbolic and ritual function; permanent relationships have not only a symbolic function, but just as importantly social, economic, and ritual functions.

Table 1 categorizes compadrazgo types in rural Tlaxcala as permanent (8), temporary (4), and temporary leading to or resulting from other compadrazgo types (19).

Permanent types are those in which ideological prescriptions are strictly discharged. In the actual functioning of the relationships, their primary, and to some extent their secondary, actors keep active the right to ask for loans, favors, labor exchange, political support for a variety of purposes, social cooperation on numerous occasions in the life and ceremonial cycles, and, in general, any type of interaction that requires the expenditure of economic, social, and religious resources. The attribute of permanence, of course, comes into existence after the central core of rites and ceremonies node, for prior to this point all compadrazgo types in rural Tlaxcala are the same in ideological-structural articulation. It should be understood, moreover, that we are not saying that permanent compadrazgo types must of necessity keep alive the latent patterns of interaction described above. Rather, we are saying that the personnel of these types feel constrained to comply, thereby giving a high statistical correlation between ideological dictates and structural discharge. In this realm of the compadrazgo system there are no sanctions or coercive mechanisms to enforce compliance with ideological prescriptions, and under these circumstances it is probable that some people choose not to activate the latent bonds inherent in this category.

Temporary compadrazgo types are the opposite of permanent types in that the permanence ideologically prescribed is not structurally realized after the central core of rites and ceremonies have ended. Statistically speaking, rural Tlaxcalans do not request economic, social, or religious expenditures in the relationships classified as temporary. Here again, since there are no sanctions to enforce any ideological injunctions, it is possible that particular couples may develop a

TABLE 1
Breakdown of Compadrazgo Types With Respect to Their Temporary-Permanent Component

	<u>Permanent:</u>	<u>Temporary:</u>	<u>Resulting-From:</u>	<u>Leading-To:</u>
Baptism	x			
Marriage	x			
Confirmation	x			
PCE	x			
First Communion			x	
CCCH		x		
CCCA		x		
ANDC	x			
ANDI			x	
AOI		x		
BSI	x			
CSV			x	
Scapulary				x
Graduation			x	
PCA			x	
Celebration of a Girl's 15th Birthday			x	
Taking a Mother to Hear Mass on the 40th Day after Giving birth				x
Presenting a Child in Church at the Age of Three			x	
Ceremonial Cleansing of a Sick Person			x	
BOI		x		
Blessing of a New House			x	
BCC	x			
BM			x	
Erection of a Cross	x			
Setting the Founda- tions of a House			x	
Relationship for Rea- sons of Close Friendship				x
CABP			x	
First Pair of Earrings Given to a Baby Girl				x
CEON				x
FC			x	
JJ				x

permanent relationship with *compadres* in a type classified statistically as temporary. Thus, it is necessary to explain why permanent relationships are established among personnel of temporary compadrazgo types, and why permanent types may grow cold and come to an end. This can be done better once we have explained what we mean by leading to or resulting from other compadrazgo types.

There are nineteen types in Table 1 classified as relationships which are either the result of previously contracted compadrazgo ties, or which lead to subsequent ones. Underlying this twofold classification is the fact that rural

Tlaxcalans recognize the affinity of certain compadrazgo relationships associated in various ways with the life and ceremonial cycles, and that certain of the resulting clusters serve as a kind of natural paradigm for the selection of *compadres*. These natural clusters may affect compadrazgo types regardless of their permanent or temporary classification—for example, the preference for baptism *padrinos* as PCE *compadres* when the deceased is a child, or for baptism *compadres* as marriage *padrinos*. The same is true of several other compadrazgo types. For example, graduation *padrinos* are almost invariably related to the parents of the graduate by previous compadrazgo ties, the most common ones being first communion and confirmation. Thus, virtually all compadrazgo types in rural Tlaxcala can be placed in the position of leading to or resulting from other types. This statement must be qualified, however. The eight types classified as permanent and the four classified as temporary have a statistical incidence of original selection which is much higher than the nineteen types that we classify as leading to or resulting from other compadrazgo relationships. In other words, a relationship that did not involve a previous compadrazgo type with the same couple. We can define compadrazgo types that lead to the formation of subsequent relationships as those which are clustered together in a position of anteriority; conversely, types which result from previous relationships are also clustered but in a position of posteriority. It is beyond the scope of this article to explain how the system works short of analyzing the developmental cycle of compadrazgo, which Nutini (1977) has undertaken elsewhere. But an example will suffice to explain the nineteen types in Table 1.

Let us take first a leading-to compadrazgo type. Scapulary is a good example, in that almost invariably it is an original compadrazgo relationship. While it involves a permanent status, this permanency is not given by the establishment of the compadrazgo itself; rather, it is due to the fact that scapulary leads to the establishment of other compadrazgo types. The types associated with scapulary compadrazgo are primarily three, namely, taking a mother to hear mass on the fortieth day after giving birth, presenting a child in church at the age of three, and the ceremonial cleansing of a sick person. Let us see how this works in practice. Manuel Xolocotzin and his wife wish to give their daughter, an infant of six months, a scapulary medal. As *padrinos* they choose Pedro Morales and his wife, a couple whom they have known intimately for many years and regard as close friends. After the central core of rites and ceremonies node, the relationship proceeded for more than two years in a temporary fashion. Neither Manuel nor Pedro invited the other to participate in several social and religious sponsorships that they fulfilled in the interim, nor did they ask each other for specific favors involving outlays of money, goods, or other resources, but they complied with the formal compadrazgo etiquette of social and religious respect. When Pedro's *ahijada* reached the age of three years and two months, Manuel asked him and his wife to become *compadres de evangelio* by presenting the child in church. After this second compadrazgo, the relationship between Manuel and Pedro became much closer, and they began to ask each other favors involving outlays of money and political resources. When Manuel's daughter was ten, nearly seven years later, she fell ill and a *limpia* was effected. Manuel asked Pedro and his wife to become *padrinos de limpia*, thereby establishing

with them a third *compadrazgo* relationship. After this event, the *compadrazgo* ties binding Manuel's and Pedro's families grew very strong, and the relationship became permanent for life.

Resulting-from *compadrazgo* types are defined primarily by their position of posteriority, for seldom if ever are they the original relationship binding sets of *compadres*. They form part of clusters that include an original leading-to *compadrazgo* type as in the preceding example, in which either scapulary or *sacada a misa* are leading-to types, while *evangelios* and cleansing are resulting-from types. The most important resulting-from *compadrazgo* types are cleansing, *evangelios*, *quince años*, first communion, graduation, FC, *primera piedra*, and CABP. When these types are contracted by a given couple, almost invariably they involve at least one and as many as four previous *compadrazgo* ties binding the set of *compadres*. The number of previous *compadrazgo* ties depends, of course, on the nature of the cluster and on contingent variables such as the eventuality of the ritual occasions (for example, cleansings, graduations, acquisitions of important material objects), the position of the ritual occasion in the life or social cycles (such as anniversaries, JJ, and PCE), and previous *compadrazgo* ties which are contingent upon individual couples by themselves. However, the nature of *compadrazgo* clusters in rural Tlaxcala is of great significance because it not only limits the total number of *compadrazgo* relationships of given couples, but also serves as a mechanism for intensifying previous ties.

We can now analyze the meaning of the permanent-temporary continuum. In the first place, we have seen that the classification of Table 1 is not fixed but rather contextual, and that the classification is primarily statistical. The eight *compadrazgo* types classified as permanent and the four classified as temporary do not necessarily mean that when couples establish a *compadrazgo* relationship of these types it will *a priori* become permanent or temporary. Rather, it is implied that there is a strong statistical tendency for the types to become, respectively, permanent and temporary relationships. The permanent-temporary dimension is even less mechanical in the case of leading-to and resulting-from *compadrazgo* types, in which the status of permanent or temporary will depend on the position of the types within the clusters of which they are part. Moreover, even the types categorically classified as permanent and temporary may form part of *compadrazgo* clusters, and this will be a significant aspect of their final resolution vis-à-vis the total number of *compadrazgo* relationships of a given couple. Finally, the very terms "permanent" and "temporary" are variable in themselves, in that their structural content may or may not become operative at given times. They might be termed "active" and "nonactive," in order to indicate their variable character. In the light of this discussion, every couple in rural Tlaxcalan communities, where *compadrazgo* networks are the functional equivalent of kinship networks, has *de facto* two sets of *compadrazgo* relationships at any given time: a permanent set with which the couple interacts in terms of the broad spectrum of what the ideology dictates, and engages in behavior patterns involving economic, social, religious, and even political expenditures; and a temporary set with which they interact formally in the restricted meaning of social and religious respect.

COMMUNAL EMBEDDEDMENT OF COMPADRAZGO AND KINSHIP

One of the most striking aspects of compadrazgo in rural Tlaxcala is that it is unquestionably the most pervasive social institution in local culture and society. There is virtually no aspect of community life that is not directly or indirectly associated with compadrazgo, or functionally or structurally involved in its web. This is most noticeable in the discharge of the central node of rites and ceremonies of the various compadrazgo types. But due to the repetition and intensification of individual relationships, there come into existence not only individual, egocentric webs of *compadres*, but also systemic, exocentric compadrazgo networks with a high degree of permanence. This is translated into a kind of ritual kinship system which is more prominent in the organization of the majority of rural Tlaxcalan communities than is the kinship system itself. Although *de facto* the kinship system has rather loose operative units beyond the domestic group, *de jure* they are not as effective as the web of compadrazgo in fulfilling the ritual, religious, social, economic, or other requirements of community life. This is also facilitated by the fact that the personnel of egocentric relationships and compadrazgo networks overlaps considerably with kinship personnel. In short, compadrazgo and kinship (in its complementary role) constitute the medium of interpersonal relations and are the only meaningful and effective mechanisms of group formation beyond the domestic unit in rural Tlaxcalan culture and society.

From this viewpoint, it seems logical that the compadrazgo system be used conceptually as an important mechanism of description and analysis at the communal level. This is especially advantageous in situations of rather rapid change, when kinship appears to weaken significantly as an organizing principle of community life, and compadrazgo assumes an increasing importance. This is amply substantiated for rural Tlaxcala, and we are reasonably certain that it may be essentially the same in countless comparable areas of Latin America. We suggest, then, that compadrazgo be regarded as the central social institution in the organization of community culture and society, or rather that it becomes the descriptive integrational principle of social life. The particular advantage of such an approach is that compadrazgo, in a variety of forms, is characteristic not only of rural Mestizo and Indian communities throughout most of Latin America, but also of the urban setting and at several integrational levels.

The interlocking of the compadrazgo system within the global context of community culture and society is underlain not only by kinship but by significant socio-religious considerations as well. The great majority of rural Tlaxcalan communities make great demands on the individual in the conduct of socio-religious life, which most often must be met collectively. There are numerous occasions in the life cycle and the religious cycle which demand large numbers of people, and these require mechanisms of permanent or temporary group formation beyond the immediate mechanisms of the institutions involved (for example, the personnel structure of *mayordomias*, the structure of the *ayuntamiento religioso*, or even kinship mechanisms of help and *ayuda* for specific celebrations). The kinship system of the average rural Tlaxcalan community seldom operates effectively beyond the circle of the domestic group. Hence

compadrazgo becomes the functional and structural substitute for, or complement to, the kinship system. In the majority of social and religious activities of the communal cycle that are beyond the efficacy of the domestic group, individual, voluntary, or the collective, formal participation of egocentric webs or exocentric networks of compadrazgo relationships are involved. In such a situation, optional decision-making or prescriptive behavior is regulated by the principles of compadrazgo rather than by the inherent mechanisms of kinship, or the mechanisms of ritual and ceremonial participation, cooperation, and *ayuda*.

Similarly, when we come to the economic system *per se*, or the economic dimensions of religion and the life cycle, we find that many of the traditional functions of *ayuda*, labor exchange, and other economic transactions are often more effectively carried out in the structural domain of compadrazgo than in that of kinship. This is not entirely uniform throughout rural Tlaxcala, for we can arrange communities in terms of the efficacy of the kinship system, from an operational maximum in which kinship traditionally outshadows compadrazgo in the generation of permanent or transitory social units, to an operationalized minimum in which compadrazgo overshadows kinship almost completely. The average rural Tlaxcalan community, however, represents a situation in which compadrazgo is more important than kinship in the organization of community life and the formation of adequate groups of people for religious, social, and economic purposes. Dynamically speaking, the trend is for compadrazgo to replace kinship as long as the socio-religious ideology remains sacred or traditional, for development of a secular ideology means, among other things, that there is no longer a social need for the unit formation and personnel functions of either kinship or compadrazgo. Analysis of a 35-community sample in rural Tlaxcala indicates that within the context of rapidly increasing secularization and change, in the most traditional, less acculturated communities kinship is more important than compadrazgo in the organization of community life and general group formation. In the least traditional, essentially secular (urban-modern) communities, neither kinship nor compadrazgo is any longer needed functionally, for organizational and group formation functions are carried out by the domestic group. In this scheme of change from traditional to secular, the various combinations of compadrazgo and kinship represent a transitional stage, which is not adaptive but rather is an inherent part of the changing process. Notice that as the process of secularization is completed, compadrazgo does not necessarily diminish as a global institution. What change are only what we have termed its permanent, group formation attributes, for the contracting of compadrazgo relationships, and concomitantly the discharge of the central node of rites and ceremonies with its primarily magico-symbolic and ritual functions, remains to some extent unaffected.³

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF KINSHIP AND COMPADRAZGO IN THE COMMUNITIES OF ATLIHUETZIAN, BELÉN, AND CONTLA

Nutini and Isaac (1974: 375-396) have characterized rural Tlaxcala as an area in which there are no sharp breaks between Indians and Mestizos. Unlike the Indian-Mestizo dichotomy in several areas of Mexico and Guatemala, in rural Tlaxcala there are no clear cultural or ethnic differences. At the community

level, distribution, participation, and access to political, social, economic, and religious life is basically egalitarian; the community must be considered an entity with a high degree of integration and lacking in sectors with totally antagonistic interests that may divide it in one way or another. At the regional level, the situation acquires an even greater fluidity and equanimity. In the urban or industrial context, whatever ethnic and cultural differences may be distinguished at the rural community level tend to become blurred, and the rural population is perceived as a diffuse proletarian mass or simply as the lower class with respect to the city. In this dynamic, rapidly changing view of contemporary rural Tlaxcala, we find individuals, groups of individuals, and entire communities moving along the Indian-Mestizo continuum. Thus, the more than 200 communities in these 21 *municipios* can be ordered in the following fashion: (a) Indian-traditional (12 per cent); (b) Indian-transitional (35 per cent); (c) transitional-Mestizo (45 per cent); and (d) Mestizo-secularized (8 per cent).

We have indicated the differential importance of kinship and *compadrazgo* as we move from traditional, to transitional, and on to essentially secular communities. It is important to determine in some detail the relative strength of these institutions, in order to assess the role they play in the process of network formation. We shall compare the kinship and *compadrazgo* systems of the communities of Santa María Atlihuetzian, Santa María Belén Azitizimitlán and San Bernardino Contla, which fall respectively under the categories of Mestizo-secularized, transitional-Mestizo, and Indian-transitional communities. In many ways Contla is quite representative of Indian-traditional communities. In fact, Contla may be classified either as Indian-traditional or Indian-transitional, depending on which social and cultural elements are emphasized. These three communities do not exhaust the full range of variation in economic and kinship organization in rural Tlaxcala, but they are representative of the three main ethno-cultural categories.

All three communities share the same ideology regarding the *compadrazgo* system. There are the same basic imperatives and constraints, the same general attitudes governing the 21 *compadrazgo* types that they share in common, and the same potential for expansion. But the *compadrazgo* systems of these three communities are structurally different, and they occupy different positions within their respective cultures and societies. Perhaps more significant is the fact that these three communities have quite different social (kinship) structures, which we shall outline briefly. (The kinship, community, and economic organization of Atlihuetzian, Belén, and Contla is summarized in Table 2.)

San Bernardino Contla (Nutini 1968) is a unilineally organized society in which kinship is overwhelmingly the most important organizational and operational principle in community culture and society. There are ten semilocalized, patrilineal exogamous clans, and each clan is subdivided into a number of localized, patrilineal, exogamous lineages, which vary from five to fifteen. The lineage is in turn composed of a number of households varying from three to 52. More than 70 per cent of the households shelter patrilocal extended families, while the remaining include primarily nuclear family households.

The clan in the *municipio* of Contla corresponds approximately to what Murdock defines as a compromise kin group. In addition to regulating marriage and having names in common, the clan has important religious and ceremonial

TABLE 2
Breakdown of Kinship and Community Organization

	<u>Atlihuetzian:</u>	<u>Belén:</u>	<u>Contla:</u>
Descent	bilateral	bilateral with strong patrilineal bias	patrilineal
Residence	predominantly neolocal	patri-neolocal and bilocal	patri-neolocal
Corporate Groups	none	nonresidential extended families	lineages and clans
Extended Family	20%, nonintegrated	40%, integrated	75%, highly integrated
Nuclear Family	fairly strong social and ceremonial functions	strong social and ceremonial functions	embedded in the extended family
Household Composition	single construction predominates, <u>gasto aparte</u>	single construction and compound, <u>gasto aparte</u> predominates	compound predominates, <u>gasto junto</u> predominates
Kinship Behavior	non-institutionalized	institutionalized	highly institutionalized
Ultimogeniture	no	yes	yes
Barrio Organization	none	weak	strong
Community Integration	weak, secular	strong, transitional	strong, traditional/transitional
Traditional Religious Organization	weak	strong	strong
Economy	25% agriculture, 75% labor migration	35% agriculture, 65% labor migration	25% agriculture, 30% labor migration, 45% loom industry

functions and less important social and economic functions. It sponsors the *cofradía* (the group of the four most important *mayordomías* in the *municipio*), the *ayuntamiento religioso*, and the *mayordomías* connected with Holy Week. In addition to these fixed, all-important religious functions, the clans have specific ceremonial functions such as being pallium bearers, lantern bearers, musicians, and so on. Social and economic cooperation is most often sought among barrio members on the basis of clan cohesion and a sense of being related.

The lineage is a well-organized body of kinsmen with a high degree of economic, social, ritual, and religious integration. With few exceptions, the lineages in Contla are localized, patrilineal, exogamous kinship units; members of the same lineage consider themselves to be closely related, and there is a strong feeling of belonging. The lineage functions as an extremely well-

integrated corporate group in practically every aspect of community culture and society. In addition to the regulation of marriage and the possession of a common name, the lineage has important religious, economic, and social functions, and it represents the widest possible range of kin within which fully effective social and economic cooperation can be sought, since the clan has largely ceased to be an effective social unit and has remained principally an effective religious unit.

The structure and functions of the nuclear and extended families in Contla are essentially the same as in Santa María Belén—and to some extent in Santa María Atlihuetzian—except for implications deriving from the fact that in the former the family is embedded in a unilineal structure and in the latter in a bilateral structure. A brief comparison indicates that Contla has considerably more extended family households than Belén: 75 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively. The extended family household in Contla is perhaps more highly integrated, with a higher incidence of *gasto junto* (one expense budget) as contrasted with *gasto aparte* (separate expense budget), and in general with a larger individual and nuclear family composition than in Belén. But in every other respect the structure and functions of the nuclear and extended families in Contla and Belén are similar. It is beyond the domain of family structure that Contla and Belén differ fundamentally.

In summary, the social (kinship) structure of Contla is remarkably uniform and homogeneous, and its integrational levels (clan, lineage, and family) are at all times and in every sector regulated by the same principles of patrilineality, reciprocity, hierarchy, and cooperation, and their associated mechanisms. Kinship, then, is the most important overall principle of organization and unit formation in Contla culture and society. From the viewpoint of the individual, the social structure of Contla may be visualized as a series of ascending concentric circles representing the different levels of integration. The individual views his rights, duties, values, and obligations largely as concomitants of these levels of integration—as an expression of membership in the corresponding social units (Nutini 1968: 113-174).

By contrast, the communities of Santa María Belén and Santa María Atlihuetzian are bilaterally organized, but to some extent the former has a strong patrilineal bias. In these communities, the role of kinship within the overall context of culture and society is not nearly as strong, pervasive, and determinant as in Contla, and it is at this juncture that the *compadrazgo* systems of these three communities become very illuminating. However, there are significant differences between the bilateral kinship structure of Belén and Atlihuetzian. As an overall principle of organization, and as a means for structuring community culture and society, kinship is less important in Atlihuetzian than in Belén, fundamentally because Atlihuetzian is far less integrated. We do not find there the kind of corporateness and consciousness that we find in Belén. What we do find is a more secular, modernized community in which the traditional ideological order underlying pan-Tlaxcalan culture and society has been more altered.

At the level of the nuclear family, there are no significant differences. The size of the nuclear family and the household are about the same, and so is their physical distribution. Furthermore, the same household forms, with respect to

social composition, are to be found in both communities. With respect to kinship behavior and internal nuclear family arrangements, there are again no significant differences except that in Belén the nuclear family household is a more corporate unit in which the division of labor, redistribution of income, and the arrangements of daily tasks are geared not only to the exigencies of daily living, but also to the discharge of ritual and ceremonial obligations outside the family *per se*.

With regard to the extended family, however, there are major differences between Atlhuetzian and Belén. First, the overall incidence of the extended family in Atlhuetzian is roughly half that of Belén, occurring in only about 20 per cent of its households. Second, while in Belén the patrilocal extended family predominates by far, in Atlhuetzian the bilocal extended family is the most common arrangement. With respect to the size of the extended family, however, and its arrangements in terms of component nuclear families and individuals, there are no notable differences except that all extended family households in Atlhuetzian have *gasto aparte*, while in Belén many have *gasto junto*. As a corollary, the extended family household in Belén is more highly integrated and has more corporate elements.

In Belén, the nonresidential extended family is still a social unit of some importance, and the *paraje* (locale)-nonresidential extended family correlation is the most significant integrative aspect of kinship at the community level. Nothing of the sort can be said for Atlhuetzian, where the structure of nuclear and extended family households is embedded directly in the community as a whole. It is this factor, more than anything else, which makes kinship less important in Atlhuetzian than in Belén. In fact, we can say that the domain of kinship in Atlhuetzian does not go beyond the extended family household, and even at this level it does not approach the integrative, coordinative, and formative importance that it does in Belén. In summary, then, as we move from the level of the nuclear family to the extended family and on to the wider aspects of kinship as exemplified by the nonresidential extended family, the kinship system of Atlhuetzian steadily decreases in structural importance as compared with Belén.

Of course, the functional extent and importance of the nuclear family, extended family, and nonresidential extended family are in large part a corollary of the structural arrangements described above, but we will add a few remarks. The functions of the nuclear family are essentially the same in both communities, except that in Belén it has greater religious and ceremonial importance in the life cycle. The situation changes a great deal, however, at the extended family level. While in Belén, the extended family is a strongly functional social, religious, and economic unit, in Atlhuetzian it is little more than the structural arrangement forced upon young married sons or daughters for a relatively short time by economic exigencies. In Belén, the extended family is the focus of concerted action in sponsoring all the important occasions from birth to death. Individuals and constituent nuclear families have specific tasks to perform, and the extended family functions as an integrated unit for the provision of services, goods, and cash. The functional structure of the extended family can be seen even more clearly when it operates as a religious and ceremonial unit. There is nothing of this kind in Atlhuetzian, where the extended family may or may not

function as an integrated unit, in some limited capacity, in the life cycle and religious sponsorship. Thus, while the extended family in Atlhuetzian is still a significant unit, it has ceased to be an effective, prescriptive functional unit—though now and then it may function preferentially. This again is an expression of the less stringent social and religious requirements in Atlhuetzian, which do not require the generation of the numerous personnel provided by the extended family and nonresidential extended family in Belén.

We have briefly described the kinship structure of three quite different communities and its position in the context of community culture and society. We should now compare the kinship systems themselves. Obviously, the importance and pervasiveness of kinship in these three communities is almost naturally scaled. At the top is Contla, where kinship pervades every aspect of community culture and society, and there are no effective principles or mechanisms of integration and unit formation except patrilineality. In principle, there is no need in such a situation for nonkinship mechanisms to cope with the structural and functional exigencies of social living, primarily as they are expressed in the life and religious cycles. In a middle position is Belén, where the kinship system is not as pervasive as in Contla but strong enough to make itself felt in most aspects of community culture and society. Kinship in this situation may provide the basis for structuring other principles and mechanisms of integration and unit formation, but it never operates in this way by itself and cannot alone cope with the exigencies of societal living, especially in the life and religious cycles. Thus, in Belén it is the *compadrazgo* system which complements, expands, and amalgamates the basic kinship elements into an organic whole, thereby achieving what kinship achieves by itself in Contla. Finally, at the bottom of this scale is Atlhuetzian, whose kinship situation is more different from that of Belén than Belén's is from Contla's. Kinship is least important in Atlhuetzian because there is essentially no need for it in order to cope with the societal exigencies, either by itself or as a complement to other organizing principles, and its effective sphere of action is confined to the nuclear and extended families.

Not surprisingly, given the adaptability and flexibility of *compadrazgo*, these three communities, which have different kinship organizations and overall secular development, share the same ritual kinship system. The same imperatives underlie *compadrazgo* in all three, but the *compadrazgo* system is discharged differently and is expressed in fundamentally different functions. Since there are no significant ideological differences, Contla, Belén, and Atlhuetzian have exchanged *compadres* on a horizontal basis for many generations. The differences appear, however, as we begin to enter the structural domain along the syntagmatic chain. In this area there is certainly a gradation of *compadrazgo* complexity with respect to types: the most complex system is that of Belén with 31 types, followed by Contla with 24, and Atlhuetzian with 21, as shown in Table 3.

A closer look at Table 3 shows that the three communities have in common all the *compadrazgo* types present in Atlhuetzian. With respect to Belén, Contla lacks CCCA, CCCH, and all public-communal *compadrazgo* types except one, while Atlhuetzian lacks all of the above plus ANDC, *compadrazgo de evangelios* and JJ. The most significant aspect of this comparison is that both Contla and Atlhuetzian have only BOI, the least important public-communal

TABLE 3
Distribution of Compadrazgo Types by Community

	<u>Atlihuetzian:</u>	<u>Belén:</u>	<u>Contla:</u>	<u>Pan-Tlaxcalan:</u>
Baptism	x	x	x	x
Marriage	x	x	x	x
Confirmation	x	x	x	x
PCE	x	x	x	x
First Communion	x	x	x	x
CCCH		x		
CCCA		x		
ANDC		x	x	
ANDI		x		
AOI		x		
BSI	x	x	x	x
CSV		x		
Scapulary	x	x	x	x
Graduation	x	x	x	
PCA		x		
Celebration of a Girl's 15th Birthday	x	x	x	
Taking a Mother to Hear Mass on the 40th Day after Giving Birth	x	x	x	
Presenting a Child in Church at the Age of Three		x	x	
Ceremonial Cleansing of a Sick Person	x	x	x	x
BOI	x	x	x	
Blessing of a New House	x	x	x	x
BCC	x	x	x	
BM		x		
Erection of a Cross	x	x	x	x
Setting the Founda- tions of s House	x	x	x	x
Relationship for Rea- sons of Close Friendship	x	x	x	
CABP	x	x	x	
First Pair of Ear- rings Given to a Baby Girl	x	x	x	
CEON	x	x	x	
FC	x	x	x	x
JJ		x	x	

type. From the viewpoint of the regional compadrazgo system, "pan-Tlaxcalan" means that the types are present in all rural communities. Communities where the compadrazgo system is the least elaborate have the twelve pan-Tlaxcalan types plus at least another four. The correlation of compadrazgo-type incidence with the position of communities in the traditional-secular continuum is as follows. Communities approaching the traditional limit have the fewest types. The number of types increases until communities pass the midpoint of the transitional stage and then begins to decline. Thus, Indian-traditional communities have between 16 and 20 compadrazgo types; Indian-transitional commu-

nities between 20 and 25 types; transitional-Mestizo communities between 25 and 34; and Mestizo-secularized communities between 18 and 22.⁴

Inevitably, differences are bound to arise in the structural discharge of such a vast array of types; but differences among the compadrazgo systems of Belén, Contla, and Atlihuetzian are of the kind which arise in such communities on the basis of the differing kinship structures, size, degree of secularization, economic base, and the like. Thus, Contla, Belén, and Atlihuetzian are variants of what we have called the pan-Tlaxcalan nature of the compadrazgo system.

THE DIFFERENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF COMPADRAZGO IN ATLIHUETZIAN, BELÉN, AND CONTLA

We can summarize the functional differences among the three communities by saying that Contla, Belén, and Atlihuetzian share essentially the same compadrazgo system with respect to ideology, form, and structural discharge, but they differ greatly with regard to function and to the way in which the system is embedded in local community culture and society. What does this mean substantively? The answer has two parts. On the one hand we have Belén, in which the compadrazgo system has temporary (the first part of the syntagmatic chain) and permanent (the second part of the chain) dimensions involving significant and clearly configured magico-symbolic, social, religious, demographic, political, and economic functions. On the other hand we have Contla and Atlihuetzian, in which the compadrazgo system has mainly temporary dimensions involving primarily magico-symbolic functions, with some residual social, demographic, and religious functions. Implicit in this analysis is the fact that the primary magico-symbolic functions of compadrazgo are associated largely with the central core of ceremonies and events leading to it, and the primary social, religious, and even demographic functions largely with the permanent dimensions of compadrazgo.

Again, what does this mean substantively? In Belén there is an unbroken syntagmatic chain in which the temporary and permanent dimensions of the compadrazgo system are blended into a single entity. Contla and Atlihuetzian are fundamentally different. Up to the point where the last event of the central core of ceremonies has been completed, including recurrent rites, (see Figure 1), most of what we have said about Belén applies also to Contla and Atlihuetzian. At that point, however, compadrazgo in the latter communities has achieved its functional (magico-symbolic) goals, and henceforth has no social or religious functions: any permanent dimensions that can be attributed to the compadrazgo system are entirely secondary. This, however, needs to be explained in order to understand the differential implications for the global social structure of these communities vis-à-vis that of Belén.

First, what does the absence of permanent primary social and religious functions mean for the individual couple, or in general for egocentrically determined compadrazgo? To be sure, the principle of *respeto*, the ideological cornerstone of the compadrazgo system, continues to operate. *Compadres* in Contla and Atlihuetzian continue to address each other by the appropriate kinship terminology, which is essentially that of Belén; they treat each other with careful respect; they may invite each other to their social and religious sponsorships, though not as cooperating members; they may even ask each other

favors occasionally. But there are no prescriptive mechanisms governing these kinds of behavior and action, nor are there highly institutionalized principles governing the web of *compadrazgo* relationships egocentrically as in Belén.

It is clear that any permanent dimensions that can be attributed to the *compadrazgo* systems of Contla and Atlihuahuetzian do not involve the principle of reliance, for it is this principle which is most effective in binding egocentrically determined relationships into some sort of a social, religious, and economic complex based upon customary and prescriptive rules. Activities among egocentrically determined *compadrazgo* dyads are individually contingent and therefore impermanent. If certain optional actions are not carried out, there are no social or religious consequences for the continuation or termination of the relationship; in fact, in Contla and Atlihuahuetzian a *compadrazgo* relationship can be terminated in principle without deleterious social or religious consequences, something impossible in Belén.

Second, for our present purposes it is the absence, both structurally and functionally, of permanent primary religious functions from the systemic viewpoint that really makes the *compadrazgo* systems of Contla and Atlihuahuetzian differ fundamentally from that of Belén. The principles and mechanisms that generate cooperation and corporate participation in Belén are based primarily on the *compadrazgo* system. Thus, in its permanent dimensions the *compadrazgo* system of Belén is a combination of egocentric and exocentric relationships in which the latter often play a prominent role in the organization and discharge of the most varied social and religious activities, thereby analogously expanding and amalgamating the kinship system. Nothing of the sort exists in Contla or Atlihuahuetzian. Whenever a group of egocentrically determined *compadres* get together for a certain activity, this is always the result of extemporaneous behavior designed specifically for the occasion and has no continuity or prescription. Occasionally, the individual in Contla or Atlihuahuetzian may turn to a specific *compadre* or *compadres* for social, religious, and even economic cooperation and participation; but the notion of prescriptive mechanisms affording him these benefits from a stable, permanent (or semipermanent), and clearly discernible group of *compadres* does not exist. Neither does the concept of collective, multiple-dyadic *compadrazgo* exist in these two communities, and this is exemplified by the absence of the significant public-communal *compadrazgo* types for which this concept is essential.

We can finally ask why the permanent and systemic structure of *compadrazgo* in Contla and Atlihuahuetzian does not extend beyond the central ceremonies, while in Belén it does. Given certain socio-cultural constraints and a certain degree of secularization, the formation of social units and the mechanisms of corporateness, participation, and cooperation required in the social and religious domains, are fulfilled by the *compadrazgo* system—and the most important global function of *compadrazgo* becomes the expansion and amalgamation of kinship. Thus, the constraints and prescriptions in the global social structure of Belén make it necessary that, in the absence of a truly effective kinship system beyond the extended family or nonresidential extended family, the *compadrazgo* system comes to function as such. In summary, then, while they are different homologously, the *compadrazgo* system and the kinship system of Belén are functionally analogous because of the structural overlapping

which binds them into a continuous extension and an undifferentiated configuration of personnel.

The case of Atlihuetzian is the simplest. This community is the most secularized of the three, hence there is no need for the *compadrazgo* system to function in forming social units or to be the basic principle of participation and cooperation in social and religious affairs. The structure and functions of *compadrazgo* are thereby limited to its magico-symbolic dimensions. We do not say that there are no social or religious events in Atlihuetzian that require the operation of principles similar to those in Belén—only that these are temporary, preferential, not wholly institutionalized, and the reflection of the rapidly forming new secular ideology. Let us note also that the limited range of the kinship system of Atlihuetzian cannot permit expansion and amalgamation along the lines of *compadrazgo*, were there a functional necessity for it. But the limitations of the kinship system are simply a reflection of secularization, for 40 years ago Atlihuetzian was structured basically along the traditional lines of Belén.

Contla, on the other hand, is diametrically opposed to Atlihuetzian. Contla and Belén share approximately the same degree of secularization (although the former is an Indian-transitional community, while the latter is a transitional-Mestizo community), but their *compadrazgo* systems differ in that the permanent, systemic functions and attributes described for *compadrazgo* in Belén are discharged entirely by the patrilineal system of Contla. Anything that we can say about the permanent dimensions of the *compadrazgo* system of Belén has its homologous counterpart in the patrilineal system of Contla. Thus, the *compadrazgo* system of Contla, like that of Atlihuetzian but for diametrically opposed reasons, has structural and functional efficacy only until the last event of the central core of ceremonies has been completed. Naturally enough, kinship as an ascribed system is inherently more efficient than *compadrazgo* as an achieved system, hence, the permanence, prescription, and degree of configuration of the principles of unit formation, corporateness, and participation are more efficient in Contla than in Belén. The strictly kinship system of Contla is more efficient than the combined kinship-*compadrazgo* system of Belén in coping with the essentially similar global, traditional social structures of the two communities. But in the majority of traditional communities and practically all transitional communities in rural Tlaxcala, the situation is similar to that of Belén: a fairly effective bilateral system (often with a significant patrilineal bias) which the systemic aspects of *compadrazgo* have expanded and amalgamated into a fairly organic and permanent whole.

To conclude, in Contla and Belén the degree of secularization differs from Atlihuetzian, where there is no functional need for a *compadrazgo* system beyond its unitary ideological, temporary meaning, and where departure from traditionality is shown in the restriction of kinship to family structure. Contla and Belén, on the other hand, share approximately the same degree of secularization, but differ in that patrilineal kinship is the primary principle in the organization of culture and society in Contla, while in Belén the combination of a patrilineally biased, bilateral kinship system and the systemic dimensions of *compadrazgo* is the primary principle. It is our contention that all rural Tlaxcalan communities fall broadly under the categories represented by Contla,

Belén, and Atlíhuetzian. Moreover, they are underlain by the following dynamic process. The two most important variables that determine the degree of permanence of the *compadrazgo* system are kinship and secularization, and the two are rather intimately interrelated. The general mechanisms in operation are these: when the local kinship system is fully efficacious, the *compadrazgo* system becomes virtually inoperative beyond the central core of ceremonies and has no permanent dimensions. The degree of secularization is more important than kinship as an exogenous variable, for it determines the need for the permanent dimensions of *compadrazgo*: the more secularized the community, the less need for permanency.

A NETWORK EXPLANATION FOR VARIATIONS IN THE PERMANENT DIMENSIONS OF COMPADRAZGO

In the preceding sections we have shown that the temporary dimensions of *compadrazgo* constitute a pan-Tlaxcalan phenomenon, while its permanent dimensions entail different functions in three representative rural Tlaxcalan communities. Thus, structurally and functionally, we explained variations in the incidence of *compadrazgo* at the regional level. Now we shall try to explain variations in the permanent dimensions of *compadrazgo* in terms of network structure. But first, we must briefly describe the two basic concepts of *compadrazgo* in action, which are directly related to the formation of *compadrazgo* networks.

The concepts of *respeto* and *confianza* are universal aspects of the *compadrazgo* system in rural Tlaxcala. In all 35 communities for which we have gathered data on *compadrazgo*, these concepts are readily verbalized as a significant component of the structure of *compadrazgo* in a large variety of contexts. As used by rural Tlaxcalans, the concepts must be characterized as "covering terms"—that is, terms whose semantic payload is much greater and more diverse than their common sense meaning indicates. They stand for a wide variety of behavior extending across the entire spectrum of the *compadrazgo* system. Thus, when rural Tlaxcalans tell the ethnographer that *compadrazgo* relationships are marked by variant degrees of *respeto* and *confianza*, they are expressing respectively a series of ideological and structural imperatives or constraints that may entail social, economic, religious, and/or symbolic components characterizing specific ways of behaving. From a dynamic viewpoint, *respeto* and *confianza* may be regarded as the activating principles that are the most significant ingredients in the formation of *compadrazgo* networks.

Respeto is the most encompassing of the two principles. It not only unifies *compadrazgo* into a well-structured system, albeit an open-ended one, but it also delimits the boundaries of actual behavior. When the average rural Tlaxcalan declares that *compadres* must respect each other or that *respeto* is the necessary condition for a *compadrazgo* relationship, these utterances cover a wide range of imperatives and commands, the highest expression of which is embodied in what we have called the sacred nature of *compadrazgo*. *Respeto* is not only an imperative to action, but also a command that conditions behavior. The covering properties of *respeto*, which we cannot detail here, may be regarded as a body of "native categorial imperatives" which in a real sense constitutes a

model of the *compadrazgo* system in rural Tlaxcala. In summary, the principle of *respeto* embodies the ideology of *compadrazgo* with respect to prescriptiveness of type, the nature and extent of rites and ceremonies, the formal behavior of *compadres*, and in general the unfolding of the temporary dimensions of *compadrazgo*.

The principle of *confianza*, on the other hand, is much more central than *respeto* to the permanent dimensions of *compadrazgo*, for it not only determines the selection of *compadres* but specifies the conditions for the repetition and intensification of *compadrazgo* relationships, which are of paramount importance for the formation of *compadrazgo* networks. We can broadly define *confianza* as a potential attribute of any *compadrazgo* relationship which permits its actors to ask each other favors of an economic, social, religious, and even political nature. This does not mean that this potential attribute is always actualized, but rather that it can be actualized given certain specific circumstances. From a slightly different viewpoint, we can say that *confianza* conditions the allocation of social, economic, and religious resources so as to minimize conflict with the proper discharge of other systems within rural Tlaxcalan culture and society. Thus, the generation of *confianza* relationships constitutes the single most important factor in the formation of *compadrazgo* networks. Finally, we must add analogously that the generation of *confianza* relationships applies equally to kinship, occupational, and several other kinds of networks.

Kapferer (1973: 101) notes two basic propositions linking exchange theory with the structure of social networks: (1) The greater the extent to which two persons have overlapping social networks with other persons who are known to each other, the more these other relationships are put at risk if one fails to discharge his obligations toward the other. (2) The greater the concern to protect one's social investments with as many people as possible, the more one will concentrate time and effort on key relationships central to the social network.

In rural Tlaxcala, where *compadrazgo* types differ in importance with regard to *respeto* and prescriptiveness (the more important the type, the more prescriptive and the more *respeto*), the actual selection of *compadres* typically works on the basis of *confianza*, that is, confidence in fulfillment of support, granting favors, and maintaining trust in the relationship, symmetrically, between two parties. *Compadrazgo* thus represents a social investment. There is a strong concern in the performance of *compadrazgo* duties and obligations—generally of a temporary, ritual and ceremonial nature—for protecting one's social investment in *compadrazgo* and in other *confianza* relationships as widely as possible.

In this context, then, it follows from propositions (1) and (2) that the *compadre* with whom it is most likely that one will fulfill *confianza* expectations is that *compadre* with whom one has many common *confianza* relationships among whom there is also *confianza*. Thus, for existing *compadrazgo* ties, *confianza* relationships tend to be activated in such a way as to form clusters or cliques of mutual support (reliance groups) based on reciprocal expectations. It also follows from proposition (2) that since members of a cluster with whom one has one's primary *confianza* relationships are more central in one's social network, one will invest in these relationships by contracting new *compadrazgo*

ties within this cluster. In other words, based solely on the dynamics of *confianza* relationships, even if one's initial compadrazgo choices were not under one's own control, one's fulfillment of obligations and later choices would be such as to lead to the formation of compadrazgo clusters, or mutual reliance groups. The developmental cycle of compadrazgo in most Indian-transitional and all transitional-Mestizo communities, where *confianza* is the basis of compadrazgo selection, shows that compadrazgo clusters have intergenerational stability because young married couples acquire the compadrazgo ties of their parents and consolidate this network for themselves before building outward to form new reliance groups independently of their parents.

Our theoretical explanation of the formation of reliance groups within compadrazgo networks is incomplete, however, for it suggests that a person would tend to contract compadrazgo ties within a single cluster or clique rather than in several. The explanation for multiple-cluster affiliations may be sought in a further extension of Kapferer's propositions: (3) A person will invest heavily not only in persons most central to one network, but in persons most central to different sectors of several networks. The focus of these networks might be defined by type of activity: family, kinship, occupation, common interests, exchange, and so on.

The most important consequence of the tendency to form compadrazgo clusters based on *confianza* is that as soon as a compadrazgo bond to a member of a cluster expires, given the inherently temporary nature of compadrazgo ritual and ceremonialism, the centrality of this relationship in the *confianza* network requires further social investment or intensification. This is achieved either by contracting another (resulting-from) compadrazgo relationship, or by converting an important, already existing compadrazgo relationship into permanent social links. The pressure to create permanency in compadrazgo linkages, then, derives from the expectations and risks associated with the structure of the social network which results from the dynamics of *confianza*. For most Indian-transitional and all transitional-Mestizo communities, then, where maximizing *confianza* is the prime consideration in compadrazgo selection, our exchange-theory propositions offer a relatively full explanation of why compadrazgo acquires permanent dimensions associated with enduring reliance groups, and a model for the process of formation of such groups. The structure of *confianza* reliance groups formed through permanent compadrazgo relationships in the type of system we have described acquires many of the functional characteristics of extended family or kinship groups: quasi-corporate mutual interests, mutual support, well-defined expectations and sanctions, and multiple allegiances—as in consanguineal versus affinal kin group affiliations.

There are specific conditions, however, under which compadrazgo links do not tend to become permanent nor to form reliance groups. This is the case in all Indian-traditional and some Indian-transitional communities, where kinship is the primary basis of *confianza*, and compadrazgo selection is based on *respeto* relationships with individuals who are members of different kin groups who cannot be expected to share *confianza*. Throughout rural Tlaxcala there is a widespread proscription against contracting compadrazgo relationships with kinsmen. The reason given for this practice is that kinsmen are too liable to disagree, especially over land and inheritance, or the allocation of resources, which is inimical to the sacred nature of egalitarian, horizontal compadrazgo

(Forbes 1971: 24). In other words, in all Indian-traditional and some Indian-transitional communities, the formation of *confianza* reliance groups is overwhelmingly achieved on the basis of kinship, in spite of the potentialities for conflict, particularly in communities where agricultural or craft occupations require extensive extended family cooperation. Thus, in the most traditional communities in rural Tlaxcala, *compadres* cannot be selected primarily on the basis of *confianza*, as outlined above. *Respeto*, however, remains a key feature of compadrazgo selection.

Respeto, like *confianza*, is ideally symmetrical, but unlike *confianza*, differences in age and status often make compadrazgo relationships asymmetrical. If one fails to comply with the expectations of a *respeto* relationship of a given degree, there is not sanction of symmetrical reciprocity operating to restore the balance of equality or to maintain *respeto* at a given level: the relationship merely changes to reflect either greater asymmetry or a lessening of the intensity of mutual respect. Thus, proposition (1) does not apply: failure to fulfill *respeto* expectations in one relationship does not put other relationships at risk. Moreover, social investment in actors central to one's *respeto* compadrazgo network does not occur, and as a consequence, there is no tendency for *respeto* relationships to form clusters or reliance groups.

The dynamic of *respeto* relationships is individualized or insulated in its network ramifications because of the possibility of asymmetry, which is absent in *confianza* relationships. In the most traditional rural Tlaxcalan communities, then, compadrazgo selection based solely on *respeto* does not have network consequences leading to the formation of clusters or reliance groups. The resultant social structure is atomistic and, by nature, temporary. Compadrazgo may serve to link individuals or families on a temporary basis, either by patching up conflicts or building temporary alliances, but such alliances lack the network sanctions that would make them permanent. Clearly, also, under such conditions, failure to comply with compadrazgo obligations does not put one's kinship relationships at risk. The obligations of compadrazgo, as a temporary link between kin groups, may be fulfilled or not, depending on reciprocity with that particular group.

Finally, in the most acculturated, exclusively Mestizo-secularized communities, with massive labor migration and an essentially urban orientation, the permanent dimensions of compadrazgo and kinship cooperation and exchange are greatly reduced. However, there are still alternate social and economic bases for the development of *confianza* relationships outside compadrazgo and kinship networks—for example, occupational, common-interest and exchange networks. Thus, in Mestizo-secularized communities, *compadres* are selected individualistically on the basis of *respeto*. The consequences for compadrazgo are essentially the same as in Indian-traditional communities, except that at this extreme of the ethno-cultural continuum compadrazgo acquires a significant vertical component. Moreover, the asymmetrical aspects of *respeto* are here utilized to the fullest extent in contracting extracommunal compadrazgo relationships which are basically of the patron-client type. Individual maximization of economic and social behavior acquires under these circumstances its maximum expression, and reciprocity is the main determinant of the greater or lesser degree of permanence in these relationships.

One general point which emerges from our network and exchange-theory

analysis is that some form of symmetrical reciprocity must be present in the dynamics of *compadrazgo* selection and maintenance in order for permanency and clustering to emerge in the network structure. This condition is satisfied only in intermediate (most Indian-transitional and all transitional-Mestizo) communities, where *confianza* (symmetrical reciprocity) is the basis of *compadre* selection. At the extremes of the continuum (all Indian-traditional and Mestizo-secularized and some Indian-transitional communities), *compadre* selection is based on *respeto* (which allows asymmetry), thereby precluding the formation of permanent reliance groups. Thus, in the most traditional communities kinship is the sole basis for generating reliance groups, while in the most secularized communities they develop, albeit in a more attenuated form, from *confianza* relationships on the basis of occupational, common-interest, and other kinds of networks. In the structural-functional analysis we discussed kinship and secularization as the main variables conditioning *compadrazgo* as a mechanism for unit formation and the structuring of reliance groups. But in a more precise explanation of the differential functions of *compadrazgo*, there are economic and demographic factors which must be taken into consideration as communities move along the continuum.

CONCLUSIONS

Our structural-functional and network analyses of *compadrazgo* are based on two fundamental premises: the predominance of the *compadres-compadres* link in the organization of *compadrazgo* behavior, and the centrality of *compadrazgo* as a social institution in regions undergoing rapid change, where analogously it comes to replace kinship as the main organizing principle of community life. These especially are the dynamic underpinnings of our network study of *compadrazgo* now in progress. Inasmuch as we cannot yet give definitive answers to the many problems involved in the network structure of *compadrazgo*, in the remainder of this article we shall present our general theoretical approach in the form of two related models with their corresponding hypotheses. It goes without saying that the replicability of the models is the justification for these remarks.

Description and comparative analysis of the forms of social organization in Mesoamerica and much of South America have been complicated by the many-stranded character of social relationships such as *compadrazgo*, bilateral kinship, effective ties in economic and political alliances, and by the lack of clear-cut structural units resulting from such open-ended types of relationships. Foster's (1961) characterization of the "dyadic-contract" identified the process by which many social relationships are formed in peasant communities, but did not clarify the types of social configurations which may result from such open-ended contracts. Ethnographic work is badly needed on the structure of social networks in societies which emphasize poly-stranded relationships, and on the consequences of different types of network structure for role behavior.

Recent developments in the understanding of *compadrazgo* links (Nutini 1977) and in methods of network analysis (Lorraine and H. White 1971; H. White 1974; H. White, Boorman, and Breiger 1975; Boorman and H. White 1975; D. White 1975; Mitchell 1969) suggest that network analysis can be an extremely fruitful approach to a number of problems in the study of poly-

stranded social organization. We are not using here the concept of social network in the loose or metaphorical sense. Barnes (1975), in tracing the development of metaphorical usage of the network concept, notes that for most problems of social organization, a detailed network analysis of social relationships may be redundant in that such analytical concepts as social roles or corporate groups could serve equally well in the exposition of social organizational data. Here we take the position that network analysis is meaningful in its own right only where the behavior of actors in the social setting is related not to roles or characteristics of individuals and groups, but rather to the particular way in which relationships are configured in a network. Thus, network analysis, if applicable to a problem, should be able to elucidate (and predict) certain types of individual and group behavior that are not functions of individual attributes or even dyadic relationships *per se*.

The data presented in this paper and Nutini's (1977) recent study make a strong case for the applicability of network analysis to the compadrazgo system of rural Tlaxcala. While the various types of compadrazgo are either dyadically or communally contracted, and related to the life, ceremonial, and economic cycles of individuals or the yearly religious cycle of the community, the resultant exocentric patterns of social relationships tend over time to form structures which acquire a dynamic of their own. Clusters of individuals with a high density of compadrazgo ties emerge, and for certain purposes they show behavioral regularities at the community level, sometimes in relation to concerted economic, religious, or social action, sometimes in relation to conflict resolution or the avoidance of direct confrontation. Without refined tools for analysis of clustering, decomposition of a finite population according to network linkages, and the compounding of role relationships (H. White 1974), it is impossible to define and specify the structure of social networks beyond their merely descriptive integration as Nutini has already done. The aim of our research is to transcend descriptive integration and generate more powerful explanations which will specify the structure and content of compadrazgo networks as an expression of social, economic, religious, and political action.

Given the nature of rural Tlaxcalan culture and society, our basic assumption is that social networks are used to generate resources to accomplish social ends. In giving our theoretical approach to the functioning of social network linkages in the form of hypotheses, it should be noted that both the nature of the resources and the conception of relevant social ends vary according to the internal resource structure or the external orientations of community members.

In the community setting, the first set of independent variables that are relevant to network formation are found in the differential utilization of resources:

(1) Involvement in agriculture. The more closely an individual or territorial group is tied to the productive resources of the land, the greater the likelihood that network linkages will be established that are socially and territorially propinquitous. Compadrazgo will tend to reinforce kinship and neighborhood ties, and at the community level, compadrazgo will tend to concentrate within the community.

(2) Involvement in extracommunal resource systems. The more time an individual invests in extracommunal exploitation of resources, such as labor

migration, the more likely it is that a significant number of network linkages will be formed based on factors of continuity and propinquity in work groups. Thus, relative to the home community of labor migrants, the number of external network relationships will increase in relation to the investment of time outside the community and the continuity of those outside contacts with persons engaged in the same work.

(3) Involvement in diversified occupations. With occupational diversification, kinship can no longer generate sufficient resources to accomplish social ends, because kin linkages give no assurance of tapping a variety of specialized occupations. Thus the more open-ended and poly-stranded network linkages, such as *compadrazgo*, will tend to be utilized to establish a broader set of linkages. This accounts for the much greater importance of *compadrazgo* in transitional communities, as compared with traditional communities in rural Tlaxcala.

Also in the community setting, national integration and secularization constitute a second set of independent variables relevant to network formation:

(4) Integration with the state and national politico-economic system. The greater an individual's or community's orientation toward the national media, politics, or market, the greater the likelihood that network linkages will be generated to serve the individual's social mobility, job security, and political security. Under these circumstances, network linkages will be less widely extended horizontally, and more vertically structured to incorporate persons who can be used to serve the individual's particular ends.

(5) Secularization of the content of social relationships and community institutions. As the proportion of individuals with a national orientation increases in the community, the effect is to undercut traditional, communally based socio-religious institutions; that is, to secularize the content of *compadrazgo* ties, involvement in the *ayuntamiento religioso* and the *mayordomía* system, and the moral-religious obligations of some aspects of kinship ties.

These hypotheses indicate that kinship will offer the most important network linkages in communities with greater dependency on agriculture (traditional communities), and that *compadrazgo* ties will be discharged in accordance with traditional religious ideology. However, as the economy diversifies in terms of labor migration and cottage industries (transitional communities), kinship will no longer suffice to generate resources even for communally linked social ends, and horizontal *compadrazgo* ties will take over as the primary axes of network formation. Finally, as national orientations become dominant among individuals in the community (secularized communities), the structure of *compadrazgo* will collapse into smaller horizontal clusters but expand to serve vertical linkages which individuals can manipulate to their own ends, while the content of *compadrazgo* links will become largely symbolic and secularized as opposed to moral and sacred.

Outside the community setting, *compadrazgo* networks will develop in work groups where there is a continuity of personnel, and *compadrazgo* links of a vertical nature will often develop between individuals in different status positions in different locales. In addition, it is possible that *compadrazgo* networks may form around other extracommunal activities such as cyclical markets or political organizations.

Nutini's (1977) description and analysis of community variation in compadrazgo structure and the foregoing hypotheses give rise to the following predictions about the relationship between community type and network structure: (a) In traditional communities, compadrazgo linkages will tend to be highly endogamous and follow kinship and territorial lines of organization. Compadrazgo links will reinforce kinship networks, but have only a moderate importance for community integration. (b) In transitional communities, compadrazgo linkages will tend to develop into exocentric network structures independent of kinship. Compadrazgo acquires major importance as the primary means of social integration in the community, with kinship in a subsidiary position. (c) In secularized communities, traditional compadrazgo types diminish in importance, while remaining largely endogamous and reinforcing kinship linkages, but only within the restricted domain of nuclear and extended family organization. Secondary and more secularized compadrazgo types (for example, graduation, *quince años*, and CEON) become more important in building networks along independent lines, often through vertical and extracommunity links.

Throughout this discussion we have assumed that positions in compadrazgo networks are not simply indicators of social position, but rather that compadrazgo positions (defined structurally within a network) are the basis on which power, cleavage, or solidarity are built at the exocentric or group level. That is, an individual may have the resources to participate in the *ayuntamiento religioso*, but his actual date of entry will depend upon the existence of required social linkages within the community. Similarly, among several children within a family, an individual's decision to migrate for wage labor or to stay and work the land may depend, not on his relative age or other characteristics, but partially on the extent to which a strong or weak social network has been created for him by his parents.

Throughout this paper, we have analyzed the most salient structural and functional attributes of compadrazgo in rural Tlaxcala, which bear directly on the network formation of the institution and its ethnographic pervasiveness at the community and regional levels. There are probably countless regions in Latin America in which compadrazgo exhibits basically the same characteristics that we have described here, but anthropologists have tended to see compadrazgo strictly in terms of dyadic relationships without any awareness that such relationships can be structured into poly-stranded, multidyadic networks. Thus, given the ideal conditions of compadrazgo as a natural system, the combined analytical approach of this paper may merit replication in other regions of Latin America.

NOTES

1. The population of these 21 *municipios* is roughly 315,000, of which slightly more than 55,000 comprise the four small cities of the region: Tlaxcala, the state capital (10,000), Apizaco (20,000), Chiautempan (18,000), and Zacatelco (7,500). These are not only small cities, but socially, religiously, and economically intimately tied to the rural environment.
2. The subject matter of this short outline of compadrazgo in rural Tlaxcala is discussed at great length in Part II of *Ritual Kinship* (Nutini 1977). The reader may wish to consult the book.
3. Nutini has carefully analyzed the traditional and transitional contexts of compadrazgo, but he has not studied the modern-secular context extensively, nor its impact on the systemic, exocentric

aspects of compadrazgo in network formation. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation (Grant # BNS 76-08386), White and Nutini are now engaged in a four-year project on this important problem.

4. Taking the incidence of compadrazgo types as an index of secularization, we can arrange all rural Tlaxcalan communities on a continuum. Moreover, the twelve pan-Tlaxcalan types represent the most important and traditional aspects of ritual kinship sponsorship in rural Tlaxcala, and the oldest in historical perspective.

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