STATE INTERVENTION IN INDIGENOUS ECONOMIES: THE CASE OF VENEZUELAN INDIAN COLLECTIVES

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by

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CHAPTER 6

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PUME EMPRESA OF KUMANI

The analysis of the evolution and outcomes of the Venezuelan Indian Program switches at this point from a "macro" to a "micro" level of the local empresas Indigenas selected for closer examination in this work. It is at this level, and with regard to the first question posed in the dissertation, i.e. which factors influenced the evolution of the program, that the impact of Individual communities' social, economic, and political composition on this program can best be assessed. It is also at this level that one can begin to answer the second question, i.e. what was the impact of the program on the lives of these people--at least for those two communities and groups considered here.

There are two critical phases in the evolution of cooperatives. One is the organizational phase; the other is the implementation phase, within which a cooperative's performance can best be assessed. Each phase has specific (partially overlapping) requirements and generates its own processes. Moreover, policy processes and outcomes generated during the first phase become a new set of structuring factors during the second. Chapters 6 and 7 will deal with this first organizational phase of the Kumani and Saimadoyi empresas.

I. Structuring Factors in the Organizational Phase of Cooperatives: Kumani

The organization of the Pume and Bari empresas occurred under the different structural and historical conditions outlined in Chapter 4. It also occurred, at the level of the Indian communities themselves, within two very different political and economic environments. The interaction of these two sets of structural and historical conditions, and their manifestation at the local level, represent one major category of factors which will have an impact on the organization (and implementation) of the cooperatives. The particular form of state intervention in each of these settings, the type of social actors involved, and the mobilizational and counter-mobilizational strategies used by the various actors during this phase, constitutes the second major category of structuring factors. The theoretical and empirical literature on cooperative organizations discussed in Chapter 1, points us to a series of specific questions, located within these two broad categories of factors, which acquire different meanings within these two divergent cases. In the next paragraphs I will outline some of the issues that will be examined for each of the two cases, and which are particularly pertinent in addressing the major questions posed in this dissertation.

Students and organizers of cooperatives attach a great deal of significance to the actors who participate in these projects, the extent to which their objectives coincide with each other and with broader national objectives; and their particular styles and levels of participation. According to Reed, "there are clear indications that the more peasants participate directly in the preparation for

and the actual implementation of the change, the more effective will be their participation and interaction in the established collective and the greater chance there will be for long-term success" (Reed 1975:365). The Indian Program's own measure of success is also premised on participatory objectives and strategies. Authors writing not only on cooperatives but more generally on rural development projects that require peasant participation are equally emphatic about this issue.[1] With regard to the question of objectives, Reed also notes the almost inevitable conflict between the members' own views of what the empresa can do for them and the broader goals characterizing state-initiated programs. Furthermore, and as I have suggested in this work, even the program's goals may not totally coincide with agricultural objectives given the fact that its creators were intent on resisting, in the case of Indians, the kind of control over peasant production that governments believed were required to meet national goals.

Secondly, with regard to the Pume households and community patterns of reproduction, the central issues are in large part those I began to examine in the last chapter, but which are now considered within a different historical framework i.e. the contemporary period; and within the specific situation of the Pume families and communities studied here--as opposed to the Pume of Apure as a whole. The last chapter's historical sketch of these groups' internal characteristics also serves as a baseline for

assessing the changes in those internal characteristics, giving a more accurate and updated picture of these communities today.

The literature on the peasantry is particularly helpful at this juncture in the analysis because, despite the lack of agreement as to what is the "true model" of peasant economy and society, it identifies some constant themes which one must address in any investigation of peasant agricultural performance--whether such performance is based on collective arrangements or not. These themes again correspond to many of the concrete issues students of cooperatives generally believe must be taken into consideration by cooperative organizers. Taken together, these issues are concerned with the definitional characteristics of these communities. Fals Borda (1977), and the Indigenistas themselves, believe that an adequate conceptualization of the beneficiaries' structural and historical reality was crucial to the development of an equally adequate cooperative structure or "design."

To begin with, pre-existing primary relations and levels of social homogeneity and solidarity are considered an important factor--and one which may not always be positive.[2] In the case of Indian peasants, the analysis of kinship and residence patterns as the principles behind those primary relations is particularly relevant. These patterns, or their transformations, can influence the decisions to join the empresa, as well as its future performance. In addition, the literature on ethnicity provides some special insights in this area. Numerous authors have correctly contended that ethnicity interacts with other social

factors, such as class, and influences the particular strategies that groups adopt for their survival (Arizpe, 1980).

Also debated is the issue, central to this project, of the extent to which pre-existing cultural and socio-economic collective practices significantly contribute to the successful transition to more complex forms of socialized production.[3] The examination of this issue is made more interesting considering the fact that some social scientists in Venezuela and elsewhere dispute the significance of these practices even within the traditional peasant and Indian socio-economic structures. Particularly important in this regard is the organization of work and distribution systems and the decision-making structures and cognitive values that reinforce such collective practices.

Several authors also point to the land tenure system's influence on the mobilization of peasants/Indians and in the general organizational features of collectives and their chances for success. It is generally believed that workers in expropriated estates present the least resistance to collectivization while private, small-land holders who are doing fairly well offer the most resistance. In between, however, is the important category of peasants like the Bari who own the land collectively, but whose productive activities, are not collectively organized. There is no consensus in the literature about the effectiveness of the transition from levels of communal ownership to group farming.

Also important is the relationship of these groups to the

local social, economic and political structure that frames their existence. Several issues are evident here. One is the important theme in the peasant literature regarding a group's control over its productive process vis a vis its level of subordination to outside capital and state agents. This is an important factor when it influences decisions to join the empresa, i.e. it influences the risk factor. But it is also important to the extent that pre-existing levels of self-sufficiency vs. subordination may or may not carry the empresa through its bad times. It remains to be seen whether this factor influences other organizational traits and the empresa's performance in general.

There also are a series of factors that have to do with the particular skills, management capabilities, and levels of literacy and relevant information to which different groups have access to. The size of the operation vis a vis the available labor force, its technical requirements, ecological factors or general agronomic conditions and the extent to which such factors are taken into account also will affect the performance of collective organizations.[4]

Finally, I am interested in examining the extent to which the group's political organization and mobilization strategies and skills influence its participation in the empresa. This is an issue commonly included in aggregate analysis of rural development and collectivization, but rarely considered in enough detail at the level of individual cases. The strategies and events examined at this juncture are, the results of the organizational phase, and the

conditioning factors for what was yet to come in the evolution of Kumani.

The "design" or organizational structure that results from this intervention/co-participation of state and community actors, becomes itself an important factor influencing other stages in the empresa's development. Among such organizational features are rules concerning the organization of work and empresa leadership.

The analysis of the Indian Program's aggregate outcomes may, in fact, confirm the simple argument that the program's emancipatory goals were ultimately subordinated to the accumulation and political requirements of the state. However, the richness of this process, and the more complex conclusions that it may yield, would be lost if such results are not desegregated at the level of individual empresas.

It is, for example, at this level that one can learn about the form and degree of political consciousness, and new levels of expectations acquired by the different groups which participated in the program; i.e. about their capacity--or lack thereof--to shape the program's outcomes, and to alter the terms of their relationship to the state and other social groups. It is at this concrete level in the analysis where one can most clearly see how external and internal factors become dialectically combined and determine the variations in results that we have observed.

One is also better able to untangle the particular contribution that each factor makes to different aspects of the

empresa's performance--for example, the extent to which the empresa design (organizational features) is responsible for particular outcomes vis a vis changes in national agrarian policy or political authority. It is finally at this level where a more conclusive judgment can be made about these alternative development models, prospects for success and for overcoming the various levels of forces that work against them.

Finally, I must add a note on the chapter's structure, and its differences with the next chapter on the Bari empresa. Naturally, I will examine the same set of issues in both cases as dictated by a comparative methodology. But I will not break down the issues along exactly the same chapter sections. This is in recognition of the internal differences in these two cases, which, among other things, means that internal factors have different levels of significance in each case. Grouping them into the same analytical categories might not accurately reflect their form of interaction in reality. One element of of the empresa system that illustrates the latter point has to do with the relocation of families to a new area as a pre-condition for organizing the empresa. This produced a much more socially heterogeneous empresa, and therefore factors such as kinship and primary relations must be more thoroughly investigated. In addition, the fact that these communities' size varied so widely, conditioned the manner in which the data was collected. In the Pume case, it was possible--and more important--to interview members from each household. In the Bari case, informants were the main method of data collection.

Regarding the data sources themselves, the chapter relies on a combination of oral histories collected during the field work, as well as government and empresa documents dealing with the organizational process.

A. The State and other Social Actors, "motives," and Mobilizational Strategies

It has been well documented that the idea of organizing empresas Indigenas was largely conceived outside of the Indian communities. Despite this "top-down" approach to the organization of the empresas, the particular community figures participating in the organizational stage, the level to which they did so, and presumably their motivations, varied significantly. This is the first issue to explore.

Due to a combination of circumstances explored in the last chapter, OMAFI and IAN officials successfully negotiated the transfer of the "hato" (ranch) Santa Cecilia from the state to several Pume families. Their main objective was to establish an Indian empresa among these families. The initial plan, developed in 1978, shows that OMAFI was also planning to locate, for the benefit of future empresa members, a "training center" on livestock production in what was originally the hato's headquarters and home of the owners.[5]

Empresa members were recruited from three neighboring small villages (caserios) which had been settled in the early part of the century by several Pume families as they retreated from other parts of their native territory that was being taken over by the

criollos. Today the villages resemble closely what Wolf (1966) called corporate communities.[6] These villages were Fruta de Burro, Palmarito, and Las Matas.

Unlike the strategy followed for the Bari empresa, and in fact for all other empresas, the establishment of Kumani was premised on the relocation of Pume families to a new area. To achieve this voluntary relocation, state agents recruited one or two local residents as "promoters." One of these in particular was specially instrumental in convincing future members of the advantages of the move to Santa Cecilia. He was the assistant to the "capitan" of Fruta de Burro and worked in the Ministry of Education office in Apure--in an office connected to OMAFI. When interviewed, he explained the basic steps followed in trying to recruit members for what was to be the Kumani empresa.

After going from house to house, "the Ministry of Education functionaries would ask me to organize the meetings with the members we had recruited from the different communities...We had no land where to build a house or to plant a `conuco´ (small garden)... We formed what was called a Land Committee and sent three letters to the president of Venezuela, signed by the different representatives of the Indian communities and people coming from outside to advise us."[7] It was this rather conventional strategy that resulted in the transfer of the Santa Cecilia ranch to the Pume during the election year of 1978.

Testimony from other members of the empresa who came from the

various communities further convey the sense of what this initial process was like, the level of understanding and participation of the perspective members, and the concrete aspirations of these individual Pume as opposed to the more abstract goals of the program founders and administrators. A former president of the empresa who came from Las Matas said, for example, "... there came a commission from Caracas, some doctors that came...enrolling people; those who wanted to come here (to Santa Cecilia) would just enroll" (Interview Olivares 1985). Asked why he decided to enroll, he said, "well, they told us that they were going to distribute land and cattle to us, which is of help to us, and that they would give us a zinc house."

One of the elders explained his decision to come to Santa Cecilia in more ambiguous, yet revealing, terms, "because they brought me here to put it that way, (they told me) to come."[8] Another elder, who explained that Indians came to a meeting where they were told that they were going to be given "puesto" (space), expressed his resistance to moving to Santa Cecilia because he always heard "there would be trouble." He was referring to the conflict that would-and-did arise between the criollos and the Indians if the latter moved to Santa Cecilia. In his mind Indians would be blamed for any cattle stolen by the criollos.

It is clear that at this point the Pume had only a very rudimentary understanding of what the move to Santa Cecilia entailed. The haphazard and rushed fashion in which the organizational process occurred also meant that legitimate fears

and concerns were not addressed in any systematic manner by any of the agencies involved. That is not to say that a more comprehensive understanding would have necessarily led the Indians to reject the empresa offer. The basic incentive of acquiring some land and other means of production is a powerful one and some risks were likely to be worth taking, given the Pume's precarious socio-economic situation. Nevertheless, the testimony of these Indians, and interviews with IAN officials confirmed that the training and educational meetings that had taken place before 1978 with other communities contemplating the organization of an empresa did not take place in Apure. "There was no promotion,...or diagnostic process... It was a conjunctural situation...there were good intentions, but in fact it was born (the Kumani empresa) with many errors."[9]

IAN and OMAFI officials recruited 42 Pume men, "heads of household," or two thirds of the set target (Plan de desarrollo 1978), for the empresa. The Pume obtained a a "possessory," (as opposed to a "definitive") collective title to the land, a credit for Bs. 3.549.146 (about $82,000 at the old rate of $1=4.30), in the form of 3,890 head of cattle and about 100 other animals for transportation. The credit was to be paid back over 15 years at a rate of 3% interest. In the contract between the empresa and IAN, it was established that failure to meet these financial obligations would result in the dispossession of the empresa members of this land and other means of production they might own at the time. Not

having a government-recognized land base, access to and retention of the land was for the Apure Indians contingent upon their economic performance in the cattle business--a situation not faced by most (if any) other Indian groups whose land rights are usually predicated upon some recognition of ancestral rights.[10]

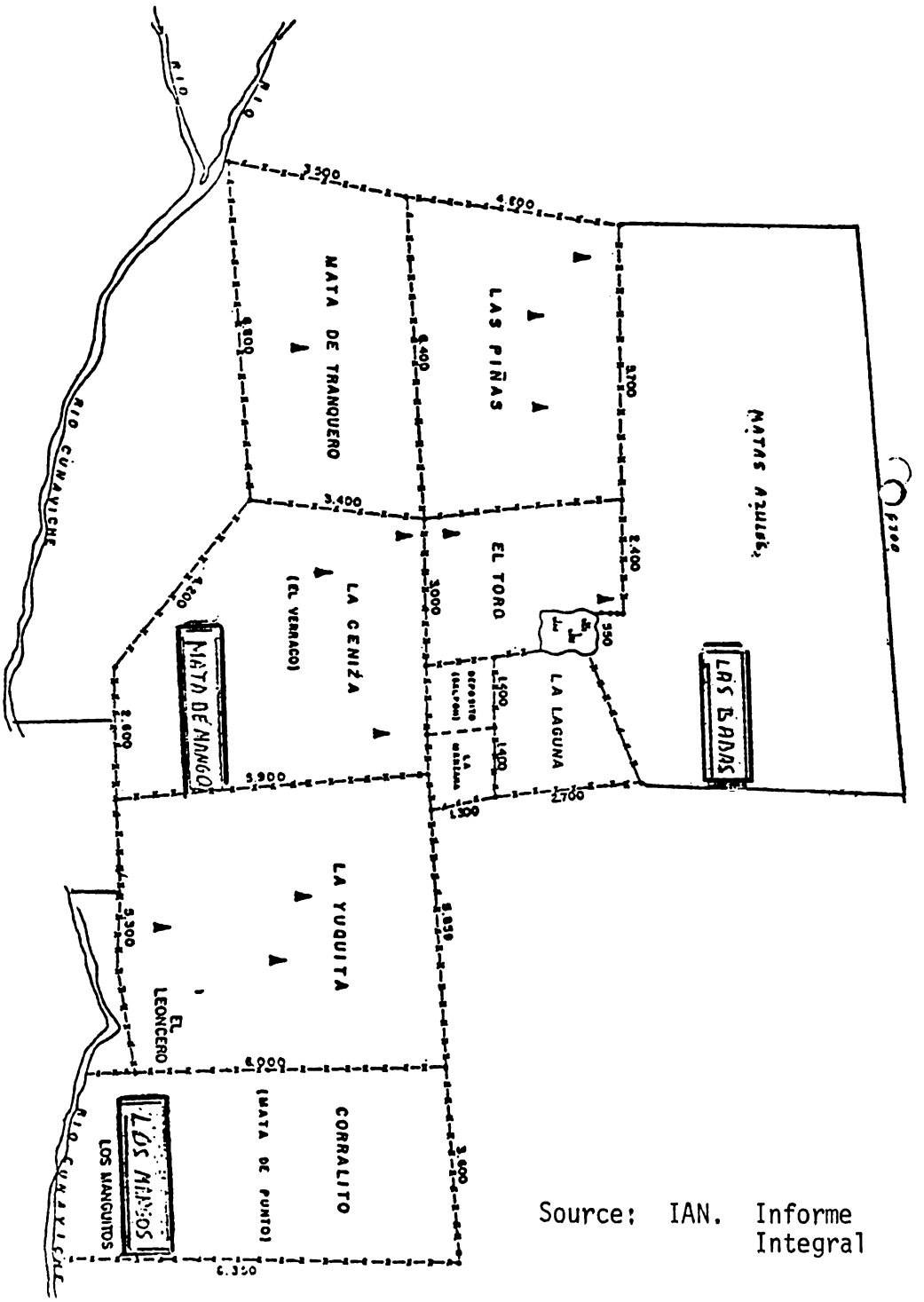
The only organizational meetings took place after individual families had joined the empresa and when they met to sign the financial agreement with IAN and legally incorporate the empresa through the formal acceptance of the standard contracts drawn by IAN's central office.

It was established that the 42 families would decide among themselves where they would settle on the 30,000 hectares of empresa land.[11] They decided to settle in three separate internal communities" or small settlements which they called "Los Mangos", Mata de Mango" and "Las Babas." (See Figure 6.1) Families that came from the same community simply settled together in these new communities on the ranch. The distance between them in this rather large ranch varied from a one-to a two-hour horse ride. Today, only the communities of Mata de Mango and Los Mangos remain. The members of Las Babas were expelled from the empresa later on; I will later explain this in more detail.

Aside from mentioning things like "closeness to the river" and "good land for planting", members of both communities cited the distance to their original communities as an important determinant in deciding where to build their new homes. But members of Los Mangos, all of whom had initially lived in Fruta de Burro,

FIGURE 6.1

Kumani Empresa. Santa Cecilia Ranch



Source: IAN. Informe Integral

consistently mentioned that the relatively short distance to Fruta de Burro (about a two-hour horse ride), was the key factor in their decision residents of Mata de Mango primarily emphasized the ecological characteristics of the area. This proved to be quite significant throughout the development of this empresa as it became clear that the Los Mangos residents were seldom found on the empresa, but spent most of their time back in Fruta de Burro. In contrast, at least some of the members of Mata de Mango would usually stay in the empresa community while others went out to purchase goods or visit relatives in Las Matas. The distance between each community, which could obviously affect the organization of work teams and other aspects of the productive process, was never given any serious consideration by these families.

B. Organization of Production and Social Relations

I have said repeatedly that the success of these collective experiments is going to partially depend on an adequate understanding by state promoters of the work relations and general forms of reproduction that were characteristic of these Indian peasants prior to joining the empresa.

At the end of the previous chapter I gave an overall assessment of some of the socio-economic changes the Pume had experienced in recent years. The Kumani empresa families that were interviewed between 1985 and 1986, corroborated that overall picture--and all indications are that families that had left the empresa did not differ significantly from those who stayed, except

perhaps in some specific aspects that will be dealt with at the appropriate time. The rest of the discussion will focus on those issues that I believe are most relevant to the analysis of Kumaní's organization, starting with the issue of kinship and primary relations as a whole.

A traditional kinship analysis is neither possible nor a necessary part of this project. The kinship analysis is restricted to establishing those connections that are most central to this work, namely, those concerning kinship ties, relations of production, social cohesiveness and homogeneity, as well as the resultant "sense" of obligation--or lack thereof--for the empresa as a main social-economic unit.

For the most part, primary relations among those within the same empresa community were closer than between communities. Families that came from Fruta de Burro settled the community of "Los Mangos" within the perimeters of the empresa land area. Those who came from Las Matas were from different families and thus settled in two separate communities of Las Babas and Mata de Mango. It was impossible to reconstruct the history of the residents from the now non-existent community of Las Babas, and only fragmentary information was available.[12] What seems clear is that there were no closed (consanguineal) kinship or friendship ties between the members of Las Babas and those of the other two communities before the assembly meetings in 1978.

The 1985 census cites an Indian population of 90 persons for

Las Matas, and 198 for Fruta de Burro. The distance between Fruta de Burro and Las Matas is more than half a day's journey on horseback and there is no easy access other than trails and navigation for the most part. This suggests that in the absence of old patterns of semi-nomadism among these northern Pume,[13] contact between the two communities came through rather sporadic visits, often in the form of "parrandas" (drunken brawls) or largely secularized versions of the traditional ceremony, the "Tonghe"--and primarily by the men.[14] There were distant kinship relations between members of Los Mangos and those of Mata de Mango, but Pume I interviewed often said that although their parents had told them they were all related, they did not meet these relatives until after their arrival in Santa Cecilia. An important implication to draw from these facts is that clearly no relations of production extended beyond the limits of each village, and although some social ties were maintained among members of the different communities, these were weak. At least one member in each community had some kinship tie with members in the other two; but again these were always defined as distant despite the use of reference terms such as "cousin" or "nephew".

In the last chapter I mentioned the fact that changes in settlement patterns among the Pume of the Arauca-Cunaviche area restricted the availability of marriageable partners and therefore the possibility of adhering to traditional marriage rules such as exogamy and marriage among bilateral cross-cousins. In general, the interviews confirmed the flexibility with which these rules

seem to be applied at the present time. However, it was also clear that such flexibility is not entirely random and the Pume can at times make decisions about where to live or whom to marry based on some interpretation of these conventional rules. In addition, the Pumè still tend to marry other Pume: In the 1982 census of the empresa families, out of 22 families, only one identified itself as mixed, "Pume-Espanol." My interviews revealed only two other cases of children who had been born to a Pume mother and a "criollo" (mestizo) father, both from Los Mangos. The obligation to marry within the Pume ethnic group was the one rule about which members were quite conscious and even somewhat adamant. However, one of the older members lamented the fact that young Pume women prefer to marry criollos."

Unfortunately, neither the Venezuelan census, nor the special Indigenous census, breaks down the data by ethnic origin of each member in the household which would reveal mixed marriages and children born to such marriages.[15]

Kinship and marriage patterns could be traced in most, but not all, cases. The rate of intermarriage between and among members of the different communities is an indicator of the relative strength of social ties existing among empresa members and how these ties may condition the participation of members in production activities. Information on marriage patterns generally confirms the fact that although many individuals still marry their cross-cousins, frequent exceptions to the rule existed before the Pume's

move to the Santa Cecilia ranch. More specifically, the interviews confirmed that what has taken place is a sort of selective application and pragmatic adaptation of old marriage rules and functions brought on by new circumstances. In other words, rules are applied when judged to be advantageous and re-defined or ignored when deemed otherwise.[16]

In Mata de Mango, out of a total of 10 marriages identified between 1982 and 1986, at least 50% were cross-cousin marriages--several of which had taken place after these families' (originally from Los Matos) incorporation into the empresa. I positively confirmed only one case in which marriage did not take place between cousins.[17] The members of Mata de Mango were all related through consanguineal ties. A couple and their brother constituted the oldest generation. The brother's wife, and both couples' children, stepchildren and grandchildren formed the entire community. Marriage in the second generation was taking place primarily among the brother's children and stepchildren.

In contrast to Mata de Mango, the community of Los Mangos is made up of three or four separate families and households. There are kinship ties among them (they are "cousins" or "uncles" or "nephews") but they identified themselves as separate families and as far as I could confirm, there was no intermarriage among the main families; Cross-cousin marriages occurred at a similar rate to that of Mata de Mango (the data for Los Mangos was more difficult to obtain given the larger number of families who had left the community before my field work).

Residence patterns are also important because, among other things, they influence migration patterns to and from Santa Cecilia. In Chapter Four, when reviewing Pume ethnographies, I noted that the in Pume societies, matrilocality, or rather matrifocality as Leeds has termed it, was the most common form of residence.

The data from the Kumani members reveals a mixture of residence patterns both before and after the organization of the empresas. In Mata de Mango, given the high rate of intermarriage among its residents, both daughters and sons lived with their parents for the most part; this is closest to what anthropologists call duolocal residence; at least in the first years of marriage. What anthropologists call matrilocality/uxorilocality was also evident, as in the case of a man who moved from Los Mangos to live in his wife's household. On the other hand, there were at least one cases in which two brothers and a male cousin (previously married to the brothers' sister) have moved back to Las Matas. One is single and the other two are married. Of these last two, one lives in his kin's household (patrilocality/virilocality), specifically in his mother's household, and the other lives in his wifes' kin household (matrilocality/uxorilocality). These last cases yield the most interesting information with regard to residence preferences and its implications for the long-term functioning of the empresas. They, taken together with the rest of the residence patterns observed in the community, show how variable

such patterns tend to be. But this also suggests, and is in fact documented here, that married couples are just as likely to remain in the community with their spouses or their spouses' kin, as they are to move back to the original communities where in-laws or other relatives still live. This applies not only to Las Matas, where most of the members had only lived for a few years, but to the places where they were born.[18] It remains to be seen whether the decision to return to these original communities is based primarily on kinship criteria, or was part of a new calculation of risks and benefits based on the functioning of the empresa--or a combination of both.

In the case of Los Mangos, there were several brothers with their wives and their married sisters living in this community. But in many cases women moved to Santa Cecilia with either married brothers or married sisters and established their household together with, or close to, their relatives. So residence patterns were also flexible and included such patterns as uxorilocality or virilocality. As in Mata de Mango, there were no cases of "neolocal" residence in Los Mangos. In other words, there was a clear preference for establishing residence with or in the immediate proximity of close relatives. The residence patterns of these families before their move to Santa Cecilia was similar to the one observed during their residence in the hato. Basically, people simply uprooted their households as they existed in the original communities and re-constituted them in a similar manner within the new empresa communities. In the case of Mata de Mango,

however, there were only four houses built at the beginning which meant that more than one nuclear family, as well as other relatives, lived in the same household. The situation of Los Mangos was slightly different as residents followed the rule of only one nuclear family per residence, just as they had when they lived in Fruta de Burro.

There are several initial conclusions to be drawn from this and they suggest ways in which the similarities and differences among empresa members could affect their participation in the same empresa.

First, it is clear that, however transformed, members of all three communities tend to marry within the traditional cross-cousin rule and to establish co-residence next to either husband's or wive's kin. This already suggests, as I said earlier, that any change in the Pume's socio-economic organization must take into consideration whether or not the new structure conflicts with such marriage and residence patterns--thus possibly undermining the long-term stability of the empresa. From the information collected, it is possible to determine that some marriages which took place after the empresa was constituted, were able to follow the preferred rules and remain within the empresa. Others however, moved away to their spouse's kin. Although the attrition rate, was much higher for Los Mangos than for Las Matas, there was no difference in terms of the tendency of couples from either community to leave the empresa in order to establish co-residence

with spouse's kin in the original communities. Relocating families with strong ties to their original communities and who leave behind an important network of relatives and other ethnic group members carries a cost that must be balanced by noticeable improvements in these families' lives.

Secondly, there were some important differences between Los Mangos and Mata de Mango. One was the "verticality" of kinship relations of the people from Mata de Mango when compared to Los Mangos where kinship ties were more dispersed. In other words, practically all the residents of Mata de Mango were connected, through marriage or consanguineal ties, to the old couple and their brother.

Another difference between these two communities--although more subtle--was the fact that in Mata de Mango this old couple and their brother constituted a form of "moral authority." No such figures were present in Los Mangos. The elderly woman referred to herself very emphatically as the "duena de casa," meaning something beyond the more simple notion of head of household. She was the only woman present during the initial assemblies when the empresa was organized, and later, along with her husband's brother's wife, was the one to be found whenever all the members of the empresa would come together either to hold meetings or to conduct the semi-annual cattle round-up and sale. Other members also referred to her husband in a similar way as the "dueno de casa..el que representa pues la casa ahi" (owner of house; the one who, well, <u>represents</u> the house there). Such terms were never used by or for

others. (One of the married children also said a reason for moving to Santa Cecilia was the fact that the elders were moving there.) It was clear from all observations that even members of Los Mangos greatly respected the elders of Mata de Mango. In addition to the authority vested in this couple based on their age, both the husband and his brother were said to know how to do some "healing" and to "sing"—i.e. to be at least close to the status of "Piache" (Shaman) or still learning to be ones.[19]

In the last chapter's analysis of Pume forms of authority, I referred to Leeds and Mitriani's views. While Leeds singled out the scarcity of resources, Mitriani focused on the absence of a moral authority as the factor underlying the "fissioning" of community structures. It is possible, however, that a combination of those two factors, at least during the period of the empresas, may partially account for such "fissioning" and the different rates at which it occurred in Los Mangos and Mata de Mango.

Other characteristics of these two original communities provide some additional insights into the different factors that may have played a role in their residence patterns and which, in turn, conditioned behaviors such as the evaluation of risks and benefits brought by the move to Santa Cecilia.

Las Matas, the community from which the residents of Mata de Mango originally came, is officially categorized as a "campesino-indigenous settlement" (asentamiento campesino-Indigena) which means literally that the community is composed of both a non-Indian

and an Indian population--though in reality they are segregated into two separate settlements. Fruta de Burro, on the other hand, is almost 100 percent Indian.[20] There are only one or two houses in the community occupied by non-Indians--one of them serving as a small grocery store. In addition, empresa members who came from Las Matas, had resided there for shorter periods having come originally from Palmarito and the near by community of La Rosa. Those who resided in Fruta de Burro had for the most part been born in that community, and one could identify at least three generations of individuals born in Fruta de Burro. Finally, the "capitan" of Fruta de Burro was seen by all interviewed as a good man and "healer", while the members of Las Matas, although restrained in their comments, were not equally complimentary of their own capitan.

Unfortunately, there are no detailed histories or field studies of these communities as far as I have been able to determine. Yet, from the various interviews conducted, a picture of two somewhat different communities does emerge. Fruta de Burro is a more permanent, all Indian town, with a distinguishable authority figure, and where the traditional "Tonghes"--albeit transformed into the new forms of social gatherings described elsewhere--took place on a regular basis, "almost every Saturday."

Las Matas was more heterogeneous--although segregated--and was made up of more recent settlers for the most part--at least in the case of those who moved to Santa Cecilia. One man from Mata de Mango tells of having lived in "Algarrobo"[21] before living in Las

Matas and then in Santa Cecilia. His uncle confirmed that they had lived in Las Matas for only three years before they moved to Santa Cecilia. The older members of Mata de Mango had been born on the same cattle ranch, "La Espera," where their parents had worked "jalando machete" (carrying a machete) and had themselves worked there for many years before moving to Algarrobo and Las Matas. It was in Las Matas that they seemed to have had any kind of access to a piece of land they could call their own and had built their own houses there as well. All households had their own garden, which from their accounts seemed to have been adequately productive. An older woman, in fact, complained that they had to abandon those gardens with trees as well a good house to those who later moved to Santa Cecilia from Las Matas, and for which they obtained no compensation. The Los Mangos members who were older than the sons from Mata de Mango said they were born in Fruta de Burro and their parents ("four families") who had been born in places like Capanaparo and Palmarito were the founders of Fruta de Burro. One of these sons (the teacher) calculates his parents arrived in Fruta de Burro around 1935. There are now 42 houses in Fruta de Burro according to this same teacher; only one of which belongs to a "criollo."

Residents from Fruta de Burro believed their fishing and hunting grounds to be better than those at Santa Cecilia. People from Las Matas thought otherwise. Both Las Matas and Fruta de Burro had elementary schools, and neither had medical facilities or

religious missions within the town's perimeters.

Information about those who were settled in Las Babas within Santa Cecilia is much more sketchy. Residents, too, came from Las Matas, but I was unable to determine how long they had lived there. It would seem then that residents of Los Mangos had much more permanent ties with the community of Fruta de Burro than the residents from Mata de Mango had with the community of Las Matas. This difference also determines the level of access to resources for both groups and is unquestionably relevant in both of these groups' assessments of benefits to be gained by moving to and remaining in Santa Cecilia. Those from Las Matas, for example, had a smaller support network and were more likely to compete with non-Indian peasants who lived next to them for work in the surrounding haciendas. Those from Fruta de Burro/Los Mangos had worked, as their fathers had, in the immediate vicinity of their community for the many years they had resided in Fruta de Burro. At least two individuals from Fruta de Burro had owned cattle (one still did). On the other hand, none of the members who came from Las Matas had ever owned any livestock.

A major reason for looking at kinship and primary relations is to determine to what extent they dovetailed with relations of production and distribution. It is also a general baseline from which to compare the changes that were later introduced by the empresa's structure. Traditional organization of production was reviewed in the last chapter. Despite lingering debates over Pume socio-economic organization, all indications are that while it is

correct to consider the household as the main unit of production, community-wide systems of production and distribution were still present among these Pume.

The specific situation of the empresa members from both communities did not deviate from the general situation of contemporary Pume summarized at the end of the last chapter. Basically, food production activities are carried out at the household level, which may include one or more nuclear families as well as stepchildren or other independent relatives. Fruta de Burro households were more likely to consist of only one nuclear family than were Los Matas households. Therefore, work in Fruta de Burro was also more likely to be performed by members of the nuclear family, while in Las Matas the households often included nephews and they also participated in farming activities. There was no indication among either group utilized the system of labor reciprocity called "cayapa" in local terminology. Part of the reason is undoubtedly the fact that garden sizes have declined as less and less land is available, making it unnecessary to recruit the help of others outside the household.[22] As in the past, men cleared the fields and women planted. Fishing and building houses is still deemed a man's job, but as with all the other tasks, exceptions to division of labor by gender were found.

Even though production was much more confined to the level of the household than it had been in the past, distribution of foodstuffs between different households still took place. This

took several forms. Food was exchanged--for example plaintain and other garden products were traded for game or fish-or sometimes sŏld, or simply given, "to those in houses nearby." Both groups considered their farm products as being primarily for self-subsistence, although, as I suggested, small surpluses were sold to neighbors. Foodstuffs did not generally enter a wider regional or local market.

One of the most important aspects of Pume reproduction today has to do with the fact that all the adult males, from both communities, as well as their fathers, had worked for non-Indian ranchers all their lives, up to the time the empresa was organized. Some were more or less permanent laborers on a single ranch and others were seasonal laborers on different ranches. The wages they received were consistently--and considerably--below the going wage or official minimum wage for any year.[23]

In the late 1960s, for example, some were making as little as 4 or 5 Bs. a day when the minimum wage was around 16 Bs. Interviews with individual Pume also suggested that they were involved in something akin to a debt-peonage system whereby most of their wages went right back to the landlords for payment of over-priced food items which had been purchased from the landlord during the period of employment. In other cases, and near the time the empresa was established, some laborers earned as much as 30 Bs. a day--still not quite up to the wages received by criollos for similar work.[24]

Equally significant was the type of work the Pume were commonly

employed to do. With rare exceptions, the Pume laborers were confined to perform what was locally known as "trabajo de mano" (hand labor) i.e. clearing of fields, building fences, planting the landlord's garden and harvesting grains. With perhaps two exceptions, none of the empresa members had ever worked with cattle. In one of those cases, the man recalled--with a certain tone of appreciation--the fact that his "godfather" and owner of the ranch would whip him, but also "taught him how to work (with cattle)".

The significance of this distinction is multidimensional and has been recently highlighted in a work by Gaston Carballo (1985) on the Venezuelan "hato." For one thing, agricultural labor or trabajo de mano was locally considered as inferior and of a lesser skill level than work associated with cattle. This distinction reinforced the development of what Bonacich has called a 'split labor market,'[25] i.e. women and Indians were consistently relegated to this type of poorly remunerated--or in the case of women, often un-remunerated "hard labor"--while the criollos literally "grew up to be cowboys". Furthermore, the structural situation fostered by this split-labor market, and reinforced by local forms of domination, was such that it made it virtually impossible for the Pume to escape their bottom position in that market. This was because any possibility of acquiring the main factor of production, the horse, and thus moving up in the wage scale, was blocked by their inability to get ahead financially and purchase this

expensive commodity. Needless to say, the Pume did not have the option of establishing their own cattle ranch (or fundos as the small ones are known; and which many of the peasants were able to acquire especially after the agrarian reform) and becoming self-employees. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that even in the rare instances that the Pume were able acquire a horse, it was often turned into a means of transportation for their frequent visits to relatives and shopping trips. The criollos, besides being a more settled social group, were seasoned horse-handlers and usually had access to other means of transportation (usually mules, or even vehicles conditioned for the rugged terrain of the area).

The Indians themselves have internalized many of the subjective judgments about the more prestigious work done by the "peones de a caballo" (cowboys) vs. their work as agricultural laborers or horseless peones (vegueros, as some still referred to themselves). These judgments have in fact become part of contemporary interpretations of Pume mythology.[26]

Contrary to the negative impact that the absence of cattle-management skills may have on the empresa, other aspects of labor in these ranches may hold a more positive legacy. Specifically, the fact that when performing such tasks as building fences and clearing pastures, the Pume worked in teams that were larger than usual and not organized according to primary ties and kinship relations.

The experiences of both groups of members with regard to wage

labor and work conditions were not very different. The one difference being perhaps that the most recent experiences of those of Mata de Mango had been more negative than those experienced by Los Mangos' members. Apart from that, both groups had had an intense and prolonged immersion into the regional labor market, primarily as temporary workers on the cattle ranches and haciendas. On the other hand, for both groups, access to garden plots was as important as finding employment in the hatos. These gardens were their most stable source of subsistence, and a sort of "insurance policy" whenever wage work was not found. Their relatively low level of industrial consumption--in this case more synonymous with poverty than with persistent "traditional" economies-- resulted in minimal sale of agricultural products and consumption being limited to items such as sugar, coffee, cigarettes, basic tools, occasional transportation to San Fernando and alcohol.

In summary, the Pume families that joined the empresa reproduced themselves in a manner that was not unique to Indian families in this region, but rather resembled the situation of the larger sector of the non-Indian peasantry, i.e. criollo minifundistas or semi-proletarians. This does not mean that there are no differences between these two groups, or that such differences do not have some bearing on the operation of collective units of production.

In this evaluation of similarities and differences, the issue of communal exchanges and systems of cooperation is particularly

crucial because it remains a source of contention within the literature and among the students and critics of the Venezuelan experience in particular. The reduction of the unit of production and consumption to the level of the household, both for Indian and non-Indian peasants, is for the most part an erroneous and a historical conception held by authors within the Chayanovian tradition. To argue, as Godelier has, that social relations of production in peasant societies take place solely at this level, is to confuse the labor process with the social process of production. Instead, as Roseberry and others have observed, data clearly suggest that it is with the increased penetration of capital relations into the countryside that this identification of household and peasant production begins to take place.[27] I would thus argue that, at least in the case of these simple horticulturalists, there seems to be a direct link between production being reduced to the level of the household, and their level of subordination to the dynamic of capitalist reproduction.

However, systems of cooperation and exchange today may be very different and respond to forces that are also very different from what they were before these groups' loss of political and economic autonomy, and the new conditions of reproduction were in place.

Kinship (fiction or real) and marriage provided the base for old networks of cooperation within and beyond the household. Today, as I have shown, kinship and marriage rules have undergone major transformation and this has resulted in a variety of forms of household composition and systems of cooperation. The role of

kinship as a major organizing principle for relations of work and distribution of products has been largely replaced by new objective conditions of reproduction. In responding to those requirements, the Pume try to creatively move in and out of traditional work arrangements. They may or may not help each other in the preparation of their gardens, or the building of their houses; they may go off alone or with others on hunting and fishing expeditions, or to seek employment on the surrounding ranches or haciendas. There is nothing new about the flexibility with which the Pume shift between individual and cooperative work. What is new is that, first, cooperative work, particularly in the form described in the ethnohistorical sketch of the last chapter, has become increasingly rare; and second, this is also an uneven process, as one can infer from the differences between Los Mangos and Mata de Mango. This should not come as a surprise when considering the features that characterize the larger socio-economic context within which they are immersed. Apure represents a fascinating milieu combining cultural and socio-economic features that are characteristic of both herding and capitalist societies. There is great emphasis on behavior and values that speak of rugged individualism, the domination of males over females, and of `owning your own ranch' with `your own cattle'.[28] Men, for example, were often quite adamant about the fact that they alone worked their gardens and built their houses, and that was all that was necessary.

C. Political and Ideological Structures

Changes in cultural representations are therefore another important factor to consider when evaluating the Pume society today. Pume, especially the older members, to one degree or another, knew something about Yaruro cosmology, but such knowledge, at least in its most traditional version, seemed largely disassociated from decisions related to day-to-day economic and social existence. Furthermore, as I noted earlier, it is largely penetrated by dominant criollo values which do not always reinforce collective practices.[29]

It is not easy to summarize the present characteristics of what appears as a fluid Pume socio-economic organization or to draw clear-cut conclusions about the relevance and degree of cooperative work arrangements in productive activities. This is clearly an ethnic group whose members have been exposed, for a long time now, to tremendous external pressures, and to which they have attempted to adapt in a variety of ways, depending on the specific circumstances confronted by each individual family or groups of families. Their ways of adapting may or may not include collective practices.

The first thing that strikes one as important in trying to determine the range of reproductive strategies that characterize Pume communities or households is the very conceptualization of what constitutes a Pume household today. As households have been increasingly reduced to the western model of nuclear families, so

has the range of cooperative arrangements which, in the past included a greater number of individuals with a wider range of relationships. Empresa members who came from Fruta de Burro were more likely to operate at the level of the individual nuclear family than would those who came from Las Matas and settled in Mata de Mango. The latter, for not totally clear reasons, had a larger kin network and thus a larger network of labor arrangements and mutual assistance. Because more "pieces" of the kinship map were there, one was also more likely to find instances of work teams that included members of the extended family and relatives by marriage. But it is impossible to contend with absolute certainty that these were, in fact, remnants of traditional kin relations rather than forms of intra-household cooperation and dependency which differ little from those found among struggling peasant--and even urban--families.

The Pume have also internalized capitalist notions of private property which have been reinforced by the loss of communal fields and the Venezuelan legal system. This includes the agrarian reform law which works with an individualist concept of private property and tends to recognize land rights based on individual occupation of idle land. This is also best illustrated by the practice of fencing individual family plots, a fact documented in the 1978 IAN report that was mentioned earlier.

So far the summary of Pume socio-economic structure and forms of reproduction is not encouraging with regard to revealing a very significant role for collective practices as such reproduction is

more and more conditioned by the local dynamic of capital accumulation. On the other hand, I have alluded to the presence of at least some collective practices that are still "functional" among the Pume. One could argue that the new perils faced by the Pume can also, and contradictorily, re-validate old and generate new forms of collectivism and communal ties as part of their survival strategies. For example, although some labor and food exchanges have become truly monetarized, others, even when money is exchanged, seem to be disguised "cooperative labor" or reciprocal food exchanges. They imply a certain obligation from the receiving side that is fulfilled at another point in time when money again change hands.

These new forms of cooperation and mutual help are also activated by an "emergent" ethnicity that encompasses all the Pume, regardless of kinship relations, and it is often elevated to include "Indians" as a whole. We may recall from the last chapter that for the Pume, the residential group rather than the "tribe" was the main social unit and source of self-identification. This re-definition of ethnicity is associated with the physical and structural separation as well as the competition for resources that exists between the Pume and the larger criollo society. Several times Pume interviewees, complained about the fact that criollos despised Indians and often looked for ways to do them in. State policies have also intentionally and unintentionally reinforced this ethnic sense of separateness and accompanying ethnic-based

strategies for survival. Collective organizers must weigh the impact that these organizations may have on such strategies. A case in point is the Pume women's increased productivity in pottery-making destined for a growing tourist market. Men also are involved in the production of carvings from a mineral called "azabache." Both activities have been boosted by the state's support for Indian arts and crafts as part of a nationalistic ideology that exhalts Indigenous "culture." The state's determination of ethnic-base strategies for survival is even more direct than that. ORAI, the local OMAFI agency in Apure, sets up every year a system of transportation for Indian migrant workers. Entire Pume and Cuiva families gather at the office at the beginning and end of every harvesting season to travel to work, and live together in several haciendas as cheap laborers. In one occasion I was visiting these offices and several families had just come in from the field awaiting to get assistance from ORAI (Oficina Regional de Asuntos Indigenas). During the short term I was there, one employee (a sociologist) referred to these families as "bichos," (bugs) and another, the director, swore to end that "subsidy" once and for all. From then on the Indians would have to look for their own transportation.

The "Tonghes" or ritual fiestas described in Chapter 5 also continue as a mechanism for inter-and intra-community participation and cooperation. But they do so in a highly transformed fashion, affected by the social deterioration of the group. The elders often complain, for example, that the Tonghes are now mere excuses

to drink without "fundamento" (responsibility) and that the young men no longer know how to sing and often end up in fights. Yet, in their own aberrant way, the Tonghe is the one remaining event that is exclusively Pume.

It is apparent then that traditional cultural practices and kinship systems no longer play a central role in guiding the Pume in their day-to-day behaviors. But pragmatic adaptations of some traditional elements still provide a social glue, which may, at times, insulate the Pume from total pauperization, as well as from their generally negative contact with the criollos. The relative social homogeneity that these practices reinforce, may be an asset to the organization of collective entities whose worth must be measured against the also present social and political liabilities. In a similar vein, my research and that of others show that economic differentiation occurs according to ethnic lines. It is the non-Indian peasants who end up as money-lenders, store owners, and even employers of the Pume. The Pume remain in less influential roles.

Besides the collective practices associated with their "ethnographic past", the participation of the Pume on the hatos' work teams constitutes the sort of experience that proponents of cooperatives often point to as conducive to collective economic organization.

However, the long and extreme level of disenfranchisement of the Pume, combined with social problems that themselves result from

this of alienation, and with local mechanisms of criollo repression, preclude new forms of ethnic solidarity from evolving into organized social or "class" movements. Rather, in terms of political actions and available strategies, the Pume seem to utilize a series of subtle, "defensive" measures which have helped them survive during years of economic exploitation, political repression, and racial discrimination. Such measures include a capacity to retreat into their own language and ethnic enclaves, and a mutism that continues to puzzle and confuse the criollos.

In summary, it can be argued that the Pume families who joined the Kumani empresa of Apure had experienced new forms of "peasantization" they joined the ranks of the semiproletariat. I would not therefore characterize this set of Indian families as components of a different "mode of production." or a class separate from the peasantry.[30] However, Indians remain economically, culturally, and politically divided from the rest of the peasantry through their participation in a segmented or split labor market, reinforced by racist ideologies and practices, as well as by their lack of mobilizational capabilities or ethnic-based political movement. In addition, they have a marginal or non-existent presence in political organizations such as the Venezuelan Peasant Confederation. Even when the Indian Federations were founded, the Pume participation was restricted to a few, mostly self-proclaimed, leaders who were themselves victims of the social disintegration that afflicts this group. Despite their good intentions and commitment, they lacked the skills and strength to fight the hard

battles that needed to be fought.

The definition of Indian groups as peasants is resisted among some social scientists who operate from rather static typologies which locate Indians and peasants in totally separate categories. I do not make light of the difficulties one has in untangling the differences and similarities between these two groups. But I believe that attempts to draw absolute boundaries between peasants and Indians lead us astray. I have highlighted in this chapter some of the ways in which one identifies those similarities and differences. In the next two chapters, I will return to this central problem and re-examine the issue of conceptualization of Indians and peasants. The discussion will address a combination of related theoretical issues which arise in the course of attempting this conceptualization. Among them is the issue, and implication, of whether one is dealing with separate modes of production, a class, or classes (and where they are located in the class structure of societies, like Venezuela), or with subordinated non-capitalist forms of production, when we are dealing with peasants as a whole, or Indian communities specifically and whether any of these are mutually exclusive. At this point one must also come back to the related questions of ethnicity and cultural differences and their relationship to class lines.

The final section of this chapter deals once again with the category of state policy factors and specifically with the type of organizational structure that resulted from the actions described

in the first section. Actions which were informed purportedly by a degree of familiarity with the internal characteristics of the Pume.

D. Final Organizational Structure of the Kumani Empresa: the Design

The statutes of the Kumani empresa were, with the exception of minimal editing changes, a copy of the standard model of statutes for all peasant enterprises. IAN officials had often insisted that these statutes were merely a formality to comply with "outside" legal requirements; but that in fact, Indian communities could re-define their functions and obligations as they best saw fit. Although this was in principle an accurate statement, the wording and proscriptions contained in these statutes were not inconsequential to the particular development path of any empresa Indigena. This was particularly true in the case of the Pume empresa which was being created in an organizational vacuum. There was no preceding formal structure directly tying the work and socio-political relations of these families, and against which they could readily measure the pros and cons of the organizational changes required by an empresa Indigena. In other words, it was doubtful, that the organization of Kumani would become an example of "non-directed" or "cooperative collectivization, as people like Long (1980) and Singleman (1978) like to refer to them.

1. Socio-economic Diagnosis of the Pume (Yaruro)

The Indigenous Development Plan elaborated as part of the process to create Kumani includes a brief, four-page summary of

Pume socio-economic organization. Those who wrote the plan acknowledge that Pume socio-economic organization has changed significantly given their participation in the local criollo economy and society. However, there is no analysis of the implications of this fact for the organization of the empresa. The summary is not necessarily wrong in the few things it says about the Pume, but it is simply a general statement designed more to comply with the bureaucratic requirement of producing a diagnostic report than to serve as a tool for state agents involved in the design of Kumani. It uncritically repeats old ethnographic analyses and says very little about the contemporary structures of political and economic domination in which the Pume are embedded let alone the specific ways in which a collective form of organization, and the specific components of Kumani itself, would lead to increased autonomy. The plan alludes to the important issue of individualism among the Pume, while also registering the persistence of the forms of cooperative labor known locally as cayapa--although no evidence is offered for the latter. Regarding individualist tendencies, (which I agree exist but have become more exacerbated as the result of capital's penetration) the plan cites the individual members' preference for private ownership of the empresas livestock.

The plan also details the agricultural features of the Santa Cecilia hato. I have not discussed ecological features as one more factor impinging upon decisions, behaviors, and consequences of empresa actions. It is undoubtedly an important factor, and in

Santa Cecilia it is both a potential asset and a liability. The land is obviously suited for cattle-ranching and it has served that purpose for many years. However, there is evidence of severe soil erosion, which affects livestock production, and, to a greater extent, the productivity of crops (IAN, 1987).

2. Kumaní's Main Objective

The objectives of the empresa as stated in the enabling statutes include those of "working the land collectively" and collectively developing plans for agrarian production, both crops and cattle. Although the development plan mentions the need to consider subsistence plots of at least 2 hectares for each family, the statutes make no accommodation for this. Other objectives cover the standard items about soliciting credits and carrying out marketing and distribution functions.[31]

3. Land and other factors of Production

The empresa members were given collective and "posessory" title of almost 30,000 hectares of savanna lands, corresponding to the total area of the Hato Santa Cecilia hato, minus some 600 hectares that were reserved by IAN, together with the hato's major infrastructural facilities (main house and cattle chute), for its own use. The members, under the agrarian reform law, were also prohibited from leasing or transferring their land.[32]

The members received in credit from IAN 3,890 head of cattle, said to be in somewhat poor condition by the recipient due to intense inbreeding, and 105 horses. According to article 45 of the

statutes and the development plan, the allocation of the cattle was to be made to individual families, "respecting their (the Pume) traditional conception of property," and only the major production tasks were to be performed collectively.[33]

The credit received by the Pume in lieu of the cattle and other infrastructures was for the amount of approximately 3.5 million Bolivares and accrued at a 3% annual rate of interest. It was to be paid back in 20 years through annual payments amounting to Bs. 341,894. In addition the credit was guaranteed by a new legal format called Prenda Agraria in which the empresa automatically "mortgaged" or offered in collateral its assets.[34] Also, the somewhat twisted interpretation by the Perez administration of the "Prenda Agraria" device as a mechanism equivalent to land distribution was severely criticized and thought to increase the peasant's insecurity regarding land ownership rights.[35] This device was used with the first experimental empresa of Hobure, but Clarac and others were later convinced of their disadvantage and opted for constructing the final model of ownership of Indian land based on the collective posessory and eventually definitive titles.

Aside from land and cattle, other assets to be facilitated by IAN included housing for all the families to be situated along strategic points to prevent the theft of cattle that is endemic to the area. A training center for the benefit of empresa members new at husbandry and management was to be located in the old main house of the hato. According to the Agrarian Reform Law, none of the

structures and facilities received could be transferred or sold without IAN's approval. This was supposed to prevent the land from being occupied by anyone other than the intended beneficiaries, in this case Pume with little or no land.

4. The Organization of Labor

This is one of the most important components of cooperative production. To a large degree, the empresa's functioning depends upon an appropriate design. Because the empresa is formally constituted within the standard juridical framework of a "civil society"[36] work is organized on the basis of individual as opposed to family or household labor, and under the supervision of an elected "cattle boss" (caporal de LLano). Only officially designated members are considered empresa workers and supposedly only under "exceptional circumstances" can other members of the household participate as replacements or assistants--undoubtedly during times of labor scarcity--in empresa activities. Although this was possibly intended as a safeguard against members disposing of their cooperative obligations by "contracting out" their share of work, this kind of labor arrangement approximates much more closely the work relations in which the Pume participated when working on local ranches then the family relations upon which Pume subsistence production is based. As Galleski (1973) has pointed out, research on collectivization strategies suggests that the shift from informal-kinship relations of production to formal work teams, and the potential opposition that may emerge between the

two, could mean that "the incentives will be weak, limited to wage incentives only, and mobilization of family labor during peak seasons, for instance, very difficult"(p.14). In an evaluation done by Heinen of the empresa of Tujuumoto in the Bolivar state of Venezuela, he found that a key adaptative strategy, contributing to the relatively smooth operation of the empresa, was to organize production on the basis of family as opposed to individual labor.

The statutes and the plan also re-affirmed--within the pre-set parameters just described--the members' right to control their labor process, from the organization of work teams to the management, marketing, and distribution of the livestock. This is also crucial, of course, because it offers the Pume the possibility of overcoming their subordination to outside agents, and may be the most measurable criteria of--economic self-determination.

Another factor commonly, and correctly, identified in the literature as highly determinant of cooperatives' success is how labor is remunerated. Because the distribution of the livestock was to be made on an individual basis, the empresa was directed to create a "capitalization" fund comprised partly by 50% of each member's gross production--presuming, though this is not clear in the statutes, that each individual member would then keep the other 50% to replenish his individual means of production. From this fund the empresa was to deduct all costs of production, including labor performed in the collectively organized activities. In addition, surpluses resulting from every sale (after all costs had been deducted and deposits were made to the social and reserve

fund) were distributed in proportion to each member's contribution to the production and administrative activities that traditionally accompany every major cattle round-up for disease control and sale--called locally "trabajo de llano." Regarding salaries, and according to the statutes, workers were to be paid a fixed amount for each production activity as set by the members' general assembly. They were also to be paid according to their individual contribution, and the empresa guaranteed a minimum of 10 days of work per month. Labor was considered a cost of production, and therefore, at least in theory, a minimum level of income was guaranteed to each member. But it was not to be necessarily calculated as a cost of production and/or according to internally established reproduction needs. The statutes also directed the general membership to establish a fixed monthly salary for the members of the administrative junta.

5. The leadership Structure

The statutes followed the standard model of empresas campesinas leadership and administrative structure, which is composed of an administrative junta (junta directiva), the General Assembly, and a supervising body called junta de vigilancia. The administrative junta was made up of a president, who, together with the treasurer, was the legal representative of the empresa and had overall supervisory responsibilities; the treasurer who assumed the normal tasks of signing checks and maintaining financial records; a "cattle boss" (caporal) who supervised empresa activities at the

point of production; and a receiver or trustee (depositario) who kept track of inventory and advised members about when to reorder. The junta de vigilancia was to act as an additional check on the administrative junta's performance. One may recall that in the original model of empresas indigenas adapted by Clarac from this standard model of empresas campesinas, the junta de vigilancia was that component of the administrative structure that would allow for the incorporation of community elders and other moral or religious leaders into the newly established leadership structure. At least on paper no such proviso was considered for Kumani. In fact there was no obvious effort (probably due in part to the hastiness of the operation) to "impregnate" any of the new organizational structural components with meaningful reference to the Pume's contemporary or traditional forms of socio-economic organization. One logical concern of empresa promoters, and a question that will be addressed in the examination of the implementation of that structure, is precisely the level of compatibility between old and new forms of leadership. Could the de-centralized and highly diffused leadership of the Pume could be reconciled with the new empresa forms of leadership that were formal, centralized, and relatively specialized?

II. Final Comments and Other Complicating Factors

Not surprisingly, the procedures leading to a formally constituted structure, as well as the content of the same, already leave open to serious question the extent to which this was, or

would become, a self-directed development project, adequately adapted to pre-existing conditions and the needs of the Pume families who joined. It is clear that the empresas so constituted were to function under the watchful eye of the state. (For example, the state can have a representative in any of the assemblies and the empresa must forward copies of its financial reports to IAN.) However, that may or may not mean, or new forms of economic or political subordination. In fact, state support may be crucial to overcome conditions of subordination, and, accordingly, it is formally committed to provide such support through technical assistance and subsidies of various kinds. It all depends on how much control over their labor process and their products the Pume were able to retain in actual practice vis-a-vis the state. In this initial organizational phase, self-determination would unquestionably score very low for the Pume. The analysis makes clear that they had very little control over the activities which preceded the formal constitution of the empresa, including the content of the empresa statutes. The intervention of the state in Kumani will become even clearer in chapter eight where I discuss the more advanced stages of this empresa.

There are several other issues that also stand out from the preceding analysis. One is the Pumé's lack of the skills and capabilities required for more complex socialized production processes, especially cattle raising.

Literacy also has important implications for both the economic and democratic goals of these collectives. The agrarian reform and

supporting financial institutions required empresa representatives to know how to read and write. This was for the obvious reason that members must be able to read the agreements they would sign, and to keep the necessary books. But, this also means that the opportunities for participation in the decision-making bodies are limited to a minority of individuals. There was no formal census conducted among the new empresa members in 1978 which would indicate literacy rates among the new members. Later, when the program founders returned to the program, a partial census of empresa members was taken in 1982, I used this together with the Indian census of 1985 and my own data, to arrive at some basic figures. Male empresa members show an illiteracy rate of close to 60%, which is approximately the same for the group as a whole. Adult females were almost 100% illiterate. In 1982, only one of the members' wives (the wife of the promoter) could read and write. Literacy among children is only marginally higher; and again much lower for females (37%), than for males (51%).[37] All members do speak both Pume and Spanish. One of the last IAN reports on Kumani done in 1986, shows that about 50% of all individuals living in the two communities could neither read nor write.

An additional and ultimately critical, factor in the organization, and potentially in the performance, of the empresa was the presence within Santa Cecilia of several individual "llaneros" who, because they had lived there many years before the empresa was founded, were probably entitled to their land according

to the agrarian reform law. There was nothing done about this matter at the time of the empresa's organization. IAN retained a dozen and a half peones to take care of the section of the ranch which it had set aside for its own use, and these peones' "fundos", which were located inside the Indian's land were and are considered a matter for future resolution.

Finally, collective practices although present to some degree, are weakened by the weight of the external context within which the Pume reproduce themselves and their units of production. Ethnicity, as a substratum that partially reinforces and generates collective practices, appears battered, hidden, compressed, and far from being a vital force in the Pume's socio-economic life. The Pume's social behavior is particularly telling in this instance. They seldom speak their language in front of non-Indians, and show great deference to government officials, including the field personnel, who they often address as "doctor."

There are also no church or state-supported mechanisms in Apure that would help combat the feelings of ethnic shame, and general socio-cultural devaluation which the Pume experience daily. Bilingual education, mandated by a decree of 1979, has yet to make its impact in this area. The church, has also not been very active in Apure. Although a mixed blessing at times, it is the Catholic church that has encouraged the re-evaluation of Indian ancestral values and "collective virtues."

ENDNOTES

1. See for example Huizer's edited number of the Boletin de Estudios Latinoamericanos (1984).

2. See Fals Borda (1977); Alavi (1973); Painter (1986).

3. This is a theme mentioned, but scantly explored, by almost all authors writing on cooperatives and collectivization.

4. Ibid.

5. See IAN's initial Development Plan for Kumani (1978).

6. Wolf (1957). See also Silverman (1980).

7. Interview with Indian "promoter" from Kumani (1985).

8. Interview with Kumani, Mata de Mango elder (1985).

9. Interview with IAN field staff (1985).

10. However, as discussed in Chapter 5, this does not necessarily translate into highly secured land tenure rights for these groups. See Coppens (1971); IAN (n.d.); and State Plans included in the VII Plan de la Nacion (Venezuela, 1985).

11. Although ORAI (Regional Office for Indigenous Affairs) officials made strong recommendations based on their own judgment of ecological and operational requirements.

12. Eleven members initially joined Las Babas (Interview with Kumani members, IAN field staff, 1985).

13. See chapter 5 for a more detailed explanation of these patterns.

14. Interview with Kumani elder.

15. This "criollization" trend is confirmed by other researchers. See for example IAN (1978).

16. The empresas did not seem to heighten this deviation from the traditional cross-cousin rules.

17. This was a young man who had been widowed and remarried while living in Santa Cecilia (Kumani).

18. For example the communities of Palmarito and La Rosa where some of the members' wives were born.

19. See the review of Pume traditional forms of authority in the last chapter.

20. In the 1985 Indian Census, Las Matas appears as inhabited by Yaruros (Pume) only, while the one white family is recorded in the case of Fruta de Burro.

21. A small Indian halmet.

22. The sizes of the gardens for both communities were about the same (one to three hectares). Interviews with Kumani members (1985).

23. The official minimum wage for rural workers was first established in 1970. Interviews with Kumani members (1985).

24. Besides poor wages, the Pume mostly complained about the poor quantity and quality of food they received while working. They were usually given two meals in a 12 hour day. When "good, the meal consisted of "rice, pasta, and beans." When they were bad the meals consisted simply of "clear broth with no meat or bread." (Interviews with Kumani member, 1985.)

25. In the case of women, it was usually un-remunerated labor. (Interview with Kumani member.) See Bonacich (1985).

26. A fascinating version of the Pume creation myth, told by an empresa member, relates how after they were dropped on the earth, "there was a horse and Parapime (the female deity as called Kumani), told the Pume to get on the horse. The Pume, the Indian, however, was afraid of the horse but a criollo was there and said, let me get on the horse. He got on the horse and that is why the criollos are not afraid and can ride horses, but the Pume cannot." (Interview with elder, 1985).

27. Coincidentally, Roseberry conducted a major study in the Venezuelan coffe--producing region of the Andes. He uses that particular case, among others, to illustrate the relationship between the emergence of family economy and the expansion of commodity economy and accompanying political transformations. Cited in Roseberry (1983).

28. These and similar comments were heard often among empresa members, especially from Las Babas (former members) and Mata de Mango.

29. For a literary vision of these values see the novels by Romulo Gallegos, Dona Barbara and Cantaclaro. For a recent oral history which reveals such values, see Caballero (1985).

30. This gets us into the thorny theoretical debates of whether

peasants are or not a class--and worse yet, whether Indians are even a fraction of that peasant class. I essentially agree with Teodor Shanin, who, elaborating on Marx's riddle on whether the peasant is or isn't a class, tells us that peasants are indeed a social class as well as "a different world." This relates to the situation of isolation in which peasant units often operate. Yet, it is unquestionable that the Pume's objective situation places them within a distinct class category. They participate in an economic organization where labor and capital are highly dissociated; their reproduction is subordinated to capital through various mechanisms; and they find themselves in a position of powerlessness vis a vis those who control the major factors of production and decision-making in the larger society places them within a distinct class category--the same category as the non-Indian peasants. The discussion of Roseberry (1983) is also relevant and compliments the position adopted in this work.

31. Kumani Empresa Statutes (1978).

32. Legal Documents on Kumani (1977, 1978); See IAN (various documents) (1978).

33. Ibid.

34. IAN Reports (1985; 1986)

35. For an explanation of the Prenda Agraria see Martel (1976).

36. See chapter 1 for the official definition of empresas campesinas as civil societies.

37. Informe Integral (1987); IAN'S census (1982); my own census (1987).

CHAPTER 7

ORGANIZATION OF THE BARI EMPRESA OF SAIMADOYI: COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS WITH KUMANI

In this chapter I assess the impact of the two categories of factors, the state and the internal characteristics of Indian communities--in this case the Bari--on the particular form assumed by the organizational stage of the Bari empresa of Saimadoyi. As with the examination of Kumani's organization, the impact of the program on the Bari participants--and thus answers to our second question--begins to be felt at this early stage.

The method of inquiry is the same as that followed in the previous chapter when I focused on the organization of the Pume empresa of Kumani. The data for this chapter came, as in the case of the Pume, from oral testimony from several Bari informants, field observations, and government and empresa documents.

I. Structuring Factors in the Organizational Phase of Cooperatives: Saimadoyi

A. The State and other Social Actors, "Motives," and Mobilizational Strategies

Besides differences in the "macro" or national and regional context within which the empresas were organized, key differences in the contemporary history of the Bari and the Pume determined some important variations regarding strategies of empresa organization and modes of participation of different actors.

The fact that the Bari, collectively, have usufruct rights

over the land they presently occupy meant that organizing the empresa did not require resettlement of its future members.[1] Furthermore, the decision to organize the empresa was from the beginning contingent upon every person in the community becoming a member, limited to those individual families who might choose to participate. This also approximated much more closely the original model conceived by those IAN indigenistas--especially its founder/Director--who had by now (1980) returned to their old jobs in the Indian Program. In other words, there had to be a community-wide consensus regarding the desirability of organizing an empresa and particularly, about re-organizing beef production along collective rather than family-based labor processes.

Nevertheless, it was the job of regional and national IAN officials charged with the implementation of development programs for Indian areas, to seek new clients. So, just as it happened with the Pume, IAN officials from the regional office approached several Bari communities in the state of Zulia and encouraged them to expand their production through these state-supported programs. At this time, a stockbreeding plan was developed for these communities.[2] The Plan was not dependent on whether these communities would organize themselves as a collective empresa, although it was clear--at least implicitly--that empresas were the preferred format and that they were considered market-oriented units of production.

Around 1980, following the process contemplated in this Plan, the Bari received a credit for Bs. 104.000 in the form of 90 head

of cattle and other inputs for the construction of fences and improvement of pastures. The cattle were a cross breed,[3] well adapted to local conditions, and intended for both beef and dairy production. However, the predominant zebu stock of the herd makes it better suited for beef production and, overall, such stock yields lower levels of both beef and milk when compared with cross-breeds of lower creole or zebu stocks. However, the Bari herd was in considerably better shape than the Pume's cattle which had been part of the Santa Cecilia hato's herd, and had remained unattended for a long time leading to the problem of inbreeding mentioned earlier.[4]

Under the guidance of the local priest and the sporadic visits of IAN's field personnel, the Bari managed the herd for two years in a semi-collective manner, but without having adopted the actual juridical figure of Empresa Indigena.[5] In practice (although it was not necessarily planned that way), the Bari used these two years to familiarize themselves with herding skills and increase the volume of the herd. One may also recall from the last chapter, that just a few years before that, the church had given individual Bari families one or two head of cattle for their own use. However, as the Bari tell it, these cattle were basically left to fend for themselves and there was no systematic management of the herd, nor even any serious attempts to obtain by products such as milk or cheese.

In 1982, after continuing conversations with IAN's field

personnel, and acting on the local priest's "recommendation," the Bari of Saimadoyi decided to organize the empresa and thus become eligible for various forms of state support.

Like the Pume, the Bari met for three days with IAN personnel from the national and regional Indian Development program to discuss what was involved in an empresa project and to elect the empresa leadership. The meetings closely resembled the organizational model set up by IAN indigenistas in the first phase of the program. From the interviews with the Bari, it was rather clear that, unlike the situation with the Pume, there was much more of a dialogue between the IAN personnel and the Bari. The Bari were able to express their own preferences with regard to various aspects of the empresa organizational structure and goals.[6]

In addition, and once again in sharp contrast to the Pume experience, the Bari had almost two years of practice with a "pre-cooperative" structure which allowed them to more adequately evaluate the pros and cons of forming an empresa. Undoubtedly, the local priest who favored this new economic organization had a great deal of persuasive power as well. Yet, judging from my field observations and conversations with many Bari, the priest's views did not always prevail. When asked why they joined the empresa and what sorts of benefits they thought the empresa would bring when they joined, the Bari would often reply with the phrase "because it is better this way, working together as a community." Versions of this phrase were constantly used by the missionaries to bolster communal participation which they maintained was in accordance with

Bari traditional culture. On the other hand, the Bari clearly had a more complex set of reasons, and therefore understanding, than the Pume had for joining the empresa. One important difference was the genuine understanding of the notion of "working together," which the Bari could easily relate to their recent history and even to current practices such as the "Kirora" or communal fishing.

But not all the Bari joined the new empresa. One family had managed to increase its own herd considerably above the two to five cattle owned by most other families in Saimadoyi. When the empresa was formed, the majority of the families agreed to incorporate their individual cattle with the community's herd and hence with that of the empresa. The Acevo family was very reluctant to do this, despite the fact that the community offered to pay them for half of the herd and so they would only have had to donate the other half to the empresa. They did not think this was to their benefit and decided to continue to care for their cattle on their own. The Avecos remained in the valley, within the Indian reserve, but both their residence and their pastures were physically separate from the rest of the community's.

In the next section I will summarize the contemporary internal characteristics of the Bari of Saimadoyi which became the structural foundation upon which the empresa was built.

B. Organization of Production and Social Relations

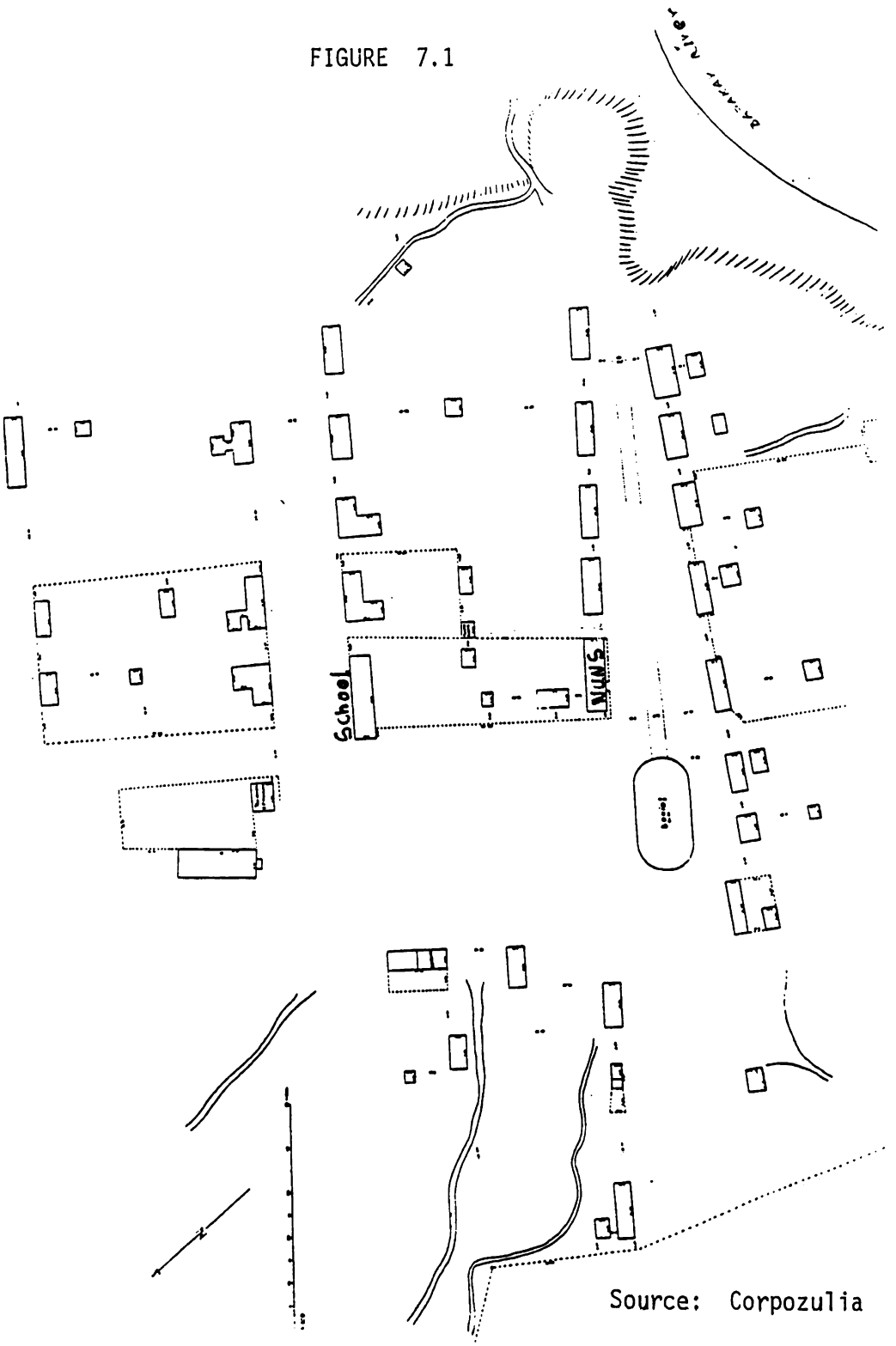
As explained in the last chapter, the Bari had already experienced major changes in their settlement patterns and in their

various production and cultural practices before the empresa was organized in 1982--or even before 1979, when the Development Plan was drafted.

Originally, the Bari of Saimadoyi lived in bohios (longhouses) located in the vicinity. They permanently settled here at the insistence of the missionaries.[7] Today, Saimadoyi is the largest Bari community and the main missionary outpost in the area. The Capuchins are fond of calling it "the capital" of the Bari territory and the "door" to the rest of the Saimadoyi Valley.

In Chapter 5 I mentioned that the internal organization and spatial distribution of the bohio imitated the organization of production activities that took place in the surrounding area. Each hearth group had a separate "slice" of the bohio---an area inside for sleeping and preparing meals and an area outside for cultivating crops. (See Appendix F for drawing.) Today, the Bari occupy single-family dwellings and although this has inevitably introduced some modifications in the assignment of production tasks, the fundamental principles that guided the labor process remain virtually the same.[8] (See Figure 7.1) The hearth group has sometimes been reduced to a single nuclear family, but as in earlier times, it is often composed of two or three families who live in separate dwellings that are in close proximity to each other. This small network is also more likely to be formed by members of the extended family and less likely to include non-kin, as was frequently the case in the old hearth groups. All garden-

FIGURE 7.1



Source: Corpozulia

Saimadoyi empresa. Bari community

related activities, including clearing, which was a communal activity, is now performed by various combinations of individuals at the level of these reconstructed hearth groups.[9] In fact, assistance from individuals outside of this network is rather infrequent and often compensated with money.[10] The building of new houses, which was also a communal activity, is also most frequently done at this level, but others do help in exchange for meals.[11]

The gender division of labor at the point of production remains unchanged mostly and is still characterized by flexibility in switching roles whenever conditions demand it. The religious missionaries have had a rather contradictory influence in this respect. At times, they reinforce the western view that "women's" primary role is confined to the domestic sphere, but they also encourage women to seek formal education, and encourage husbands and male children to share in household tasks.[12] In 1972, when the missionaries distributed those few head of cattle to individual families, the care of these animals was shared by both husband and wife. (In fact, I heard them sometimes refer to at least part of the family herd as being owned by the wife.) However, with the new and considerably larger herd introduced by IAN around 1979, there began a separation of roles in production in which men were increasingly charged with all productive and non-productive activities connected with cattle raising, while women did everything else.

Communal production activities such as fishing continue to take place. Except now, "community" means not 20 to 50 people but

a village of almost 300 individuals, all of whom participate in these fishing trips to the surrounding rivers. The introduction of cattle by the missionaries reinforced community practices such as clearing fields--except fields were cleared for pasture rather than for crop production.

Finally, the fictional kinship relations of "Ogjibira-Sagdojira" (consanguineal-affine) described in Chapter 5, have not totally disappeared despite the impatient attitude of the religious missionaries toward these complicated and highly arbitrary kinship rules. We know this because of the occasional disputes that arise, and which often involve the local priest, about whether a Bari is allowed to marry someone or not. It is not clear whether the permanence of these relations is still connected at some level with reproduction needs which require an adequate distribution of marriageable partners and the formation of long-distance alliances. An alternate and very plausible interpretation, still to be adequately tested, began to emerge during my field observations and interviews. It seems likely, that with the stretching of the community's "social borders", and the significant reduction in long-distance tribal connections, new formulas, or adaptations of old ones, seem to be required for establishing alliances beyond the household or hearth group. It is not difficult to see why these alliances or new forms of primary relations are still important components of survival strategies, particularly during times of scarcity in what is still a rather precarious and minimally

incipient market economy.[13] Holding on to alliance-building dyadic forms of kinship can also prove useful in intra-community conflicts. These conflicts have become more frequent because of the larger size and more heterogeneous makeup of Saimadoyi.[14]

These fictional rules of kinship are also still likely to be "activitated" by parents who are concerned about the marriage possibilities of their children in Saimadoyi, but within contemporary constraints. Men slightly outnumber women[15] and the reproduction of the family within new socially establish criteria is somewhat dependent on purchased commodities, i.e., those men who have the capacity to provide cash incomes for their households or hearth groups are more likely to be favored as in-laws.

There are several reasons why these types of primary relations which preceded collective organizations must be taken seriously into account as a factor that may affect and be affected by collective organizations. For example, "primordial loyalties" at the sub-community level may at times come into conflict with demands for loyalties at the community level. On the other hand, Lizarralde and Beckerman (1985) said that this intricate network of dyadic relationships was to a large extent determined by the "peaceful" atmosphere surrounding Bari communities. Also, rather than assuming that these fictional kinship formulas are no longer operable, or that "even they (the Bari) don't understand what it means..." as the priest says, one must consider the possibility that they have been adapted to new requirements for social and economic reproduction. The priest himself points to such

adaptation when he observes--in what he believes to be an aberrant use of the okdyibara-sadogyira relations--that they are often manipulated for self-interest "whenever they need money or something done." He is particularly critical of "mothers that do not want them (the children) to marry so and so because of advantages for her...because that girl maybe tomorrow helps me (the mother)..and whenever they don't want a child to marry so and so, `sadogyiri'".[16]

To a much lesser degree than the Pume, the Bari of Saimadoyi have also reproduced themselves through sporadic sales of food products and as wage laborers in government jobs,[17] or in surrounding haciendas for wages as low as 25% of the officially established minimum wage.[18] They, have therefore maintained a much higher degree of "relative autonomy" from the capitalist economy than the Pume. On the other hand, the presence of the missionaries, who at times function as agents of the state, but not as agents of state policies, have in a contradictory manner played an important role in protecting these communities from outside agents. In the past, state subsidies transferred to the missions, though small, have contributed in the past to the supply of those commodities on which the Bari are now dependent, including medicine and school-related expenses. Also, as I have indicated, missionaries have encouraged the development of a cash economy through the introduction of cattle in to the community. But again, compared with the Pume, the level of commodification (both as

consumers and producers), and thus subordination to the larger national economy is relatively low.

C. Political and Ideological Structure

The first families that arrived in Saimadoyi came from the same bohio, and upon their arrival they elected their chiefs in much the same manner as they had always done; by choosing the ones who seemed most able to guide the construction and organization of the new households.[19] However, as the community grew it brought together families from very different areas and bohios, with more and more distant kinship relations. After the arrival of additional families, and with the encouragement of the missionaries (the Priest and the Sisters), a semi-western style "election" and a new chief was chosen. But this election introduced a new form of specialization and division of labor between the old, traditional and "moral" leaders, and the younger, spanish-speaking, semi-converted ones. Again, "encouraged" by the missionaries, the Bari elected a young man who would represent the community in all matters and act as an intermediary between them and the missionaries. The tasks connected with communal hunting and fishing were left to the older Bari. It will be interesting to see whether this early specialization of supervisory functions will be successful in meeting the empresa's leadership requirements. In the ethnohistory presented in the last chapter I discussed the presence of a second chief or "duashina" among the Bari. Therefore the general notion of the second chief is not totally foreign to them. But what is new is the division of functions between these two

chiefs. Up to the very early days of Saimadoyi, the natobay and the dwashina had largely identical responsibilities, the primary difference being that the ntobay was the first chief, and the dwashina was like an assistant chief and an "alternate" during those times the natobay was absent. Nevertheless, the community was not totally passive and in essence it was to the benefit of the missionaries as well as the Bari that whoever was elected had the approval of both. In essence, there was an "accommodation" of both the Bari and missionary interests. Traditional qualities of moral guidance and expert leadership were preserved in the figure of the older Bari, turned now into "hunting chiefs." And the relished skills such as Spanish speaking and a capacity to communicate with outsiders (now mainly non-Indians) became institutionalized criteria for new community chiefs.

This new community chief did not (and does not today) seem to enjoy any more authority over the community than the old ntobay. However, he has to a large extent become an intermediary between the missionaries and the rest of the community. The "soft-coercion" of the former is mediated through this chief who dutifully suggests to the community courses of actions previously suggested to him by the missionaries. But again, the community is not a passive receiver of these messages and in new as well as old ways it mobilizes "public opinion" --as well as "chisme" (gossip)-- upon which power within Bari societies has been traditionally based. The chief has thus become an important relayer of community

sentiment to the missionaries. One of the nuns for example, commented--or rather lamented--how she enjoyed working with a Yucpa community, who were much "closer to the sisters" than the bari of Saimadoyi.

With regard to women's decision-making powers, the situation is a bit more complex and by no means clear. Traditionally, Bari women did not formally participate in the deliberations held by community leaders and others whenever a major decision was made. They did, however, make their opinions known through their husbands and other wives of the community. (Such opinions carry weight in most horticultural groups.) In the contemporary period, it is very difficult to determine the extent to which women influence different types of community decisions. There is a hint that the mission has subtly driven a wedge between the worlds of the men and women. Domestic tasks are systematically taught to women while men are encouraged to "help." On the other hand, new activities connected with commercial production, and especially after IAN introduced the new herd, are systematically taught to men while women are neither encouraged nor discouraged to participate. This has resulted in a higher degree of specialization of knowledge by gender, and therefore of the decision making process.[20]

There are a few other aspects of contemporary forms of Bari leadership and mobilization strategies which are more difficult to describe but are at least as significant as the ones just examined. For example, there now exists in the Bari community a sort of "competition" for formal, but most importantly informal,

missionary-independent, moral leadership based on a dual understanding of Bari traditions and the outside world. This is a direct result of the more heterogeneous nature of Bari communities, and an "unintended" consequence of the missionaries' contradictory insistence on preserving Bari values (selectively) and changing those values through formal education and religious teachings. In addition, it is the missionaries themselves who have promoted an "Indian movement" of sorts, by using tactics that are not very different from those IAN used to mobilize the Indian population in support of its development programs. The missionaries now organize regional and national conferences on different aspects of Indian life and problems which bring together community leaders from all over. At the end of these conferences and congresses, these leaders (with the obvious help of the missionaries) draft rather militant declarations and demands to the government which coincide with the missionaries' own programs for Indian areas. These are later published in the local media and government as well as church-related publications.[21] Some of these same leaders (including one woman) are the ones who have later sought to establish themselves as legitimate representatives of community values and interests by attempting to show their independence from both the regularly elected authorities of the community and the missionaries. One of these leaders is also highly charismatic and does not fail to articulate, quite eloquently, the concerns of the community any time government representatives come to visit.

Charismatic leadership and the abilities to stir up public opinion and action are important pre-conditions for collective mobilization--whether it is organizing an empresa, or banding against government policy.[22]

Finally, I would like to return to some of the issues related to ideology, ethnicity, and culture which have surfaced at various points in the above discussion. These issues are especially relevant when trying to determine if pre-empresa conditions such as social solidarity and collective practices were as important as some authors suggest in shaping the empresa's organizational process and general performance.

With respect to ideology, or cognitive values which seem to guide the Bari's interpretation of their day-today social experiences, one must consider the relationship between old Bari cosmology and the values introduced by the Catholic missionaries. Although they clash in several points, such as the interpretation of kinship, an interesting syncretism has developed between Bari collective values and the missionaries' "patrimonialism." Both emphasize the superior qualities of the collectivity, but while for the Bari this also implies a highly egalitarian order, in the case of the missionaries it presumes a hierarchical order in which there is always the figure of "God and the Prince" (or God's representatives on earth), who stand above the collectivity. Hardly a day goes by without the missionaries, and the Bari alike, speaking of the need to work together and to remain together "because that is the Bari way." There is no question that this

reinforces the internal cohesiveness of the Bari vis-a-vis the outside and introduces social control mechanisms against individualistic tendencies.

In the discussion of the internal characteristics of contemporary Pume, I also brought up the idea of "emergent ethnicity" as a potentially new source of internal solidarity and mobilizational strategy. All Venezuelan Indians, to one degree or another, have by now learned that in the eyes of the larger society, they are all lumped together as "Indians" and contrasted unfavorably with non-Indian society. In the case of the Bari, this new ethnic consciousness began to develop, when they were first rounded up with other groups from the Sierra of Perija. But, as with the other Indian groups, it has been the type of contact they have established with the modern state which has enhanced this "Indian ethnicity." This contact has been largely mediated by the Catholic church which has been officially and un-officially charged with implementing state policies in education, land, and more recently, economic development. In this process, the Bari have been educated about the state's special treatment of Indian people as a whole, as well as the special dangers they face today as inhabitants of frontier and strategically desirable territories. This new consciousness has also been reinforced through the church-sponsored congresses I mentioned earlier, and the suspiciousness with which the missionaries treat outsiders. The nuns were particularly instrumental in reinforcing a sense of skepticism and

distrust toward outsiders. Continued isolation, as opposed to informed connections with the outside, seems to be their guiding philosophy.[23] In fact the nuns and the priest clashed somewhat in this area. The Priest was more of a believer in the Barí's need to participate in the outside economy and in their capacity to master the skills that were necessary so that they would not be run-over by "civilization." Internal cohesiveness and solidarity can work in favor of the organization of group farming, but it can also work against it when the overriding sense of skepticism towards government intervention is reinforced daily by social agents such as the Catholic sisters, and by charismatic leaders who wish to establish their own authority by offering independent judgments about the empresas--which may or may not be correct.

There is a certain tension between the church's goal to build a strong sense of community among the Bari and their desire to use inter-ethnic strategies to support their own views regarding the state's Indian policy. In the case of the Bari, this tension has so far not produced any serious conflicts of interests between them and any other group in the Sierra; but they could potentially emerge if state resources are unequally allocated.[24] The Bari had positive things to say about the inter-ethnic church-sponsored congresses, but they were always highlighting their differences with neighboring groups like the Yucpas. They would comment with a certain degree of disdain that the Yucpas were very different in their approach to work, "they get bored and leave for months." This was an implicit reference to a Yucpa who had married a Bari

woman and brought his cattle to join the empresa, only to disappear for long periods of time while visiting his people. The Bari seemed intent in making this one more example of why there should be no outsiders living there--Indian or non-Indian. They would often identify whatever major problems they had with "those who come from outside" (los que vienen de afuera)--a situation which the missionaries were happy to exploit.

The Bari never participated in the Indian federation of the state of Zulia, which was most heavily represented by the more acculturated and militant Wuaju (Guajiros). But they did not lack mobilizational experience of their own, even in conjunction with other groups. Just recently they have been involved in a battle against new mining leases in their territory, which has taken them, together with neighboring groups like the Yucpas, to Caracas to demonstrate in front of government offices. They ran off a team from the Ministry of the Environment which was secretly conducting a feasibility study for a large hydroelectric dam which would have left Saimadoyi under water. In this sense, they once again contrast with the more defensive Pume and their very limited--or non-existent--collective mobilizational strategies.

D. Education, Skills, and Resources

These three areas must also be considered as part of those internal "micro" factors that would impinge upon the successful development of an empresa. Literacy rates for the Bari, as expected, are higher than for the Pume. This is mainly due to the

presence of religious missionaries and their emphasis on Indian education. Saimadoyi also has a full-time elementary school, which is now under the Ministry of Education but run by the missionaries.[25] Bilingual education is stressed in the school, and one of the community elders teaches the children about Bari culture during a regularly held class. In addition, ORAI and IAN have coordinated classes on adult literacy which have met with a great deal of success, and these have allegedly reduced the illiteracy rate to about 25%.

Some of the students from Saimadoyi have also been sent to Mission schools, and a couple have had a few years of schooling beyond high school. Beyond the general value of formal education, literacy is an important equalizer in the political structure of the empresa because the Agrarian Reform law requires it of anyone occupying a top leadership position.

Equally important to the empresa are the husbandry and marketing skills some of the Bari had acquired prior to the founding of the empresa, and particularly after 1979 when they got the larger, community-owned herd. But even before that, when families owned only a few head of cattle, the Bari had begun to work together clearing fields and building fences; and several families' cattle would graze in the same pasture. But the more serious application of husbandry management techniques, including sanitation and breeding controls, began when IAN donated the new herd in 1979. The Bari had worked on local ranches and acquired some of their livestock raising skills in that manner.

In addition, the Bari had briefly experimented with what they considered to be a successful consumer cooperative which they would like to resume at some point.[26] This consumer cooperative was sponsored by Zulia's ORAI, and its basic purpose was to those food commodities upon which the Bari had become dependent, such as sugar, flour, and rice, more accessible and at cheaper prices. When ORAI no longer supported these kinds of cooperatives, and the Bari had not developed a sufficiently large cash economy to support them, the cooperative was phased out.[27]

With regard to agronomical and ecological factors, the land area where the Bari are located has been judged by the Ministry of the Environment[28] to be adequately suited for a combination of foodstuff and livestock production, "if adequate management techniques are followed." The soils are relatively acid and require the introduction of improved pastures in combination with natural pastures.[29] The soil is particularly adapted to traditional Bari crops such as manioc, plantains, and pineapples, and these are seldom scarce in Saimadoyi or other Bari communities (except for pineapples whose production has been reduced to a minimum). In addition to adequate conditions for planting those crops that are basic to the Bari diet, there is still hunting and fishing. However, due to the repressing of the waters in some areas and large scale fishing and hunting around the large haciendas, there is less game available (I once accompanied the Bari to the Kirora, and they came back highly dissatisfied with the

small size of the catch and commented on the frequency with which this is occurring.)

The resource base of the Bari is somewhat different from the Pume in Santa Cecilia. Although Santa Cecilia is located in a traditional cattle-ranch area of the country, the soil has suffered from serious erosion and without the introduction of fertilizers some areas do not easily lend themselves to the production of basic crops.[30] In addition, fish and wild game have become depleted because of the un-controlled hunting and fishing carried out by poachers and other criollos. Ecological conditions must thus be sufficiently favorable not only for the production of the empresa's marketable goods, but for those subsistence crops on which the Indians depend. This was, in fact, a major goal of the Indian empresas--much more so than for the empresas campesinas; to strike the necessary balance between cash and subsistence crops. The founders of the empresas understood that subsistence gardens were considered a safety belt by these Indian families and that their decision to participate in the design and implementation of an empresa would largely depend on their assessment of the empresa's guarantees for daily survival vis-a-vis the ever-producing manioc and plantain gardens.

E. Final Organizational Structure of the Empresa of Saimadoyi: The Design

1. Socio-Economic Diagnosis of the Bari

The statutes of the Saimadoyi empresa are more general and somewhat more adapted to their particular situation and interests

than were those of Kumani. For example, there is an explicit effort to translate the various administrative structures such as administrative Junta and "junta de vigilancia" in to Bari terms, roughly conveying the meaning behind them.

The agricultural plan (Plan Pecuario) elaborated in 1979 contained a brief diagnosis of those aspects which were most relevant to state agents for the introduction of additional cattle into Saimadoyi. This included a basic agrarian sketch detailing the kinds of pasture, climate, and number of existing head of cattle per hecatare. The only social aspects mentioned in the Plan were the number of families and individuals, by gender, living in the community at that time.

When the empresa was organized in 1982, the information about the contemporary situation and aspirations of the Bari was simply updated through the intensive meetings and conversations that were held before and up to that time with the Bari community. The adequacy and shortcomings of this diagnosis will become clearer in the chapter analyzing the empresa's performance in the more advanced stages. But I wish to point out that much more has been written about the Bari than about the Pume. For example, the missionaries publish a monthly magazine which often discusses contemporary aspects of Bari life--as seen by the religious missionaries. Similarly, I have made the point that while kumani was being erected in a virtual organizational and structural vacuum, this was not the case in Saimadoyi. The empresa in the latter case constituted one more step in a process of economic

growth and change which had begun a few years earlier, over which the Bari had more control than did the Pume. In the case of the Bari, then, one would expect the state to be less directly involved in the day-to-day operation of the empresa, and thus to be less concerned with obtaining a highly elaborate diagnosis.

The generality with which the statutes were written also reflects the lesser amount of control that the state had in developing them (although it was definitely involved). It also meant that by not making these statutes a carbon copy of the more elaborate standard statutes used for the empresas campesinas (and still conforming to the form which the law required), the Bari retained a greater degree of flexibility with regard to internal decisions about such things as renumaration and division of labor.[31] In the following paragraphs I will look more closely at the most relevant prescriptions and rules set by these statutes, and at other related aspects of the empresa's design.

2. Saimadoyi's Main Objectives

The objectives of Saimadoyi were drafted in a manner similar to those of Kumani. The only difference was a slightly greater emphasis on the existence and preservation of "ethnocultural" factors as foundations and objectives of the organization. As with the Pume, the statutes defined the empresa in terms of collective activities which could potentially include the production, processing, marketing and distribution of agricultural and non-agricultural products. But in article #8, the statutes again refer

to those activities which are considered communal and focus specifically on both the new activities such as livestock production and the consumer cooperative, and on old ones such as the Kirora and the "promotion" and "valorization" of Bari cultural manifestations. In this manner the line between the empresa, as a new economic structure, and the community, as a socio-economic unit, were intentionally blurred. This was in fact a notion I heard the field officer repeat often. The Bari also often used the terms "empresa" and "community" interchangeably. The statutes also recognize the right of individual families to engage in productive activities (agricultural or artisan) for both subsistence and cash purposes. The only condition being that the appropriate costs of communal services be deducted from the gains secured through these activities.

3. Factors of Production

At the time the empresa was organized, the individually owned cattle were simply added to the communal herd which had been acquired as part of the 1979 Plan put together by IAN. The total number of livestock from these two sources was approximately 250. The main emphasis of the empresa at the time, then, was one of reorganizing livestock production and making it a communal activity, and then securing new grants and loans to improve the general infrastructure required for an expanded livestock raising operation. The 1979 herd had been given in the form of credit rather than as a grant. The credit was for a total of Bs 104.672 (about $25,000), with no interest, and was to be paid in 5 years.

The Plan specifically says that such a repayment is crucial so that other communities can benefit from similar Plans. However, this has been re-interpreted differently by both national and regional IAN personnel. While some believe IAN meant to convert that into a grant, with the cattle belonging to the Bari, others say the credit could be repaid simply by showing increased productivity and by helping neighboring communities get started through such things as donating calves or providing technical assistance. As I will discuss in the next chapter, the ambiguity created by this form of credit has been a major cause for concern among the Bari, as well as an added reason for distrusting the government.[32]

4. The Organization of Labor

The statutes of the Saimadoyi empresa do not contain detailed information on how labor is to be organized and remunerated that one finds in the Kumani statutes. The first statute simply cites the obligation of empresa members to work collectively. A later, statute, gives the members the responsibility of naming those who would be responsible for every collective activity. (Again it does not distinguish whether these fall under the empresa or not). Article 10 discusses the reserve, re-investment, and social funds to which a percentage must be allocated once the necessary deductions for "services" (presumably labor services) have been made. It also dictates that any surplus remaining after all of these combined deductions must be distributed equally among all empresa members. No other details are given as to what basis

(individual or family) work teams are to be organized, or how they are to be compensated for their labor.

In the Kumani statutes there was also explicit mention of the fact that only "members" (meaning among other things males, head of households) could participate in the empresa's productive activities. Although this is a requirement of the agrarian reform law, the Saimadoyi statutes do not stress this and in fact, a Bari woman was elected as the administrative junta's secretary. To have achieved this, an article was added towards the end of the statutes (article 16) clarifying the fact that Joaquina, the secretary, was not included in the list of members ("comuneros"), "because she lives in her husband's home," but she was chosen for "being able to write, and for being a teacher of Saimadoyi."[33] Technically, Joaquina is not permitted to run for office because only husbands are official empresa members. However, the obvious inadequacy of such a proviso in the agrarian reform law is slowly being recognized, and a new "custom" is developing whereby women are beginning to participate more in these organizations. But this is still rare and it depends a lot on the particular group and their internal gender relations as well as relative independence in their decision making process.

5. The Leadership Structure

The decision making bodies of the Saimadoyi empresa were basically identical to those of Kumani. They were the General Assembly (Inskiki), the Administrative Junta (Innakyi), and the Supervisory Junta or "Junta de vigilancia" (Yabikyikyibai). The

general assembly was required to meet at least once a year and the Administrative Junta at least once a month. The underlying notion behind the supervisory junta, as in the case of the Pume, was to allow for the participation of the older, more respected Bari in a capacity of overriding authority, making sure that all decisions were in accordance with the Bari community's values and desires.

In the first assembly, a young, literate Bari by the name of Pedro was elected president of the empresa, and the charismatic leader I referred to earlier was elected treasurer. From then on, the president of the empresa functioned as the main representative and chief of the community. The figure of the second leader or "duashina," described in chapter 4, was also revived in the new post of second chief--also called cattle chief. The latter, just like the "duashina" of the past, would assume formal responsibility for the community when the main chief or president of the empresa was away.

II. Similarities and Differences That Matter: Final Comments On the Organization of Saimadoyi and Kumani.

Chapters six and the present chapter are concerned with the question of which factors, at the level of individual communities, influence and are influenced by the organizational process of collective enterprises. Two broad categories of internal factors have been identified: modes of state policy implementation, and pre-existing socio-economic, political and cultural patterns of the two communities chosen for study.

Within the category of state policy implementation I first examined the more concrete issues of which social agents were involved in the transition to these complex forms of economic organization, what their objectives were, and which strategies of mobilization were used to attract potential participants into these collective empresas. This analysis revealed some similarities, but most importantly, some major differences between them: 1) the manner in which the two empresas were organized, 2) the particularities of these two group's pre-existing socio-economic structure, and 3) the inventory of political strategies and resources available to each group.

Clearly, the Bari were more involved in the organization of their empresas than were the Pume. The presence of the founding Indigenistas in this process also contributed to the Bari's higher degree of participation and thus to a much more "non-directed" approach to the establishment of the empresa. No statement is being made here as to how equal participation of its members was. Nor am I forgetting the fact that the live-in missionaries of Saimadoyi have a great deal of influence over what appears to be "community decisions." But the main point about the greater participation of the Bari in the day-to-day operation of their empresa vs. the Pume, still holds.

The fact that the original supporters of the empresa program were involved in the organization of the Saimadoyi empresa also increased the probability that their original objectives, including that of a participatory approach, were achieved. These

Indigenistas selected the community carefully, noting whether they possessed the pre-conditions which, back in the middle seventies, they had identified as ideal for establishing the empresa (see Chapter 2). And they were more aware of where the Bari were with regard to developing a cash, livestock- based economy, and what the next steps to take were.

The Pume were looking for a piece of land, and to put it simply a decent "house with a Zinc roof". There was a wide breach between these simple objectives and the larger, more comprehensive goals of the Indian program--let alone those setting the pace of the national agrarian policy at the time. On the other hand, the Bari began the transition to a market cooperative at a very different level. Their survival (complete reproduction), was fundamentally guaranteed by their subsistence gardens, and they were ready to take advantage of a program that offered some possibility of economic growth and the ability to fulfill needs which had been emerging since their early days in Saimadoyi, if not earlier, and which had changed their social definition of "survival." That they were ready to expand their production capacity, however, may still not be equal to the expected results by higher-ups in the state structure--although it may suit the Indigenistas just fine, despite the strategically articulated rhetoric that got them the program in the first place. The fact that the Bari did maintain a greater degree of socio-economic and political independence from the state, could very well suggest that

they would continue to strive towards maintaining that independence and thus control over the pace at which they wished to expand their economic performance. The original 1979 agricultural development plan which eventually led to the Saimadoyi empresa, contains some rather ambitious goals against which the performance of the Bari empresa will be further evaluated in the next chapter. It also serves to highlight the potential conflict I am alluding to between what each social agent, or group of agents, expects from these state-supported enterprises.

The scrutiny of the second category of factors, the internal characteristics and particularities of these communities, generated perhaps the most interesting information. This part of the investigation goes to the heart of questions, such as who these groups are, how they reproduce their individual and social existence, what identifies them as unique, what their distinctive social structures are, and the characteristics they share with other rural inhabitants. In addressing these questions, the issue of collective practices and their particular place within those structures has been central. This is still one of the most debated issues in the debate over which factors contribute to, or inhibit the transition to complex cooperative organizations.

The fact that we can no longer deal with neatly separated categories of "peasants" vs. "primitive groups", "pre-literate societies", "uncaptured peasants," or Indigeneous groups, makes this research particularly intriguing. The Bari and the Pume are two groups who began their history as simple horticulturalists, who

yet have now traveled somewhat different paths. The investigation of their history adds some new and modest pieces of information upon which to reflect when dealing with the question of what defines the peasantry and what distinguishes it from what Shanin calls "analytically marginal groups." Most importantly, this investigation improves our picture of these communities as they exist, hope, struggle, and respond to the larger society with which they are unquestionably involved, even though unevenly. But the picture is necessarily limited by the parameters imposed by this work's larger concern with isolating the factors which most influenced the development and performance of the empresas Indigenas.

There are several lessons one can then draw from the comparison of these two group's internal structures, particularly about the extent to which collective elements are present in such a structure. Again, the differences are more interesting than the similarities. Both groups were in a sense reconstructed communities, and in the case of Kumani, "twice reconstructed." Saimadoyi resulted from the relocation of families coming from different areas who were tied by different kinship relations. Those of Kumani had come from two different communities which had, also, resulted from migratory processes and reincorporation into new settlements during the first half of this century. They were again relocated to the Santa Cecilia ranch where the empresa was to be assembled. The consequences of these moves for each group were

very different, not least because of the particular context within which the new communities were situated. The Bari had been in Saimadoyi long enough, but most importantly, isolated enough from outside forces and protected by religious missionaries so that they could reconstruct a "sprit du corps." One nurtured by the the old myth of Bari community and rooted in milled and re-milled traditions which these Catholic missionaries--albeit selectively--continuously reinforced and promoted. The Pume, even those from the more stable community of Fruta de Burro lived with the daily assault of negative outside forces, either as wage laborers or political subordinates of the local hierarchy which primarily reinforced individualistic solutions to their existence, and also generated new, but rather weak collective strategies.

There is no question, judging from the ethnohistorical information of the last three chapters, that out of old collective traditions there emerged new ones. In the case of the Bari many of there are particularly relevant--either as obstacles or assets--for the organization of new and more complex collective systems of production. In the case of the Pume, production had been reduced to the level of the household and labor exchanges had become rare. Ironically, it was their experience as cheap laborers in neighboring ranches, which sometimes brought them together in work teams, that led to new forms of collective work.

When the Bari met to organize their empresa, the resounding theme was that of "working together as it once was." For the Pume, it was more the possibility of again having a little "space" of

their own, carved out of the vast land which the criollos controlled and which the Pume did not even claim as theirs any more.[34] The full impact of these different approaches, expectations and circumstances could only become clear as we investigate the different stages of development of these empresas Indigenas. But in the investigation of the organizational stage, there emerged the distinct sense that the Bari's accumulated experiences and dynamic traditions of collective production and decision-making contributed to a rather smooth process of mobilization of members for the purpose organizing the empresa. For the Pume, it was clearly a much more drastic operation for which they were very ill-prepared. It is in these latter cases where all students of cooperatives stress the need for the state to be particularly supportive. But it is also in these cases that the execution of a participatory approach is most difficult.

Finally, with regard to the category of state policy implementation, the preceding analysis focused closely on the particular rules and norms which were contained in the formal organizational structure of these empresas, or what we have also called the empresa's design. The notions which regulate, for example, the organization of labor and the decision-making process within these empresas are thought to generate their own dynamic and thus become new factors affecting the internal operation and overall performance of cooperatives. Venezuelan Indigenistas have also discussed whether the problems that the empresas Indigenas

encountered were due to the particular design chosen for these organization within the confines of Indian social structures, or to the "implementation" of such design.

The application of the design will be the subject of the last chapter. At this time, however, I would say that either, or both the design and its instrumentation can shape each empresa's performance. The differences between the Pume and the Bari are again illuminating. Kumani's statutes were basically carbon copies of the standard statutes of the empresas campesinas. One cannot even speak of an effort to adapt them to the concrete circumstances of the Pume in Apure. In the case of the Bari, the statutes were not all that different from those of Kumani, but they were general enough to allow for a great deal more flexibility in the decisions internal to the empresa's operation. Hence, the adaptation of the design was not an homogeneous process. But beyond that, there is the more important issue of what degree of control each group had over the implementation of those designs. Friends and foes of the peasantry and Indians have often succumbed to the tendency of viewing these groups as mere objects of state policies or economic forces. Seldom do they seriously consider them to be historical agents capable of shaping those forces. Even in the case of the Pume, the fact that the statutes were much more confining than those of Saimadoyi, the instrumentation of those statutes were shaped not only by the strategies and manipulations of the state, but by the Indians' own actions as well.

This connects with the last issue I want to address. What then

are these groups, "Pre-literate", "primitive", "uncaptured peasants", or just "peasants"? and how does the label we employ affect the terms of organizing and implementing a program of collective production? More specifically, to what extent does being one and not the other make the design of these empresas conflict with their "traditional" social structure, as some Venezuelan social scientists argue. To go one step further, what do people become once they enter these new cooperative arrangements and begin producing for the market on a larger scale than ever before?

Like many others, I believe that once previously independent social groups become embedded in the larger context of the capitalist political economy, any definition of a group which centers on "primordialness" and static notions of traditionalism, are necessarily flawed. The old dichotomies then will just not do. But it is easier to figure out what they are not, than what they become in the process of losing their autonomy, and when their social reproduction become intertwined with the larger society. The key term here is process; and the two processes which typically characterize the transformation of the rural masses within a capitalist context are "peasantization" and proletarianization--both of which at some point intercept to become two sides of the same coin. However, as Shanin and others reminds us, one cannot view these as unilineal evolutionary tendencies, one must consider the possibility of alternative "roads of agrarian transition." In

the recent literature on the Latin American peasantry, for example, the road of the "capitalized family farmer," previously dismissed by many as a rarity in Latin America, is now being given a careful second look, and is being considered side-by-side with peasantization, de-peasantization, and proletarianization, among others.

As independent cultivators become embedded in the larger social structure, then, they may experience different degrees of "peasantization" or proletarianization--measured by the particular definitions one adopts for each, which in themselves are subject to debate. In the case of the Pume, I argued that they have indeed experienced new levels of peasantization/semi-proletarianization as their reproduction has become increasingly dependent on the larger economy, while at the same time they maintained control over the means of production required by their subsistence economy. Also, "family labor" today is more accurately defined according to cultural norms which are closer to the contemporary Venezuelan "full-fledged peasantry" than to past Pume societies, i.e., the nuclear family household has become the most important unit of production while community-wide social relations of production have been minimized. The Pume, much more than the Bari, have stepped outside the borders of Shanin's "uncaptured peasants," and their communities are much more "penetrated and controlled...by the national networks of state bureaucracy, market economy and acculturation" (Shanin, 1981).

The Bari on the other hand, retain a greater degree of control

over their internal reproduction. But this is dampened by the historical penetration and permanent presence of religious missionaries and the church apparatus. They cannot, any more accurately than the Pume, be defined by terms such as "traditional societies," or "uncaptured" peasantries. But at the same time, they do not fit the mold of a typical peasantry, and even less that of a rural semi-proletariat. They are analytically marginal, as Shanin (1987) says, but in a category that does not quite fit his own set. They are largely reconstructed communities which, despite their contacts and confrontations with the larger society, have retained a significant level of autonomy from it.

And neither can can we speak of the empresa design clashing with the "traditional" socio-economic structures of these groups. To be sure they may or may not clash, but it will be with the objective, historically structured, contemporary social entity which today is called Kumani (or Mata de Mango and Fruta de Burro), or Saimadoyi, not with the pre-literate groups (which were the subjects of the ethnohistorical chapter). This does not mean that these communities have been transformed beyond recognition and that "tradition" no longer plays an important role in their existence and survival strategies. Especially in the case of the Bari, such traditions are still identifiable even when transformed, and even when their role in reproducing these social units is no longer the same. And no tradition is more important for us than that of collective work and cognitive values. These have nurtured, as I

said earlier, new forms of community solidarity, and may well build new forms of collective work such as that required by the empresas. "Traditions" as Terence Ranger (1987:313) points out, are no longer regarded in the peasant literature as "circumscribing" peasant creativity. Traditions are a resource. Practice or discourse which can claim to be rooted in tradition, no matter how much it has changed shape, acquires legitimacy, furthers mobilization, puts moral pressure on landlords and officials," (and I may add, missionaries).

END NOTES

1. As noted in the last chapter, pre-existing land tenure systems are commonly considered in the cooperative literature as one of the factors that conditions the various social agent's mobilizational style and the Indians calculation of potential risks in the transition to new forms of production.

2. The Plan included along with the Bari of Saimadoyi, those of Bachichida, Bogsi, and Kudagyi. See IAN, Plan Bovino (1979).

3. Spanish - Cebu and later, pardo suizo-cebu.

4. Interviews with IAN veterinary and field staff (1985). This type of cross-breed, in different proportions, for dual purposes is typical of the Perija area where farmers and peasants have adopted it as a way of balancing the uncertainties of milk and beef markets. See Coleman (1980), Llanvi (1988).

5. Besides the program's limited capacity to serve these communities, the Bari are situated in an area that is more inaccessible than that of the Pume.

6. This does not mean that all community members were equally active or informed and knowledgeable as to what this new organization entailed. But there were conversations for many weeks after national and regional IAN personnel visited the Bari, and as usual the entire community was present during the initial assemblies.

7. I collected several interesting oral histories on how some of these individuals got to Saimadoyi and why they decided to stay. Reasons often given had to do with the amenities provided by the missionaries plus the sense of increased security from "moving together."

8. Dwelling still may include more than one family. In addition, cooking huts are often shared by several members of the kin group.

9. Field observations (1985); community maps.

10. Interviews with Saimadoyi members (1985).

11. I saw several houses under construction which included different combinations of individuals, and in only one case, was the future owner working alone.

12. Field observations (1985).

13. Either within the community, and to the extent that external relations with other Bari communities still take place, outside of each community as well.

14. During my stay there, I observed a few of those conflicts and disagreements. What became clearer as these took place was that the same people would line up on the same side of each issue, and that kinship ties--whether consanguineal or affine--often corresponded to such divisions--although I would not suggest at this time that they were the only criteria.

15. Community Census (1985). Interviews (1985). The exact figures were never available. Unfortunately the Indian Census does not disaggregate population figures of communities by sex.

16. Upon finishing this sentence the Priest turned to a Bari and asked rhetorically, "right Lorenzo?", to which Lorenzo simply replied "umbu!"--one of the several subtle, and at times quite explicit, indications I got denoting the respect that Bari still have for this kinship system which is traced to mythical ancestors and thus has an important place in Bari cosmology. Traditionally it was reaffirmed through the inter-community visits and singing sessions described in the last chapter. Such sessions do not take place in Saimadoyi anymore. Bari rituals having any religious overtones have been historically repressed--more through trivialization and demeaning interpretations of those rituals, than through any direct opposition by the religious missionaries. In essence what has occurred is a sort of "secularization" of these alliance.

17. Only two cases, except for teachers hired locally to work at the school in the community.

18. Interviews with Saimadoyi members (1985).

19. Interviews with old community members (1985).

20. I commented earlier on women and formal education. The expectations of the missionaries in this regard is mainly to produce teachers for the community school.

21. Some of which are widely read as is the case of SIC, the Jesuit magazine and to a lesser extent the Capuchin's own publication, Venezuela Misionera. Among some of the issues which these conferences have taken on are the land situation, bilingual education and area mining.

22. Although this is more often than not a positive dimension to the Bari political development and community solidarity this is not automatic.

23. For example, they stayed far away from any discussion on the empresa and privately voiced their disapproval of a cooperative in the community and of "outsiders" who disturb the community's peace.

24. The independent Ye'Kuana cooperative organization, UMAV, which was formed by Ye'Kuanas and Sanemas (a Yanomami group) has experienced some tensions between these two groups. Recently the Sanema had acquired sufficient cattle and skills to form its own separate organization. In the same region, the aggressiveness with which some religious (Catholic) and Indian leaders have pursued the consolidation of the cooperative, have provoked a reaction from another group, the Hoti, and a whole new set of supporters who claim that Hoti Land is being illegally appropriated by the Ye'Kuanas (Personal conversations with Frechione, and UMAV assistant, 1985).

25. There are a couple of Indian teachers, one of whom is a Guajiro or Waju Indian and a nun.

26. One of the major obstacles cooperative experiments often face is the memories of experiments gone sour in a previous time. And unfortunately, these memories are quite frequent given the poor record of these organizations in Latin America.

27. The Bari talked often during the time I was there, about reviving this cooperative now that the empresa was bringing in sufficient cash to purchase food in bulk. There still remained, however, the problem of transporting large bundles via mules trails.

28. Ministerio del Ambiente (MARN), (1985).

29. Field notes; Interview with IAN's veterinarian (1985). It is also important to note that other government documents point toward the over-utilization of land in Zulia for cattlegrazing-around one million hectares over the ecologically established limit. The government also favors financing of intensive over semi-intensive or extensive livestock production units. See Venezuela, State Plans.

30. This was a common complaint, especially, from the resident of Los Mangos.

31. In the last chapter I alluded to the comment state agents often make with regard to statutes being only pieces of paper. The statutes were easier to read and more Bari than Pume seemed to have at least a rough notion of what they were about. In addition, the priest made them occasionally aware of them and would refer often to the need to comply with the

rules as stated in the statues.

32. The credit was given by IAN after the agreement with ICAP of 1976.

33. Saimadoyi's Statutes, (art 16). Technically, Joaquina is not permitted to run for office because only the husbands are official empresa members. However, increasingly, the obvious inadequacy of such a proviso in the agrarian reform law is slowly being recognized, and a new "custom" is beginning to develop whereby women are beginning to participate more in these organizations. But this is still rare and it depends alot on the particular group and their internal gender relations as well as relative independence in their decision making process.

39. Need for land is often a critical incentive for peasants to join cooperative organizations (Galleski, 1973). But by itself, it is an insufficient ingredient for sustained commitment. Once again, the <u>particular combination</u> of those <u>general factors</u> identified in the literature as crucial to cooperatives' performance is most determining at the level of individual communities.

CHAPTER 8

THE EMPRESAS' PERFORMANCE: OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY CONSEQUENCES

This chapter examines the evolution of the Kumani and Saimadoyi empresas, their accomplishments and problems, and the possible long-term implications for the Bari and the Pume, as well as for autonomous Indigeneous development as a whole. In other words, it specially addresses the second question posed at the beginning of this dissertation. It is here, and in the next and last chapter, that we get closest to the specific impact that the empresas Indigenas had on the lives of those community members who participated in their organization and implementation. But, in addition, and as I have made clear before, the close-up look of these communities also allows one to assess the relative importance of factors such as state intervention and internal community structures for the evolution of these collective organizations.

Once again we look at the literature on peasant collectivization and rural development, and more specifically on alternative and classic projects of development among indigeneous groups, in order to select some criteria for evaluating the performance of these empresas. Most analyses of peasant and Indian development programs recognize the limitations of project evaluations that are restricted to corroborating whether or not the more concrete project objectives were achieved. The task must thus involve both the presentation of concrete evidence of economic

performance and social benefits, and a consideration of the broader goals of alternative emancipatory development projects--many of which were incorporated into the IAN development program. Similarly, the more theoretical literature on the peasantry, and the analysis of peasant subordination and the mechanisms to overcome them, also suggest a parallel set of criteria to evaluate the impact of these empresas.

All of these analyses point to evaluation criteria that revolve around the broader issues of: 1) self-sufficiency vs. economic subordination and dependency. This refers to more specific issues such as control over their means of production and products of their labor, access to necessary resources, and a favorable market environment. 2) Autonomous, self-development (autogestion) vs. directed or "controlled" cooperative organizations. This has to do with democratic participation and control over all community decisions including the labor process and allocation of material and non-material resources on an egalitarian and culturally appropriate basis and 3) of special significance for Indian communities, the strengthening and incorporation into the program's content, of community values, ethnic identity, cultural manifestations, and pre-existing forms of community organization--traditional or inherited. (The last item places special emphasis on collective practices and their flexible balance with family-based socio-economic arrangements.) Finally, the evaluation should consider the middle and long-term

implications of the project in all of the above areas. In other words, it should look for increased political participation and political organizational capacity, improvement in the resource base and expansion of development activities within the community and ethnic groups as a whole, reinforcement of ethnic identity and of intra- and inter-community solidarity.[1]

These larger questions or criteria overlap with many of the more specific questions about how cooperatives can be successfully operated. Objectives such as participation, concrete benefits for all members, and strengthening of communal solidarity and commitment, dovetail as crucial means to guarantee the smooth day-to-day operation, as well as the long-term survival of the cooperatives. The performance of these empresas must thus be viewed as a process rather than as a static set of final outcomes, and therefore strategies and results, means and ends must be examined simultaneously. The key and more specific issues to focus on include the balance between authority and members' participation; between an efficient organization of labor and social considerations; between family and collective strategies, and between expected members' commitment and incentives and benefits.[2]

Finally, the performance of these empresas constitutes the final embodiment of the interaction between "internal" and "external "factors" discussed throughout this work. By analyzing objectives and strategies simultaneously, it is possible to observe the contradictions between these two "moments" of original aims and

subsequent stages in the evolution of these cooperatives and determine the concrete combination of internal and external factors that affected their performance. In other words, the analysis should corroborate the extent to which the evolution of these empresas matched, or contradicted, the goals of autonomous development as expressed by the IAN Indigenistas and the Indian communities. Expressed in very general terms, peasant production has occupied a subordinate position, and rural development projects, despite rethoric about "peasant-based solutions," have been guided by dominant national economic and political interests. Historically, whether intended or not, have contributed primarily to the simultaneous dissolution of peasant units of production and the incorporation of the rest into new forms of subordinate relationships with state and private agro-industrial capital.[3]

I. ADAPTING THE EMPRESAS' DESIGN TO SAIMADOYI AND KUMANI

A. KUMANI:

1. The Organization of the Work Process, Social Relations, and Resources

After Kumani was organized, late in 1978, it lived through an initial period of high levels of motivation and expectations from its new members.[4] Despite the initial preference of Kumani members and statutes, the cattle were never allocated by independent households, and the work process was organized according to task-specific work teams composed of various members irrespective of their kinship relations. However, interviews with these members

revealed a great deal of participation and motivation in the empresa's early stages. But, this was also the period when state support was relatively high. IAN had assigned Kumani a temporary, full-time field officer to assist the members in the first phase of the empresa's activities, which included repairing fences, building houses, and improving the poor quality herd they had inherited from IAN. In addition, and most importantly, IAN provided Kumani with all the necessary food, as well as production imputs during this "take-off" period. The members received "advances" in the form of wages equaling the official minimum wage (from Bs 30 to Bs. 40 later on) for each day worked.

By 1982, a different and disappointing picture of Kumani had emerged. After the change of national administrations in 1979, and despite increases in the Indian program's budget at the national level, Kumani became a secondary priority for local IAN "delegates" (delegado agrario).[5] This absence of state support, combined with numerous factors such as the lack of experience in livestock production and commercialization, the heterogeneous composition of the three communities that made sustained cooperation difficult, and the constant threat of antagonistic criollo elements, generated undesirable behaviors ranging from emigration to individual appropriation of cattle.[6] Although it is difficult to prove, there are clear indications that the cattle ranch fell victim to corrupt practices by local IAN officials and allied political figures. There are hints in various written and oral testimonies that the first sale of Kumani's cattle was rigged to benefit friends and

relatives of these local IAN officials, and that that an alleged set of "consolidation" activities financed with the sale's proceeds was not evident. Finally, according to several individuals familiar with the history of Kumani, local IAN delegates purposely diverted funds from Kumani and toward other Indian communities for political reasons.[7]

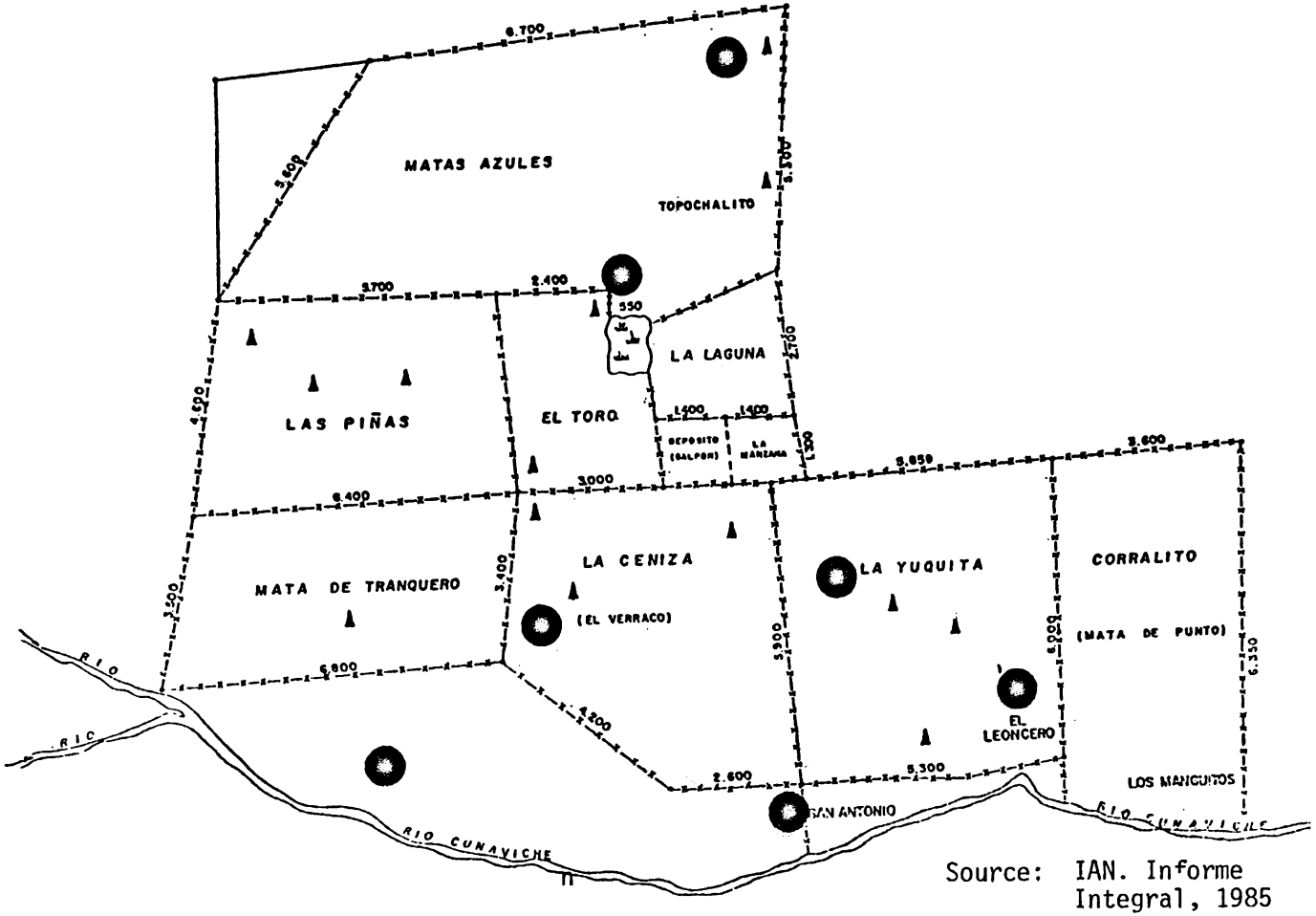
Under these conditions, the cattle, and the ranch in general, deteriorated considerably. By 1982, the rate of reproduction of the cattle was calculated at 32%, half the expected rate. In addition, according to a technical report of the same date, the herd had "mysteriously" diminished which implicitly referred to the problem of cattle theft or "abigeato" which is endemic to the area. In fact, the thefts were thought to originate not so much from outside ranches, but from criollo elements "fundados" (with established small farms) within the perimeters of Kumani. This was the direct result of a situation that had emerged during the organizational phase discussed in chapter 5. At that time, IAN and ORAI officials were aware that there were non-Indian families who had lived in the ranch as sharecroppers prior to its transference to the Ministry of Agriculture. The situation had worsen since then as other criollos invaded the area, including IAN laborers and their relatives.[8] What followed was not only a social, but a legal nightmare as some of these families fell under the protection of the agrarian reform law, and had the support of the Venezuelan Peasant Federation.[9] By this time there were at least 12 separate

criollo owners 1.500 head of cattle grazing in the empresa's land (See Figure 8.1).

The situation of the Indian families within Kumani began to resemble the worst of their past experiences outside of Kumani, where they were constantly forced to compete with criollo peasants and large land owners for land and other resources. In both cases, they not only lost cattle but were subjected to explicit and implicit threats and fears about losing their land--either to local criollos or to IAN itself.

These Indian families were all too familiar with these aggressive tactics and with their inability to defend themselves or seek protection from local authorities. Therefore, they resorted to their combined inventory of "safety-first" and "ethnic-based" strategies. They moved back to their original communities, mainly of Fruta de Burro, and came to the ranch primarily during visits by state officials and the -annual or annual cattle roundups initiated by these officials. In essence, the cooperative fragmented before it had the chance to evolve into a more organic whole capable of resisting bad times through the cohesive actions and more solid commitment from its members. Those from Fruta de Burro had preserved subsistence plots in this community and could count on a large support system of friends and relatives from the same ethnic group whom they had left behind when they moved to Santa Cecilia. The situation of the Las Matas people was a bit more precarious and thus we see a more pronounced tendency of this group to stick it out, or at least to maintain a dual survival strategy by using

FIGURE 8.1



Source: IAN. Informe Integral, 1985

Criollos Settled in Kumani

whatever resources they could muster from both Las Matas and Kumani.[10]

In 1982, due to another unexpected turn of events, the hopes of Kumani members and of the IAN indigenistas who had returned to the program in 1980 were suddenly renewed. The National Agrarian Institute had received a request from an international delegation to visit a "consolidated" agrarian reform settlement. Embarrassed by the fact that there were none to show, IAN top officials decided to rush funds for such "consolidation" works.[11] IAN staff then met with the remaining members of Kumani, hoping to salvage the cooperative, and, most importantly, the land. In that meeting, they formally expelled some 24 members who had abandoned the ranch all together. Most importantly, they re-organized the work process into a semi-collective as opposed to collective system. In other words, groups of families corresponding to the three communities would be independently in charge of a specific portion of the herd. while continuing to care for an additional portion collectively. They agreed that this would facilitate domestication as well as improve supervision of the herd to curtail theft. Major activities such as cattle roundups and general health care would continue to be performed collectively. The funds allocated for consolidation purposes were to be used to repair houses and fences, to build corrals for the newly divided herd, and to purchase a vehicle and a boat to facilitate inter-community meetings and supervision.[12] The division of the herd was for purposes of management only, and did not imply separate ownership. The cattle were still owned

collectively. However, at this point, the issue of how to deal with differential results from the three communities and with the related issue of distribution of rewards, was not addressed.

Despite this renewed support from IAN's central office, the acts of aggression and the instilling of fear in the Pume continued unabated. In the same year, the local IAN Indian coordinator introduced a herd of pigs to help families supplement their subsistence production. Criollos took advantage of families' absence from the communities, stole the pigs and raided homes. I heard the Pume recount this episode several times in 1985 as if it had just occurred. One of those times, a Pume made clear the potential for violence that underlines social relations in the area. He said that he was sure the Indians would have been killed had they been there when the criollos came to rob.[13] Morale continued to deteriorate and the state refused to come to the aid of the empresa one more time. Citing the Indians' failure to meet credit payments, IAN authorities froze the empresas' assets for over a year, around 1984-1985, in which time the situation became even more serious. New calves were not branded, and the fences were cut to allow the cattle to flee to nearby ranches where they were easily sold.[14]

Despite all of this, the empresa continued to exist in form if not spirit. For one thing, this was an extensive type of livestock raising operation and cattle could survive on their on for a long time. In addition, Indian families clinging to the land to which

they had secured rights for the first time,[15] continued to migrate back and forth from their original communities--keeping "a foot in each place" as it were, and thus maximizing their chances of survival.

The management of the herd up to 1985 was supposed to have been conducted as decided in 1982--however minimal such management was. Every one of the three communities, Los Mangos, Mata de Mango, and Las Babas, was made responsible for an "initial" allotment--120 head for Los Mangos and Mata de Mango, and 80 for the smaller community of Las Babas. The purpose was to place these cattle in small corrals in close proximity to these communities and begin a more systematic process of domestication of what was a very wild herd, and begin to implement some control over breeding. The rest of the herd was left in the larger savanas and members of the three communities were supposed to organize themselves collectively in separate work teams under the guidance of the elected "caporal" (cattle boss)to care for their cattle and the ranche´s infrastructure. In the initial phase of the empresa, a IAN employee had acted as the empresa´s "caporal" despite the fact that Indians had elected a Pume for such job. By 1982, the Pume had received a special training course on cattle management and were supposed to assume responsibility for this function.[16]

After the empresas´ inactive period, (when assets were frozen by the government), IAN program staff returned to Kumani in order to assess the situation and made another attempt to salvage the empresa. By the end of 1984, and early 1985, a new plan of

recovery was drawn for Kumani and the assets were unfrozen. In March of 1985 a new inventory of the cattle revealed that the herd, far from growing, had been reduced to approximately half of its initial number, to 1,507. Again, both IAN staff and Indian members attributed this to cattle theft.

More disturbing, and not surprisingly, than cattle theft and other external forces, were signs of a diminishing commitment to the empresa on the part of the Indians. Only one community, that of Mata de Mango, properly cared for its portion of the herd and increased it by a modest number. The herd from Los Mangos was never successfully domesticated and had escaped to the larger savanas. The Pume alleged that this was also a consequence of criollos purposely leaving the gate of the communal roads or "camino real" open.[17] The most serious case was that of Las Babas which basically appropriated the cattle for its own use, ironically improving its quality and then selling it illicitly to opportunistic criollo buyers. All of this, with the knowledge and cooperation of local criollo authorities.

The larger herd was left basically unattended which resulted in the significant reduction of its size. Empresas's members had not had a single meeting or working session during all this time with the exception of those called by IAN representatives. For this members blamed both the incapacity of the empresa's leadership--to get people together and to organize the work process--and IAN for delaying the delivery of key resources such as

wire for fences and salt for the cattle.

The organization of the work process using smaller groups, in this case individual communities, is often used by cooperatives to alleviate "free-rider" problems. It is a solution that has potential costs in terms of loss of collectivity and internal cohesion, but if well managed the benefits can outweight the costs.[18] However, in the case of Kumani the adoption of a dual system of community-based and collective herd-tending only exacerbated the free-rider problem. This was particularly so because as far as I can determine the responsibilities regarding the larger herd were not clearly spelled out, nor was the investment of time, effort, and motivation to deal with this dual arrangement ever calculated. Plagued by lack of motivation and expertise, each community made its own independent judgment as to whose responsibility it was to care for the collective herd and the rest of the ranch's installations. As one member put it, "if there are too many women in the kitchen each one assumes the other will cook the meal."

A factor that further contributed to the negative situation, was the lack of effective leadership and community mechanisms for imposing informal or formal sanctions. This is a problem that affects peasant cooperatives in general, but it also has roots in the Pume-specific leadership patterns pre-dating the empresa, which were discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Traditionally, and until today, the Pume have maintained a very loose form of leadership structure. Like many other horticultural groups, the Pume recognize

as leaders only those figures who can claim some kind of "moral authority" on the basis of their capacity to guide the community, and who excelled in specific tasks. (This moral authority may also be claimed on the basis of some healing powers.) In chapter 5 I combined Mitriani's (1973) and Leeds' (1969) emphasis on the lack of a central authority and of resources as reasons for a community's "fissioning" or the tendency to split from larger groups and pursue independent reproduction strategies. With the probable exception of the first empresa president who knew something about livestock management but remained in Kumani for a very short time, subsequent leaders were not able to motivate the membership, let alone effectively supervise their work and impose sanctions whenever the work was unsatisfactory.

These leaders suffered from motivation problems themselves, which can be seen in the actions of the "caporal" from Las Babas. The president who had been elected in January of 1985 was from Mata de Mango and this community's endurance was supposed to set a better example for the rest of the membership. But he lacked the knowledge and skills that the Pume look for in a leader and lacked a natural ability to lead. Those have proved to be key elements of leadership in any peasant cooperative.[19] Most members complained that they needed a president who knew how to "order" (mandar) and how to tell the "Doctora" (the IAN representative) that things were not going well. This ability to act as a broker between the Indians and external agents has continued to be, within the modern

context, a very important criteria for the selection of leaders among the Pume and Indians in general. This is the criteria that prevailed in the election of the "capitan" in the communities from which these members originated.

Pre-existing settlement patterns and the fact that these groups did not conform an organic whole also meant that typical informal means of community sanctions and of problem-solving were weak and perhaps only beginning to form as a result of their new collective arrangement. In addition, the need to avoid conflict with both Indians and criollos made it even more difficult for both leaders and rank and file membership to call on any member who had failed in his duties to the collective. The more clear case of this occurred when the members of Las Babas were discovered to have been selling the collective's cattle for their own individual benefit. Until the IAN representative came, the empresa refused to take any kind of punitive measures against these individuals, or even condemn their actions openly.[20]

The intervention of state agents in these cases is not necessarily negative however. They can, in fact, act as neutral enforcers of cooperative rules in cases such as these when the violations seriously compromise the survival of the empresa.[21] The more serious issue was the problem of the members lacking significant control over any of the decisions connected with the empresa. This worked against the membership acquiring any real sense that this was in fact their empresa, their cattle, their money. There were fears that the local criollos, and especially

those inside the ranch, were only too happy to fuel, hoping the Pume would abandon the empresa.[22] Several times I overheard members saying the cattle weren't their's but the IAN's. With this attitude, an incentive to work hard and beat the terrible odds that confronted them was not very high.

Returning to the organization of work, there is one other aspect that requires some detailed consideration as it also partially concerns the empresa's relationship to state agents. This has to do with the typically collective process that begins with the cattle roundup and ends with the separation and sale of the herd. Twice a year, before and after the rains, it is customary to conduct a cattle roundup in order to inventory, vaccinate, and ultimately sell part of the herd.

The process in Kumani resembled that of the least mechanized and more traditionally-run cattle ranches in the area. It was an intrinsically collective process requiring cooperation of the ranch owners and workers, and also of neighboring ranchers, because cattle tended wander on to their estates.

Roundups had been conducted with only some regularity in Kumani. During the time that the empresas' assets were frozen, Kumani was practically abandoned. For the roundup, the empresa had to hire local criollo cowboys, because this task required a level of skill and experience lacking among the Pume--given the fact that the cattle were wild and the ranch was large. Because these hired workers were "montas," i.e., riders who also supplied their own

horses, they were paid at the local rate of Bs. 150., while the Pume obtained "advances" corresponding to the manual labor wages of Bs.40 The expectation was that once the Pume had acquired enough experience by participating in three or four of these roundups, they would be able to reduce the number of criollos hired for this purpose.

The operation involved at least two teams which would leave early in the morning to locate the cattle and bring them to the IAN portion of the ranch where the necessary infrastructure for inventorying and vaccinating the cattle was located. The wildest animals had to be roped and brought into line with the rest of the herd. The participation of those few Pume who had become skillful cowboys in these activities was hindered by the fact that they lacked horses. The initial IAN credit included at least 30 horses and others had been bought along the way. However, the horses suffered a fate similar to that the cattle they were poorly cared for or stolen. Moreover, they were used as means of transportation and beasts of burden when the Pume traveled back and forth from their original communities.

The task of obtaining the cooperation from neighboring ranches required that a representative of the empresa be sent with a horse team to inform the owner of the roundup. Often, especially in the past, neighbors actually participated in the roundup and helped gather the animals which had moved onto their property. This presupposed a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation between all parties. The historically asymmetric relationship between

Indians and cattle ranchers constituted an important cultural barrier to such cooperation--not to mention the fact that these ranchers were not at all eager to help the Pume consolidate their enterprise. A IAN employee had, therefore, to be charged with this task.

Once the cattle were in the main corral, a new set of experts was required to vaccinate the cattle, estimate weight, and decide by simple eye calculations, which animals were to be slaughter.[23] Some Pume had learned to vaccinate, paint the horns of cattle that were to be killed, and perform some other tasks related to controlling the herd while cattle passed through the chute. However, the skill of calculating the age, weight, and overall condition of the animal required many years of practice and none of the Pume could perform this task. Ironically, the local expert, and the man the IAN normally hired to help the Pume with this task, was another one of IAN's ranch workers who had a "fundo" (stock farm) inside the Indian land area.[24]

At this point it is appropriate to focus briefly on the participation of women in the empresa. The original design of Empresas Indigenas envisioned the organizations as dual purpose (crop and stock) collectives. In other words, there would be strong support for the maintenance and strengthening of subsistence family (and eventually cooperative) production, and for the incorporation of new cash crops--in this case the cattle. However, in the case of Kumani, as I have mentioned before, the poverty of

the soil did not permit an easy transfer of native cultigens to the area. In light of this and other difficulties, women often chose to stay in the original communities in charge of the more productive garden plots. In addition, neither the legal nor the economic structure of the empresa allowed for the formal participation of women. Instead, the women, but only those of Mata de Mango, traveled with the Pume to cook for the entire membership present at the roundup.[25] They were paid an "advance" equal to that received by the male members. Finally, the sale of the cattle was also controlled by IAN given the complexity of the process. Notices had to be posted in the local media and area ranchers then attended the sale conducted on the premises, (often flying into the ranch itself) and made bids on the spot. This required a great deal of familiarity with the local price structure as well as bargaining skills. The cattle were later "walked" by the buyer to the nearest feedlot or slaughterhouse--to be later sold at considerably higher prices. The transaction was handled by IAN officials, who also kept all the records in the national office. The check for payment was, though, deposited in the empresa's account.

2. Household vs. Collective Strategies for Survival

The scenario constructed above was perceived clearly by the various Pume members as endangering their reproduction. In concrete material terms only, the dormant state of the empresa meant that members had received very few "advances," and those had come primarily during the semi-annual cattle roundup operations.

Up to 1985, the empresa had been unable to provide members the minimum 10 days of work guaranteed by its statutes. On the other hand, IAN was quite formal in its enforcement of the various articles in the statutes that forbid family members to participate in production unless they were also formal members of the empresa, or were designated as official substitutes. IAN was able to enforce this because it kept the payroll record and checkbook in its possession. This, at least, delayed the benefits of extra income from those sons and other relatives, who could perform substitute work. In addition, statutes allowed for "auxiliary" work which left the door open for the unremunerated participation of family members, usually the member's wives and children. Finally, members felt quite insecure about their property rights in Kumani given the degree of control IAN exercised over the management of all the empresas' assets and operations.

Yet, for better or for worse, not all families opted for leaving the empresa. For this reason, it is necessary to simultaneously consider the short-term as well as the long-term strategies pursued by the various families.

The difference in the strategies adopted by these three different communities in order to deal with the negative set of circumstances just outlined can be easily understood in terms of the options each had available and what strategies they had used successfully in the past.

Those from Los Mangos decided to invest most of their time in

their established subsistence plots in Fruta de Burro rather than in fighting the wild cattle and the criollo's aggression. The land in Kumani had not yet been sufficiently conditioned to produce a good yield of subsistence crops, and the residents of Los Mangos believed they were situated in a particularly poor section of the ranch which was often flooded during the rainy season. Particularly important for these members, was the production and sale of clay pots, hammocks, woven shoes, and "azabache" carvings. This represented an important source of income and was only feasible in Fruta de Burro. The bottom line for them, as well as for the rest, was the right to a piece of land, something they did not have in the other communities. So rather than the household strategies being the "insurance policy" against the failures of the cooperative, the empresa seemed to have become just one more form of insurance against the always uncertain subsistence activities and wage labor opportunities.

The residents of Las Babas who had relatively weak ties with Las Matas, their original community, clearly decided to make it in Kumani but by circumventing the collective enterprise's goals. They took advantage of a void of authority and supervision to privatize their production. These members also seemed to have had more experience in raising and selling cattle. (This was deduced in part from the fact that one of Las Babas' members was highly regarded by other members as a good cattle boss.[26])

Residents of Mata de Mango also had relatively weak links with Las Matas (see chapter 5) and had disposed of their houses and

gardens when they moved to Santa Cecilia. They were praised by IAN's national representatives for being the most dedicated and the ones who had effectively managed their herd and attended every meeting called by IAN. As discussed in Chapter 5, there was no question that this community exhibited a lot more cohesiveness as well as dedication to the empresa.

But internal cohesiveness and commitment to stay have repeatedly proven to be insufficient for a cooperative's survival, if benefits are not forthcoming within a reasonable period of time. If one accepts this, the question still remains: Why has this particular community behaved so differently for such a long time? This is, in fact, a question that puzzled IAN representatives during my 1985 visit. I would suggest that there are two other factors that help explain these members' resilience. One was the fact that this community had the larger number of young men who could, and in fact did more often than any others, work in nearby haciendas as wage laborers. The second factor is one whose authenticity cannot be totally verified because it was raised in the context of an accusation by a member from Los Mangos. This member alleged that the so-called improvement of the Mata de Mango cattle was a fiction. In fact, according to the allegation, the community had simply augmented the herd by periodically adding cattle from the collective herd which had been left in the larger savana. As proof of this, he pointed to apparent discrepancies in the age and size of their cattle compared to what should now be the

age and size of the lot they obtained in 1982. The allegations seemed plausible to all of us present at the time. If so, it illustrates once again the variety of defensive strategies utilized by peasants in order to assure their long-term reproduction.

3. Recent Adaptations of Kumani's Organizational Design

When we arrived in Kumani in October of 1985, a typically opinionated Venezuelan who had piloted the small plane that brought us there remarked "What did I tell you, they (the Indians) are not here. I bet you they are back there in their place, in Fruta de Burro. That's where you (IAN) should have put all of this. That's where they like to be. This ranch should have been left for a tourists' resort." His words, although rather disturbing at the time, expressed in a succinct manner, the contradictions which underlay the situation of Kumani. The Los Mangos members were indeed taking care of their gardens and making pots in Fruta de Burro both times I entered the Santa Cecilia Ranch. And the core of Apure's professional and political elite often used the excuse of this conspicuous absence to argue for the transfer of the ranch to the Ministry of Tourism or some other agency.

The first order of business for IAN representatives was again to assure members that their land was not going to be taken away and that IAN was going to increase its technical assistance to Kumani with a permanent expert on animal husbandry (zootecnista). This seemed critical at this time, because through the testimony of several members we confirmed that many of the desperate actions of the last months were at least partially prompted by a criollo-

initiated panic that IAN was taking everything away.

The mood of the members was somber. This was the time when they had had to deal with the formal expulsion of the members from Las Babas, and another from Los Mangos. This was also a moment of truth in a way, as the crisis of Las Babas brought to the surface all the other inadequacies of Kumani and the irregularities committed by all members. To an outside observer, this looked like the end. Adding to the sense of depression, as the cattle began to be brought in, it became obvious that they were in poor shape. The hope of obtaining a decent price for the animals and recovering some of the losses incurred in the last months seemed dashed.

There were other problems which became serious disincentives for the members' collective efforts. Social services such as a medical dispensary, a food store, and an adequate school were still absent and the possibilities of attaining such services seemed remote. A three month old baby had died from complications of a simple stomach problem the day before my arrival because of a lack of medical attention. The criollo teacher of the school in Las Matas had physically and verbally mistreated the Indian children. And according to the President of the empresa, many of his relatives from Las Matas had left because they were experiencing outright hunger.

Nevertheless, largely through the commitment of IAN's national representative,[27] the roundup set for the end of 1985 proceeded as scheduled. As days passed, members began to trickle in from Fruta

de Burro. The young boys from Las Matas (Mata de Mango) were absent for the first part of the exercise. They were working in local haciendas for Bs.30 a day, (10Bs. below the minimum wage, and of the "advance" they would have received from Kumani).

Once again empresa members had no horses and therefore they increased rather than decreased the number of hired workers or "montas." This time the hired workers were paid Bs.125 as opposed to Bs 150. In addition, because the Pume had not been practicing some of the skills learned earlier on, they had to hire an animal husbandry expert to supervise the vaccination and other health procedures.

Some positive signs were however evident. A couple of young Pume had learned to be skillful cowboys and won constant praise form the criollo "montas." The children, who by now had grown up in and around Kumani, were also showing a great deal of interest and skill in dealing with the smaller animals. The two older members of the community, both from Mata de Mango, worked constantly during the entire period of the exercise. The least motivated were clearly the members from Los Mangos who had to be prodded to speed up their efforts.

4. Organizational Changes

In an assembly that took place during the days of the roundup, the IAN representative presented yet another plan to consolidate the empresa. The central aspect of the plan was to once again divide the herd between the two remaining communities, Los Mangos and Mata de Marigo. Presumably, this time it would be done

according to a more coherent plan drafted with the assistence of the animal husbandry expert IAN had just hired. All members unanimously agreed with this, and a new level of motivation could be sensed among the membership. They again expressed their views that it was too difficult to organize people from both communities who lived far from each other and who had different motivational levels. The new system would thus alleviate the problems of diseconomies of scale involved in organizing the larger and more heterogeneous groups. It would also alleviate the free-rider problem since there was no collective herd and each community would know precisely which lot it was responsible for. Each community was to receive a separate branding iron, in addition to the Kumani iron. Each community was to decide by itself whether it would divide the work according to households or collectively. This was done primarily to accommodate the more heterogeneous Los Mangos. A restructuring of the corrals and a system of supervision was another important component of the plan. Finally, IAN representatives were working hard to have the National Guard set up a post in the vicinity of Kumani to help with the problem of cattle theft.

Each community was then to decide how to handle sanctions in cases where its resident members or families did not perform as agreed. This arrangement relied primarily on mobilizing the informal sanctions present within single communities. It could not, however, resolve the absence of de-personalized authority

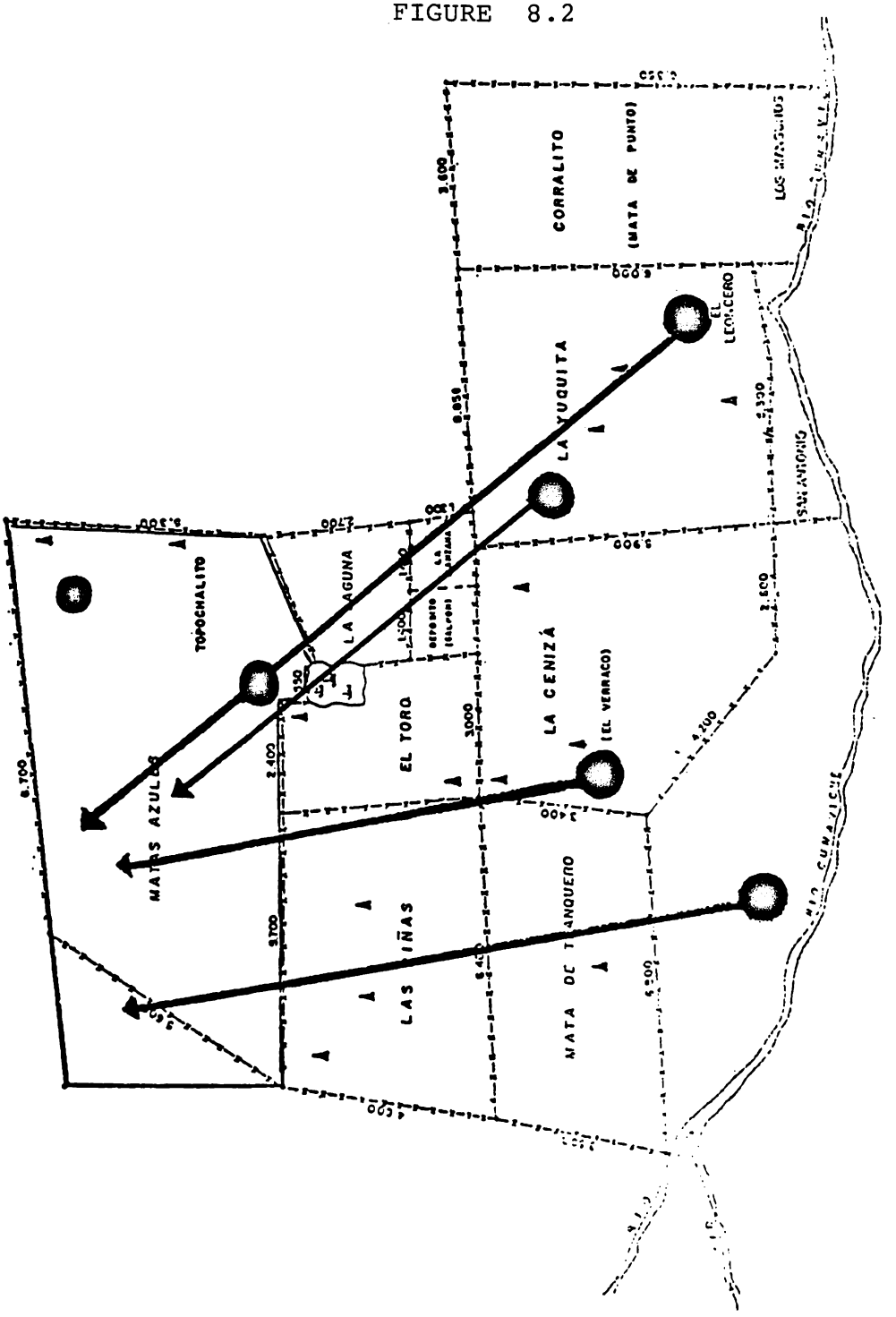
which makes it difficult for members to openly sanction their neighbors.

The new plan was also going to address leadership problems by turning the empresa into an "inter-communitary" (inter-comunitaria) as opposed to a "communitary" (comunitaria) empresa. This meant that each community would elect its own leaders who would then represent the communities in a wider inter-communitary decision-making body. With perhaps one exception, most members were pleased with this structure.

The most important part of the plan was the resolution of the land tenure contradictions concerning the criollos inside Kumani. The IAN representative had come to the conclusion that the only option remaining was to relocate all the criollos to a section of Kumani which would then be ceded to these individuals. The scarcity of land in the state had made it impossible for IAN representatives to find an area outside the ranch where criollos and their herds could be adequately relocated. Once again, the Pume understood that they had no choice and were willing to give up some 8,000 hectares to resolve this situation. But as one of the empresa founders said to me in an informal conversation, that still left the criollos inside the ranch and therefore the problem of cattle stealing and other aggressive actions might not have entirely been solved. (See Figures 8.2 and 8.3).

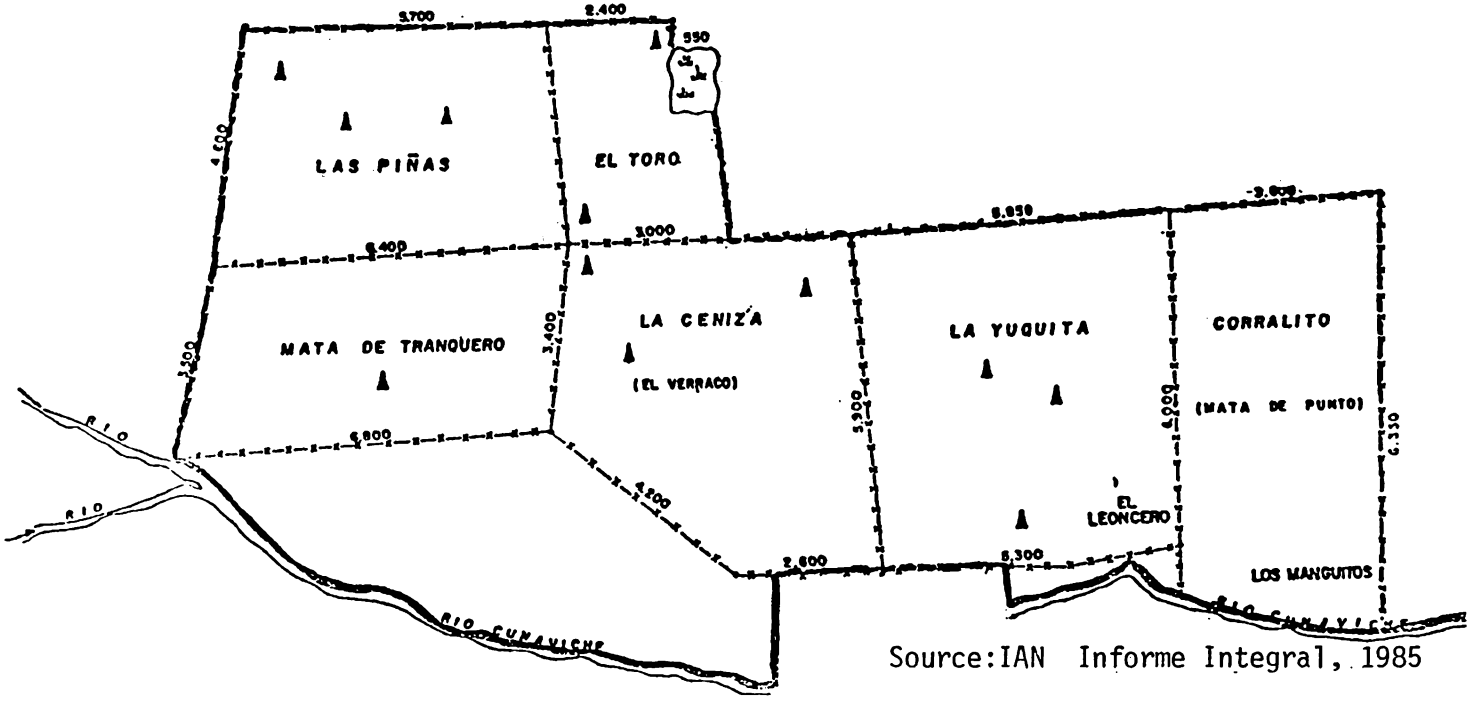
The last events for which I have information occurred between 1986 and 1987. The expert hired by IAN during my field work quit almost immediately after he realized the plethora of problems

FIGURE 8.2



Relocation of Criollos Within Santa Cecilia

FIGURE 8.3



Source:IAN Informe Integral, 1985

Kumani After Criollo Resettlement Plan

facing the Pume--particularly their conflicts with local criollos. However, a new individual who was a local "llanero" and more experienced in dealing with the local pastoral culture agreed to proceed aggressively with the new plan. He developed a very modern agricultural and social plan and moved into the ranch's main house. IAN extended the loan period to 30 years and reduced the interest.

But soon after the new employee began his efforts to consolidate the assets of Kumani, specifically seeking to retrieve stolen cattle from nearby ranches, major conflicts erupted. He began to receive death threats, and in a personal encounter with a criollo was told: "Any Indian I see on the road is a dead Indian." It also became clear to IAN representatives that at least some members of the National Guard were on the side of the cattle ranchers. The community of Los Mangos experienced its worst crisis when a drunk member of the community caused the boat he was piloting to capsize and a young member drowned. The widow (a criollo woman) was suing the individual, and the community fragmented yet one more time leaving only two members in the Los Mangos.

B. SAIMDOYI

1. The Organization of the Work Process, Social Relations and Resources

The Bari members of Saimadoyi practice a semi-extensive type operation[28] of approximately 500 hectares, and unlike the Pume or Kumani, they have engaged in some modest efforts to improve pasture land. While the carrying capacity of Kumani's pasture has

diminished to 10/6 has., that of Saimadoyi stands at 20/1 ha. They also practice some degree of paddock rotation and matching controls. Like the Pume, however, the technical composition of their operation is quite low. They do not have, for example, irrigation pumps or weight scales. Finally, in Saimadoyi most of the improvements are the result of un-interrupted state support, both in terms of grants and in terms of periodic technical assistence.[29]

As did the Pume in Kumani, the Bari organized the work process around teams rather than independent households. In the case of the Bari, however, this system had already been operational before the empresa. There were several teams divided according to tasks such as the seeding of new pastures, cutting wood for fences, string wire for the fences, and rotating the herd. The teams were organized under the supervision of the "caporal," who also acted as the traditional "second leader" or "duashina" of the Bari (see chapter 6). Individuals within a team then rotated to other teams so that everyone had a chance of learning the various jobs involved in livestock raising.

One important aspect of the Saimadoyi empresa is that their dual purpose cattle allow them to produce milk daily for local consumption. Milking is done manually and lactating cows have an average yield of about 2 litters per day (morning milking only). The milk is free to all those who show up during milking time around 4:30 in the morning; but it is sold to those who come later to the milking shed.[30] Because the Bari do not have a cooling

tank (or electricity, except for a small plant), they make hard and semi-hard cheese out of the extra milk and sell it within and outside the community. Work teams were also organized for these activities.

According to a IAN veterinarian, the herd is in fair condition and, although the Bari still have a ways to go in acquring husbandry skills, they have learned a great deal since they began raising cattle. The rate of reproduction of the herd has been moderate. In 1985 the Bari had some 300 head of cattle and had sold several animals in at least two auctions.

The empresa members are remunerated like Kumani's members, i.e., by the number of days worked in a particular month. The empresa records show that a significant proportion of the empresa's income goes to pay monthly salaries. Wages are set by the Pume according to their calculation of the empresa's income and an informally calculated "consumer's index", and not according to the official Venezuelan minimum wage. Therefore, in 1985, wages were set at half the official minimum wage.[31] Except for the first year of the empresa's operation during which time members contributed their labor, salaries have been paid every month. The payroll averages some Bs.12.000 a month, with some months being as high as Bs.22,000. Salaries, as in Kumani, represent "advances" on the empresa's annual income. But unlike Kumani, they are also derived from clever manipulations of government grants for the purchase of inputs. For example, IAN provides funds for the

purchase of fence posts. The Bari simply cut their own wood, use the money to pay those who participated in this task, and then show the IAN field officer the neatly built fences as proof that the money was legitimately spent. The field officer is aware of this irregularity and even encourages it. He "doesn't care what they do with the money as long as they show the work."

The records do not show how who or how many people work every month, or for how many days. It is possible to arrive at an approximate average of 30 individuals per month.[32] Thus, evidence from interviews and a review of the empresa's books suggests a situation of labor utilization that is almost the reverse of that of Kumani. (This was also confirmed by the veterinarian when he remarked that the Bari have an excess of labor.)

The consequences of this situation in economic terms are that the empresa is not able to achieve any kind of sustained capitalization (therefore "advances" are all there is in terms of profits distributed among empresa members). On the other hand, the empresa has maintained a positive balance throughout its years of operation. But most importantly, in terms of social and cultural benefits, it has allowed the Pume to remain within their communities rather than moving out to find employment.

Only once were members told that the empresa had no funds to pay whomever worked at that time. On that occasion, according to the President of the empresa, the Bari decided that the work needed to be done whether they were paid or not and were would be willing to do so until the empresa could pay them again.

The empresa is not without its problems, especially when it comes to the area of management and leadership. The president and the treasurer constitute the most visible, and conflictual, forms of authority in the community. But this is not simply because of the place they occupy in the formal empresa structure, but because of different claims to moral leadership which predate the empresa. The president is a spanish-literate man who is employed by the regional Indian affairs office as an "Indigeneous Promoter," or community organizer.[33] He derives not only a salary from this position, but also a certain status from his capacity to act as a broker between the community and outsiders. Furthermore, his qualifications as community leader, but especially as the needed manager and broker, received a ratification of sorts when the priest used his "suggestive powers" and influence to have him elected as the empresa president in 1984. The treasurer's claim to leadership derives primarily from his achieved level of formal education (the highest in the entire community). But, more important than that, from the way he uses his educational status to legitimize his claim to leadership. He works very hard at being the "consciousness" of the community and the guardian of true Bari values and culture.[34] In an interview, I asked him to rank the main leaders of the community, and he placed the president first but then made it clear that while the president might be the one who takes care of business, he (and those who followed him) had the rapport with members at the grass-root level. He also went on to

explain that traditional leaders were chosen in the past for their capacity to "dialog and converse with the people," clearly suggesting that he fit that characterization better than the President. "Now the Priest (who influenced the election of the president) wants to rule, but the Bari do not let him,." as the secretary observed.

There has developed, then, a type of competition between these two forms of leadership. Although, this has potential benefits, too often management decisions become "political footballs" which each member uses to legitimate his leadership status with the community. Because the Priest supports the empresa, and the president is its leading and necessarily most loyal representative, the competition between these two leaders often becomes a competition between those who want to maintain a strong level of commitment and motivation with regard to the empresa, and those who want to point to the dangers of once again being fooled by the government.[35]

There are other elements that reinforce this conflictual relationship. While the President receives a salary for his "promoting" activities, which basically dovetail with his functions as the empresa president, the treasurer receives no salary for his work in bookkeeping and payroll. In addition, the president hardly participates in the livestock operation, while the treasurer must do so in order to obtain any kind of income. As one IAN official put it, " (name), the president, hardly picks up a machete or goes hunting... . He is more like a bureaucrat." This situation is

actually perceived by many as a violation of the socially sanctioned criteria for "rough justice" or an expected contribution from each individual as both a Bari and member of the collective enterprise.[36]

The treasurer and his wife complained privately about this several times; but publically, their complaints were phrased in the form of questioning the salary formula "as if we are peons in a hacienda and not owners of an empresa." The issue of advances being perceived as wages rather than distribution of profits by cooperative members is a constant theme in the cooperative literature. Its negative implications are that they diminish the member's identity with the enterprise and can enhance feelings of alienation and distrust. Thus Saimadoyi's teacher, and wife of the treasurer, tacitly suggested that empresa profits from cattle sales should be distributed equally among all official members of the cooperative, regardless of the kind of work they did. This formula has often been a recipe for disaster in cooperatives as it encourages free-riders. The exception being those cooperatives placed at the top of Galleski's continuum of collectivization such as the Israeli Kibbutzim.[37] On the other hand, the IAN representative, recognizing the obvious problem in the area of resource distribution, did suggest to the empresa leadership to think about paying the treasurer for his long hours of work.

Informal forms of community sanctions thus operate in Saimadoyi to a much greater degree than they do in Kumani. On the

other hand, as in Kumani, the absence of a de-personalized authority makes it hard for the community members to use more direct forms of recrimination when they may be called for. The "Junta de Vigilancia" or elder's council was supposed to supply the empresa with an extra set of checks and balances. But neither Kumani nor Saimadoyi residents believe this structure can work and, in fact, it has not. But the reasons and implications are not entirely the same for both communities. In Kumani, the problems originated at the very initial stage of the empresa's organization. At this time, IAN failed to adapt the structure to the reality of a very diffused and household-based system of authority (something that may have been corrected with the latest modifications to the organizational structure). It also failed to provide the kind of continuous technical assistance and education that would have raised the level of the three communities' understanding and trust in this system of checks and balances. When asked what the Junta de Vigilancia was for, members invariably referred to technical aspects such as supervision of the cattle to prevent theft, and never to the supervision of the leadership to make sure they were acting according to community needs and desires.

In Saimadoyi, members clearly understood that the Junta was "another set of leaders." In their view, however, this confused things --"everybody giving orders then." They argued that the Bari way was one main leader (the natobay) and a second leader (the duashina), or substitute in the event of the first leader's absence. But ironically, what also occurred was that the empresa

had tried to re-insert the elders in decisions from which they had long been displaced--namely decisions about (new) economic production and reproduction strategies. These were decisions that inevitably involved relationships with external, non-Indian market, state, and religious agents. Prior to the formation of the empresa, as I discussed in chapter 6, the Bari had already resolved the contradictions between young and old leaders by preserving the authority of the latter within the more traditional subsistence activities of fishing and hunting.

But the elders, like other members of the empresa's rank and file in Saimadoyi, had other mechanism open to them for participating in the making of decisions that affected them and which more often than not were connected to cooperative business. To date, the Bari maintain a system of informal and constant communication that takes the form of long nightly chats in different houses and among different families. These are the "conversations" to which the treasurer referred. And, despite the political manipulations of these conversations that he or others may engage in, they continue to be an important forum to discuss the issues of the day and to air the complaints that eventually get to the formal leadership--gossip and escalating grumblings being the preferred mechanisms. In addition, men and women of all ages show up in impressive numbers for any meeting or assembly called by any of the leaders. Even if not everything that is said is understood by all participants there is plenty of material to take

home for continuous discussions.

As it became clear from the discussion of Kumani's internal management, these informal mechanisms of participation are virtually absent, and their development is impeded by the array of obstacles we pointed to. The presence of such mechanisms often render as unnecessary the more abstract and technical system of decision-making required by the empresa or any cooperative organization. This is not always understood by outside observers, including empresa promoters and critics. Nor is it understood by inside observers like the Priest, who, after all, is not terribly interested in those hard-to-control systems of decision-making. In their view, expressed often in my interviews with these individuals, the fact that the formal structure fails to function as required by the statutes constitutes an indication of failure. The orthodox indigenistas, critics of the empresas on the other hand, focus primarily on the inadequacy of this structure to effectively include the "traditional elders." But as I just showed, this is, at least in the case of the Bari, a non-problem. The critic's contention that the empresa's administrative juntas inevitably give young leaders, who are promoted through its ranks, an excessive amount of power vis-a-vis the rest of the community, seemed in the case of the Bari to be exaggerations.[38]

However, informal mechanisms are not always sufficient to deal with the possible aberrations of power that can occur as the empresas evolve. (Some Bari for example complained that the people do not dare to contradict Daniel.") In this sense IAN promoters,

who often listen to the complaints about the leader's behavior, are correct to suggest that an additional mechanism is needed. What they fail to recognize is that, at least in the short term, IAN's field officers are that mechanism. As with the Pume, the officer often constitutes a neutral agent who has little to lose by openly bringing up management problems. In both communities I observed this process when each of the IAN representatives encouraged frank discussions about certain leadership decisions and behaviors with which members were unhappy. The outcome in both cases was extremely positive. Leaders were forced to humbly and honestly admit their mistakes or deeds as well as explain their motives in front of the rank and file membership.

The reason even <u>state agents</u> tend to overlook these more positive functions of <u>state agents</u>--especially when dealing with the politically and ideologically charged case of Indian communities--is the fear of violating, or being accused of violating, the goals of self-determination. In this case however, we must honestly recognize the <u>possibility</u> that state agents and new decision-making structures can extend or re-institute democratic elements which may have been lost along the way--even if they are not restored in "traditional" forms. It is in this part of the process that a state agent who is skillful, dedicated, and knowledgeable of community characteristics can make a difference in the final balance of the cooperative's successes or failures.

But it is also correct to assume, as an ideal, that state

agents would remove themselves from the scene once these communities have learned to deal with the more complex management issues of a formal cooperative structure. The differences between Kumani and Saimadoyi augur the possibilities each community has in achieving this higher degree of autonomous decision-making. Numerous studies have underscored the significance of informal mechanisms of participation as a necessary "prelude" to the more formal cooperative structures of participation.[39] These mechanisms, as I have said repeatedly, are much more apparent in Saimadoyi than Kumani. In this regard, empresa critics are again mistaken in their generalization about the incompatibility of more "traditional" structures with the empresa's "design."[40]

2. Household vs. Collective Survival Strategies

The Saimadoyi Empresa obviously does not occupy the whole gamut of survival strategies employed by the Bari. Contrary to the Pume, however, Bari family strategies complement rather than substitute for the benefits of the empresa. This outcome is therefore much more harmonious with the intended objectives of the program, at least that of its original founders.

All families maintain at least two and often three garden plots which are worked collectively by members of the same "hearth" group or extended family. The nuns, who are far more conservative than the Priest when it comes to their view of Indian communities, do not particularly care for the idea of an empresa indigena and often complained that the gardens are neglected because of the empresa. A few Bari also note that the gardens are sometimes

neglected. It is true that as people have more cash, they become more dependent on purchased goods such as pasta and rice. But the evidence suggested that the neglect of the gardens is minimal. For one thing, there is no easy access to nearby towns to purchase such things as rice on a regular basis. In addition, the organization of the empresa's work process formally includes justified absences to work in private gardens. Undoubtedly, if empresa members do not do so as often as they once did, it is because they prefer to have the cash.

But there are two worrisome signs associated with this potential trend. One is the questionable nutritional value of purchased carbohydrate-packed products. The other is the increased burden on women to tend the family plots as their husbands become more and more involved with the cash operation. Neither one of these issues is easy to assess during short-term field work. From my observations, however, I could say that so far the community's diet seems adequately balanced. This is because the hunting and fishing expeditions still supply the Bari with important sources of protein. In addition, the missionaries have encouraged the planting of fruit trees.[41] Not all residents take equal advantage of these different sources of nutrition. But the potential is there for a more balanced diet.

With regard to women's labor, I observed that women were occupied almost solely with garden activities. Traditionally women have done the harvesting, but men often cooperated and picked up

what was needed for the daily meals. Now, with few exceptions, I saw only women and children performing the harvesting tasks. Moreover, like the Kumani empresa, the Bari empresa has very little room for the formal participation of women. The only exception was the teacher. She is the wife of the treasurer and she is also the empresa's secretary. Because she possesses important administrative skills, the Bari thought nothing of including her in the formal administrative structure, even when that violated the agrarian reform law. Ironically, while her skills as "secretary" are seldom utilized (basically keeping the minutes and writing up the assembly's acts), her opinion on community matters, including the empresa, is highly respected. But conflicts do occur. In the last elections for example, the outgoing president announced through the speakers that only men should show up for the assembly and vote. He had just read the statutes again.

Despite its problems, the empresa in Saimadoyi offers its members a series of short- and long-term benefits which contribute to the Baris' higher level of commitment to a collective effort vis-a-vis that found among the Pume. For one thing, Saimadoyi provides work for all its members. Similarly, it allows young Bari to finance their high school education outside the community while working for the empresa during the vacation periods. The empresa has also been able to generate "old age insurance" and "widow insurance" for those who have needed it thus far.

Although Bari consume little meat, there is the occasional feast[42] in which a cow is killed and consumed collectively. The

social value of these events and their contribution to the solidification of collective bonds is clearly more important than its material value.

In addition, despite lingering insecurities about property rights (of both the land and the cattle), the Bari seem convinced of the arguments of IAN indigenistas and other supportive elements, that the more solid and permanent their economic operation looks to the state, the less risk they run of being relocated or having their land placed under water because of a hydroelectric dam. Maintaining a collective organization allows them to achieve a higher level of economic viability by decreasing the risks of "microcrop" failures and losing rights to state support.

This brings us to those families whose economic strategy was <u>not</u> to join the empresa or to leave soon after they had joined. These residents of Saimadoyi, as noted in the last chapter, had accumulated a herd that was, relatively speaking, much larger than the two or three cows owned by most other families. They had moved out of the central community onto another part of the Saimadoyi valley. During my first visit to Saimadoyi, a representative of those families showed up at the community assembly. He had come to complain, in front the IAN representative, about the ostracization they had received from both community members and IAN. They were particularly insulted by the term "individuales" ("individualists") applied by the Bari to those who refused to work jointly in the empresa with the rest of the community. The Bari

used the term in an indisputably contemptuous tone.

He had also come to ask the IAN representative for help in forming a separate empresa and even obtaining separate title to the land (which is impossible given the juridical figure of Indian Reserve under which these lands fall), and credit from ICAP. These individuals by now understood the structural limitation set by the state's intervention into the agarian structure. Specificially, such support was, within the contemporary policy emphases, widely limited to those peasants who agreed to organize empresas campeinnas or Indigenas.

The Bari contended, quite correctly, that some of the "individuales," particularly the one who came to complain had left the empresa because in its first years it did not pay salaries.[43] For most, this type of behavior was contrary to the collective values upheld by the Bari. For better or for worse, the community in their view should stick together.[44] This type of pre-existing communal ideology and collective economic strategy, combined with the objective benefits of the cooperative, contributed to the Bari's relatively high level of commitment to a collective effort, which was crucial to carry the empresa through its bad times.

The "individuales" in Saimadoyi had, like the Pume, experienced a new level of "peasantization" as they were more heavily dependent upon the sale of cattle for the livelihood. But they had also experienced a degree of "upward-differentiation" which contributed to the severing of some community ties and obligations.[45] These Bari had been more affected by ideologies

that corresponded with the outside market economy, and with the interests of the landowners for whom they worked, or to whom they sold animals, or rented their pasture.[46]

Furthermore, their special vulnerability to criollo scare tactics bears an astonishing resemblance to that of the Pume. These "individuales" had been particularly instrumental in spreading in Saimadoyi some of the allegations made by criollo ranchers, that the "government was going to sooner or later take their cattle away." This was the sort of allegation that was picked up by the treasurer's faction. Although there are understandable fears about land rights, I found no indication that IAN had any intention (and probably not even the administrative capability or desire) to take the cattle or any other resources away from the community. But, as with the Pume, it is not hard to create distrust of government intervention among Indigeneous groups in Venezuela or elsewhere in Latin America. Unfortunately, these allegations and counter allegations had become one of the political footballs between the community's formal and informal leadership. It was an issue around which community emotions could easily be focused. Raising the issues, and constantly questioning IAN motives and threatening the possibility of abandoning the empresa, legitimized the authority of the treasurer as the true guardian of community interests.[47]

Once again we are presented with evidence that the potential conflict between household-based strategies and collective work has

little to do with a confrontation between two culturally distinct forms of production, one traditional and one modern. In fact, as in the case of the Pume, these privitized strategies exemplified in the case of the "individuales," were the result of the penetration of capitalist relations into these groups' dynamic of reproduction, and not an expressions of pre-capitalist traditional practices of subsistence family production.

3. Recent Adaptations to Saimadoyi's Organizational Structure

Toward the end of my visit and through information received througout 1986, I learned that ICAP had approved its first credit for Saimadoyi in the amount of Bs. 450.000. The credit was to be used to upgrade the quality of the herd by introducing a more balanced cross-breed and higher yield milk and beef cattle. The idea was to increase milk production, which is a much more profitable activity in this state and one that receives more government support, not only in terms of credit, but also in terms of subsidized prices. The Priest was not happy with this decision. In his view these cattle were too sophisticated for the unschooled Bari cattlemen. The Bari, although careful not to openly contradict the Priest, seemed to like the idea. However, they knew that the success of the operation depended upon adequate access to the market, and the acquisition of cooling tanks. Currently, the Bari take the cattle to a state-supported slaughter house, "FRICAPECA," in a rented truck suited for traveling on the makeshift and hazardous road which can only be used during the dry season. The new plan contemplated the purchase of a truck for the

community's use. It was not clear how all of this was going to be resolved. In early 1981 they had begun the construction of a road. But the project was paralyzed after some bureaucratic embrolio.

In addition to the new cattle, the Bari had received a grant from IAN to experiment with a collective garden in which they would grow plaintains for the urban market. This seemed to be working well and the Bari were highly motivated about this new activity from the beginning (I was present in the assembly where this was discussed and the majority agreed that rather than planting and harvesting individually they should do it like "it used to be, all together.")

The environmental, social, and economic impact of these changes in the community can be substantial. The nature of the impact will depend greatly on the capacity of the Bari to pace these developments as they have managed to do with the preceeding changes introduced by the empresa. It will also depend on whether these new activities will imply a loss of control over that pace, given the requirements of yet another agency, ICAP, with which they must deal. The empresa critics have charged that this credit agency is the main catalyst for drastic and externally-controlled changes in Indian communities organized as empresas. The revision of the program's history, as well as the literature examining rural development programs in Latin America, suggests that they are at least partially correct. Private and state credit institutions are often the Achilles heel of peasant production units, whether they

are individual or collective in native. State agencies are instrumental in the subordination of peasant production to various forms of capital, not only finance capital. This often means that internal decisions about the type of crops to be planted will be determined by state agencies. Agroindustrial complexes influence the state's decisions about the type of crops for which peasant producers will receive support. Invariably, these are the less profitable crops, and given their lack of control over the market, peasants often end up increasing their level of self-exploitation to meet the credit payments thus completing the subordination cycle.[48] In the case of ICAP, IAN indigenistas have maintained a continuous struggle to force this agency to adapt its requirements to the needs and interests of the Indian communities.[49] Although indigenistas have failed in the past, in Saimadoyi, they seemed to have been somewhat successful. The community chose the crop they wanted to plant and rejected other suggestions made by ICAP (such as cacao). They also decided on the number of hectares with which they wished to start.

II. Sypnosis and Conclusions

Not surprisingly, results both in terms of economic gains and social changes were very different for Saimadoyi and Kumani. The Pume's herd had been reduced by the second half of 1985 by more than 60% (IAN, 1986) Kumani has experienced progressive decapitalization reflected not only in the reduction of its herd, but also in the deterioration of its infrastructure and the total

loss of that crucial and costly factor of production, horses. The Pume had been unable to meet any of their credit payments. Their treasury balance in 1985 was slightly above the amount of the required monthly payment. Meeting their credit obligations would have left the empresa with no capital for inputs or wages. The potentially productive area in Kumani totals about 15,000 hectares, but only about 8,000 are utilized because of condition of pasture and poor management of the herd.

The Bari on the other hand have had the advantage of setting their own limits of productive land through a well-paced deforestation process. They have increased the area from some 200 to over 500 has. The Bari's herd showed a moderate increase in levels of reproduction (around 45%). The empresa also had a positive fiscal balance during the 1982-1985 period.

In terms of social change and benefits, the two empresas also differed greatly. Proletarianization among the Bari has been halted, but, this process had been intensified among the Pume as a result of the near zero productivity of subsistance plots. This was itself a consequence of the combined factors of poor soil, labor requirements for extensive livestock production, and the inability of the empresa to generate any meaningful income. Saimadoyi's success in providing employment for all of its members came at a cost. The empresa was unable to increase its capitalization fund because of a fairly large payroll.[50] This means, among other things, that it must continue to depend on IAN grants for the acquisition of the more costly capital inputs. The

failure of its leadership to reduce redundant labor is a logical explanation for the so far minor neglect of subsistence plots and the concomitant increase in women's labor time.

While the Bari retained control of their labor process and maintained a degree of autonomy in decisions pertaining to the organization of production and distribution of their products, the same cannot be said of the Pume. The problems involved in running a large hacienda, combined with the aggressive antagonism of local criollos toward land-owning Indians, increasingly led IAN Indigenistas to assume almost total control over the operation of the empresa. The principles of self-management and participatory democracy, central to the definition of alternative grass-root projects and to the Program's goals themselves, were never really upheld in Kumani. Instead, the Pume's continued reliance on semi-proletarianization, plus the state's increasing control over the empresa's productive process, meant that their subordination to outside agents had not been lessened but actually increased.

Pre-existing levels of social cohesiveness and solidarity, communal practices, and the related presence of informal mechanisms of participation, proved crucial in the development of these two empresas, especially during the critical formative stages. The Bari were more likely than the Pume to accept the democratic structure of the empresa and its emphasis on "Bari working together" as symbolic of their strong ethnic identity and communal solidarity. As Young, Sherman, and Rose have stated, if these

members "come to see the cooperative as a source of solidarity and purposive incentives, the cooperative will enjoy a degree of affective loyalty which may be of great importance in helping it to survive the economic difficulties of the early period of its existence" (1981:19). Despite its problems, the empresa has supplied the Bari with new ideological and material legitimations for collective efforts. This was evident, for example, in their treatment of the "individuales" and their projection of the collective form of economic organization onto new areas of production.[51]

In contrast, the difficult conditions that have confronted the Pume since their move to the empresa have often fostered conflictual and anti-collective behavior, such as the illegal sale of cattle by individual members.

At the level of individual enterprises then, there is evidence that communal efforts were strengthened among the Bari when compared with the Pume. Contrary to the opinions of empresa critics, at least in the case of the Bari[52] there are important mechanisms of communal solidarity and relations of production and redistribution that could be successfully "grafted" on to other forms of cooperation.

On the other hand, the household-based organization of production, most prevalent among the Pume, was not, as these critics generalize, a remnant of their traditional economies. Rather it evolved as a result of capital penetration in their areas. In fact, many of the decisions connected to their current

means of reproduction seemed only secondarily influenced by those organizational features that pre-dated colonial times and which were still evident among these groups. A case in point were cross-cousin marriage and matrilocal residence patterns. It was initially thought that such cultural proscriptions might shape decisions involving migration patterns and commitment of the Indians to remain in the empresa. But the analysis of these decisions indicates that these kinship patterns are no longer the principal factor guiding the Pumé's socio-economic arrangements and survival strategies. Accordingly, decisions about staying or leaving the empresa were mostly shaped by the objective evaluation of what the empresa had to offer vis-a-vis other survival strategies.

There is no doubt that community ties and ethnic-based strategies continue to be important "insurance policies" for the survival of Pume families. This was particularly evident in the case of the members from Los Mangos. But in the highly heterogeneous, and originally unaccounted for, "inter-communal" context in which the Kumani empresa was organized, such ties were very weak. In this sense, the pilot's comments regarding the mistaken establishment of Kumani in Santa Cecila were probably correct albeit for the wrong reasons. A cooperative organization would probably have had a better chance of survival had it been set in Fruta de Burro.

But even in Fruta de Burro the degree to which Pume survival

strategies had become individualized had to be taken into consideration when deciding at what level a cooperative could be realistically organized.[53] For the Bari, community-wide forms of cooperation and egalitarian distribution of community resources was an intrinsic component of their contemporary survival strategies. In the case of the Pume, their increased dependence on commodity production placed in conflict the maintenance of community ties and individualist activities such as fencing their small plots and monetizing previously reciprocal forms of labor exchanges. The insertion into commodity production has also involved some contradictory individualistic and collective practices. Their participation in local cattle ranches takes a collective form. On the other hand, there is great emphasis in this pastoral society of Apure, on the tenacity and self-made character of the individual "llanero."

The presence of collective modes of cooperation and ideologies are not sufficient elements to guarantee an effective transition to expanded forms of collectivization, let alone assuring the survival of the empresa in its present state. In the context of Venezuelan political economy, state support is crucial. The erratic and minimal levels of commitment to Indian collectivization by dominant class factions in the state proved fatal in the case of Kumani where the historically problematic situation of the Pume could not be overcome. In the case of the Bari, however, the presence of a coherent set of collective values, a communally-held land base, pre-existing joint work arrangements, and even the kind of

protection provided by the church, provided appropriate incentives and special conditions for experimental forms of cooperation in production. These internal factors impinged on each groups' calculation of risk and their ability to determine the level at which they wished to commit themselves to a new and problematic production process. The Bari had in the land a relatively self-sufficient economy, and in the missionaries, an "insurance policy" that the Pume did not have. But the local political and economic context also determined important differences in the level of state support given to each of these empresas. Kumani, and the Pume in general, are caught in one of the most hostile environments in Venezuelan society where land is scarce and competition for resources is fierce. Political battles are therefore equally explosive as politicians scramble to establish their clientalistic base. Kumani benefited from such battles to the extent that it was formed during an election year. But from then on, it became a target of land-hungry criollos and a victim of politicians who put IAN's money where the votes were. Kumani received only two grants from IAN from its inception until 1986 (Saimadoyi had received grants every year they had been in operation). In addition, the Pume were held responsible for the credit they received from IAN, which placed them in an untenable position given the dismal performance of the empresa. On the other hand, the credit given to the Bari, not only did not require any interest payments, but local IAN delegates had arranged it so the credit received in 1980 would

be basically forgiven if the Bari showed efficient re-investment of their capital into their's or other Bari communities.

Within these two very different contexts, the Bari have, so far, chosen to maintain their commitment to the collective enterprise. The Pume have resorted instead to those defensive strategies that have helped them survive for so many years among the exploitative and repressive criollos. They retreated; said "yes" when they meant "no," held on to the empresa land while working on someone else's livestock ranch; and, ultimately, sold the cattle to feed their families.

END NOTES

1. For analyses that suggest evaluation criteria of development programs among the peasantry as a whole see, for example Fals Borda (1977); Carter and Alvarez (1986); and Singleman (1978) among many others. From the peasant literature on criteria of subordination and mechanisms of transformation of such conditions, see Llanvi (1981); Zamosc (1980). For Indian alternative development project criteria see the entire issue of Cultural Survival: 11 (1); and especially the articles by Jason Clay, Stiles, and Richard Chase Smith.

2. See Carter and Kanel (1985), Reed (1975), Young, Sherman, and Rose (1980).

3. See Chapter 2, 3. Gusti (1984) for general; Galli (1981); See, for Venezuela, Gutman and Van Kesteren (1978), Vesuri (1977), Cendes (1982); BCV, various Informe Economico. This statement must be qualified so as not to suggest that all peasant production is functionalistically trapped in the roads of disappearance-subordination. In fact, some peasant units in Venezuela and Latin America have been able to increase their level of capital accumulation and transform into what is being called in the literature "capitalized family farms." This road as Llanvi, Lehman, and others point out, has been neglected by people like de Janvry who have excessively focused on the phenomena of "functional dualism".

4. This is not a typical in the organization of voluntary cooperatives. Interviews.

5. At this level it is valid to suggest that party competition played some role in the decisions of delegados agrarios not to support Kumani wholeheartedly during COPEI's administration. Kumani had been organized by local AD state officials and the Pume clearly identified the latter party as their benefactor--albeit a largely un-important one. Apure's IAN office had lost its Indian coordinator by the mid-eighties and local politics weighed heavily on decisions concerning distribution of funding and levels of support for these Indian families.

6. Interviews with Kumani members and local IAN officials (1985).

7. Interviews with national IAN officials (1985).

8. In chapter 5 I explained that IAN maintained a permanent workforce in the area of Santa Cecilia which had been reserved for the institute.

9. IAN's failure to take care of the problem was therefore not accidental. It would have meant a straining of the client relationships between the relatively powerful Peasant Federation and the AD administration.

10. These resources included gardens in both places whenever possible, wage labor among the younger members, and fishing in Santa Cecilia, and possibly the cattle itself.

11. Interviews with national IAN officials (1985).

12. One of the major problems the Pume of Kumani face is the long distances from one side of the ranch to the other. When they leave in horseback to check one side, says an IAN official, "by the time they return they (the criollos) have already cut the fence on the other side". The criollos are also victims of cattle theft, but in their case, the situation can be somewhat alleviated by their capacity to instill fear of retaliation in potential offenders. The implied threat is often being shot with a high-caliber rifle. The Indians do not have such weapons--although they asked for them during one of my visits--and, given their powerless position, they fear much more than they are feared.

13. General Assembly, Kumani (1985).

14. Interviews with IAN officials and Kumani members (1985). Field observation (1985).

15. Although such rights continued to be secured through the fragile "possessor" titles.

16. Members complained however, that the elected caporal, an elder of the Mata de Mango community, did not know enough about cattle herding.

17. In Venezuela, and especially in states such as Apure where there are virtually no internal roads to divide properties, the state maintains the right to stretches of land dividing such properties. These are called "camino real" See Carvallo (1985).

18. See Cox (1981); Carter and Kanel (1985).

19. See for example Fals Borda (1977), Carter and Kanel (1985).

20. Field Observations, interviewees with IAN field personnel (1985).

21. Carter and Kanel (1985).

22. Several IAN reports allude to this problem.

23. Like other ranches in the area, Kumani did not have weight scales and therefore the weight has to be estimated.

24. Although his case seemed to be different because he inhabited the ranch before Kumani was founded.

25. The impact of these changes in women's participation in production on gender relations was not yet clear. Given the minimal scale at which the empresa was operating, the impact was also minimal.

26. Field observations (1985).

27. A progressive anthropologist who was high committed to save the land for the Pume and help them get their empresa on a better footing.

28. Basically, they combine some modest technological improvements such as improved pastures, with relatively large grazing areas.

29. Operational plans (Plan Operativo) show that the Bari received state support every year since the empresa was organized. Compare this with the Pume situtation described above.

30. According to the empresa books, the nuns are the most important buyers of milk.

31. From the point of view of the relationship between peasants and the capitalist economy, this would suggest a typical case of "over-exploitation." In other words, the Bari, in order to be able to sell the cattle at prices set by the capitalist sector of the economy, must be willing to work harder for less benefits (they keep a smaller portion of the surplus value their labor generates). As Chayanov (1974) correctly pointed out, peasants enterprises, contrary to capitalist enterprises are not dependent on substantial capital accumulation for their reproduction. Rather, this calculation of "benefits" takes into account the relationship between "drudgery" and consumption needs. Beyond this, there are problems with the the Chayanoian argument which tends to lock peasants into this logic, often appealing to culturalists relations such as an anti-market, anti-capitalist "rationality." What locks peasants into this logic is not cultural or ideological convictions, but their inability to overcome structural limitation inspired by a capitalist-controlled market, and a state which favors capitalist producers in most (not all) instances. Cultural and ethical prescriptions (moral economy) do have their place in the analysis however. Culturally

prescribed rules and obligations about social responsibility, commitment to territorial integrity, and collective redistribution of the community's benefit influence individual peasant/Indian groups' decisions to relinquish economic benefits for higher social goals (ultimately tied to wise understanding of the group's requirement for long term survival). So from the point of view of the Bari themselves, an inefficient use of labor and thus a lower rate of individual and collective income, is justified by the higher goal of providing equal employment opportunities for all Bari, and distributing the empresas modest income also equally. See Guggenheim and Weller (1982).

32. Unfortunately there is no census of the community broken down by age which would give us the economically active labor force.

33. See chapter 2 for a more detailed description of this post and its functions.

34. For example, any time outside visitors came to visit, especially military and govenment officials, he got up and gave long speeches about Bari way of life and self-determination, and warned these officials about false promises.

35. It is interesting to note that the "followers" of the treasurer reflect a combination of traditional and inherited "centripetal forces" and redefined "primordial loyalties." They are both members of his extended family, and individuals like the first empresa president whose reputation in the community had been damaged for various reasons, was not a very effective manager by all accounts. And it was unfortunate that during his term the Bari were almost fooled by the Ministry of the Environment's efforts to build a hydroelectric dam while pretending to do soil studies. He therefore had instrumental reasons for belittling the actions of the president who followed him, and who enjoyed a fair amount of respect among community members.

36. The term rough justice is used by authors such as Carter and Kanel (1985).

37. And even in these cases, collectivist principles of redistribution have had to be modified to include some measure of effort rather than "to each according to his/her needs" (See Galleski, 1973).

38. I had several opportunities to observe how decisions made by the chief were opposed by the community and had to be modified.

39. Carter and Kanel (1985), and Galleski (1987) refer for example to the case of Israeli Kibbutzim and the Hutterites.

40. I thus reiterate one of the central arguments of this dissertation, and that is that communities which possess a more coherent set of collective values and patterns are more likely to adopt an independent posture at the appropriate conjunctures. State programs like the empresas have reinforced the autonomous posture of the Bari. For example, the Bari have recently openly expressed their view that they do not need the Priest to "run" things for them anymore; that he can leave and the Bari can do it alone. This reinforces a point often made in the recent ethnicity literature, on state program's effect on ethnic identity and politicization. However, as the case with the Pume illustrates, this is not automatic. In fact, these programs can do quite the opposite when they are introduced in settings where extreme inter-ethnic conflict has produced severe social disorganization and alienation within the ethnic group exposed to the state program.

41. For example one can drink lemonade almost any time, and there are often papayas and other fruits to be found.

42. Usually "Mother's day" and "Christmas" obviously a missionary initiative.

43. This particular individual had indeed left to seek wage employment outside the community, leaving his small herd and his job responsibilities to be taken up by the other members. Free-rider behavior was not tolerated among the Bari. Upon his return, they, without IAN's assistence, informed him that he was no longer part of the empresa and he should take his cattle some place else.

44. This was repeated in many forms and many times.

45. In the same meeting, however, this individual spoke of not wanting to do harm to his Bari brothers by breaking up the land and would be willing to consider alternatives.

46. They had been unwilling to redistribute their cattle in any way for example.

47. This, according to the decrees governing the Indian reserve as illegal inside the Indian reserve. The pasture land was also rented at about a third below the standard prices (Interview with empresa leaders, 1985). These "individuales" believed deeply in the value of having their own property, said one, " I think I cannot join the empresa because...I only like to

work "individual," that is with my own family; we don't want be more than `individual,' only." Unfortunately he had no other choice than to use the only term he knew how to refer to their special situation; "individual." (Assembly Meeting 1985).

48. Field observations (1985) Material concerns also help explain some of this observation. The teacher had also accumulated a relatively larger herd when she entered the empresa and placed with with the new collective heard. While she received a salary for her teaching, they were not getting much benefit from the herd unless her husband helped take care of it (something they didn't even do much of before). In the case of the other individual who joined them in their opposition to the empresa, he was closely related to the families who did not join the empresa initially and often visited them and was exposed to their arguments against the empresa.

49. See Zamosc (1980).

50. Interviews with IAN field personnel (1985); accounting books of Saimadoyi (1981-1985).

51. Exact calculations were not possible.

52. See Deere (1986).

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT AMONG INDIGENOUS GROUPS

This dissertation has addressed two sets of questions that sometimes overlap and at different points in the analysis take on a significance of their own. The first has to do with the broader political economic forces and internal community characteristics that have shaped the evolution of a program of collective agricultural enterprises among Indian communities: the empresas Indigenas. The second set of questions, which have so far been addressed individually, has to do with the impact these government-supported development programs have had on the lives of Indian groups who participate in them. How are Indian communities transformed by their participation in these types of development projects? What is the Indians' perspective on what these cooperatives can do for them, in terms of the preservation of cultural values and traditionally sanctioned arrangements and strategies they deem crucial to their existence? Conversely, what can the participants do to ameliorate or transcend those economic, social, and political conditions (whether external or internal) which they view as a threat to their very existence? Ultimately, then, could this type of project, lead not only to the economic viability of these communities, but to an organically integrated development process, which as Jason Clay aptly put it, "is not separated from everyday life,...strengthens a community by

enhancing its ability to identify and work collectively to solve local problems and defend its own interests" (Clay, 1987:p.2).

In what follows, I will first summarize the most important analytical conclusions concerning the first set of questions. Then, I offer a succinct discussion of the broader issue of long-term implications and possible lessons we can derive from the particular approach to development that was the foundation for the organization of Indian cooperatives in Venezuela.

II. Genesis and Evolution of the Venezuelan Indian Development Program

It has been stressed throughout this dissertation that the specific policy process, method of organization, and subsequent performance of the Indian development Program and the Saimadoyi and Kumani cooperatives in particular were molded by different "levels of determination." These levels can be analytically distinguished according to two different but related criteria. First, there are forces fundamentally outside the Indian communities that constitute the broader political and economic backdrop for the evolution of the empresa program and its various sub-components. These are what I have described as "external factors." Second, there are influential forces that emerge primarily from the internal composition of independent communities and from the particular form of the cooperative organization adopted by such communities. These I have labeled "internal factors."

One can distinguish these different levels of determination by

examining the distinction between broader contextual factors and more concrete and conjunctural phenomena. Specifically, we must distinguish between "structural" factors that constitute the outer parameters of reformist policies, and "conjunctural" or contingent factors that mediate between more abstract forces and concrete outcomes. This distinction has been central to Marxist methodology. Yet, as Llanvi (1988) recently pointed out, students of the peasantry, both those of a Marxist and non-Marxist perspective, often confuse these two fundamental levels of determination. Most typically, contingent factors are treated as structural barriers. This is also the problem found among some critical analyses of the empresas program. Contingent/historical factors such as a community's form of reproduction are treated as constant "independent" variables, which determine an inevitable contradiction between these forms and the empresas's organizational structure.

Stressing these distinctions, while remaining mindful of external factors, this dissertation has stressed the importance of the economic and political system that characterizes the Venezuelan state and constitutes the structural scaffold upon which reformist policies are built. Within the category of external factors I have paid particular attention to the form of the Venezuelan state and its commitment to agrarian transformation. I have also emphasized the requirements of capital accumulation and the particular patterns of accumulation that characterize Venezuela's socio-economic system.

The following statements can then be safely made about the significance of these "external" or contextual factors and the level at which they manifest themselves. First, at the more abstract level, I conclude that a capitalist environment, and the corresponding functions of a capitalist state, constitutes the outer layer of limitations to the development of collective, emancipatory and egalitarian models of production. Both the theoretical and more substantive literature on cooperatives recognize the contradictions between a capitalist "regime" based on the disassociation of labor and capital and the principles of private accumulation through competition, and the cooperative principles of collective work, workers' control over means of production, and equal redistribution of rewards. In other words, the capitalist system, and the particular accumulation and legitimating functions that the state must perform within such a system, set clear structural limitations to the evolution of alternative forms of economic and social organization.

Moreover, and at a slightly lower level of abstraction, I argued that Venezuela's particular pattern of capitalist development and the state's mode of intervention defines a still clearer image of those outer limits. More precisely, an oil-fueled, capital intensive, export-oriented industrialization process has, as in other Latin American countries, subordinated the development of agriculture to such a process. This has translated into low wages and profit levels within the agricultural sector and

to high levels of food imports.

So far, this kind of scenario is what leads people like de Janvry (1981) to theorize a "logic of accumulation" for Latin American economies that is fundamentally "disarticulated" because it lacks important forward and backward linkages in the production process (Department I and Department II in Marxist terminology). These countries' major source of capital realization lies outside the formation's boundaries thus inhibiting the development of an important internal market, an leading to an incipient and piecemeal industrialization process. This results in low wages and low prices for agricultural products. One of the most immediate consequences of these structural conditions for peasant production have been their difficulty in reproducing themselves and their units of production. This can have serious consequences, among other things, for the reproduction of a cheap urban labor market. It is partly due to concerns about losing a labor force, and partly for political and ideological reasons, that the state in Latin America has assumed the important role of preventing the total disappearance of various categories of peasant producers. This has been done through the enactment of reformist policies such as agrarian reform and rural development programs, and through the manipulation of price structures and financial and protectionist policies.

In Chapter 3, I introduced some modifications of this general scenario based on the Venezuelan case. In the conceptual bargaining between theoretical and empirical phenomena which

comprises theory building according to Wright (1985), the model offered by de Janvry appears somewhat functionalistic. Specifically, the absence of an internal market seems greatly exaggerated, as does the related impossibility of peasant units of production to achieve sustained capitalization under the third world countries' logic of capital accumulation. I will return to this latter point in the last section dealing with the long-term possibilities for Indian cooperatives and alternative development programs.

However, broader, modified, theoretical parameters are also insufficient to explain the genesis and evolutionary trajectory of specific reformist policies--in this case, policies attempting to deal with the "Indian question." Contingent conditions related to Venezuela's own accumulation and political process, and issues such as the social composition of the state and its administrative and fiscal capacity at different points in time, become "particular propositions describing the intended and unintended consequences" of such specific policy formulations (Llanvi, 1988:p. 355; see also de Janvry, 1981). In other words, the explanation of concrete policy developments cannot be automatically derived from an abstract understanding of Latin American, or Venezuelan, development patterns. Nor can they be derived from the widely tested analyses of rural development among the non-Indian peasantry. Indian social formations impose a separate set of structural and contingent conditions on the evolution and success

and failure of those policies within specific communities. Expressed succinctly, factors such as accumulation and political (or legitimacy) crises have generated an especially high level of state intervention within Latin America's economic structure. But, levels of intervention and commitment by the state are contingent on an array of circumstances ranging from fiscal capacity to the level of political mobilization of pertinent social actors.

I start by summarizing the abstract and contingent conditions which were fundamentally external to Indian communities and which posed real limitations to, as well as possibilities for, the development of the empresas project.

This history of the Venezuelan program of Indian development and extensive examinations of external factors suggests that collectivization among Indian communities was never part of the state's dominant agrarian and peasant strategy. The level of the state's commitment, reflected in small budgets and erratic support, was always unquestionably low. Such limited state support raises questions about the real "motives" behind this development program. Of particular interest are the extent to which such motives coincided with national political and economic goals established for rural development programs among the larger sector of the non-Indian peasantry, and how rationales and levels of state support tended to interact with each other.

One argument made by empresa critics is that collectivization among Indian communities was part and parcel of the dominant agrarian policy which sought to subordinate (with the conscious

collaboration of IAN indigenistas) Indian production and labor to the expanding rural capitalist dynamic. However, this view appears largely unfounded. First, the extension of the empresa program to Indian communities met with great opposition from dominant factions within the agencies charged with national agrarian policy. The Indigenistas were not collaborators, they struggled to increase resources while working to maintain the autonomy of the collectivization program. Second, in an agrarian sector where unemployment is high and state support for increasing agricultural productivity is consistently channeled to the less risky clients, neither Indian labor, nor Indian units of production would seem particularly attractive as major components of state agrarian plans.

Critics have also argued that the empresas Indigenas plan and the parallel effort to support an organized Indian movement were designed to coopt and halt an independent Indian movement that was forming in the frontier areas and which threatened the stability of the countryside (Arvelo-Jimenez, 1984). The evidence of any major movement prior to the program seems greatly exaggerated. Similarly, Serbin (1983)[1] has argued that the prime motivation for the establishment of an Indian program had to do with incorporating the Indian population into the political (and mainly electoral) clientele of the dominant Venezuelan parties. Judging by the relatively small size and low levels of political organization of this constitutency at the time, it is again difficult to believe

that this was the overriding motivation for the Indian program.

I do not disagree totally with these economic and political rationales that seek to explain the organization of an Indian program in terms of implicit objective (de Janvry, 1981). But I believe that the emphasis given to these motives by the program's critics must be reconsidered on the basis of a more thorough assessment of the Venezuelan agrarian structure and the place Indians occupy in it. Given the recognized limits to "Indian power" and their small contribution to agricultural production, I suggest that while legitimacy was an issue, the main concern of dominant state agents was not to secure the support of what was essentially a politically weak Indian constituency, but rather to preventing an ideological legitimacy crisis among an objective, and much larger, non-Indian peasant constituency.

For the latter group, the benefits of the agrarian reform of the sixties had started to decrease rapidly as peasant communities experienced new levels of land concentration, semi-proletarianization, and the massive exodus of younger members to the towns and cities in search of more reliable sources of income.[2] Faced with mounting food crises and excessive food imports, the COPEI and AD administrations had progressively shifted the state's agricultural policy to emphasize economic productivity as opposed to goals of redistribution and social justice, which were celebrated in the earlier phase of agrarian reform. This orientation was clearly expressed in COPEI's PRIDA, and Perez's Empresas Campesinas program. The development programs were

designed to consolidate the strongest and better off peasant and farmer's units of production. The poorer, semi-proletarian peasantry received no more land (only social-welfare type benefits), and the Indian peasantry was left out all together.

It was extremely important that the peasantry view these moves as "legitimate" and consistent with the parties' populist claims about democratic and egalitarian rule. The fact that populist nationalist ideologies had become impregnated with the celebration of Indian cultures allowed this conjunctural event to be converted into a vehicle for restoring ideological legitimacy among more integrated sectors of the agrarian structure. But as we can infer from the history of the program, the ephemeral issue of legitimacy is a very fragile peg in which to hang the continuity of Indian development.

Toward the end of the 1970s, the Venezuelan rural population stood at less than a quarter of the total population. Much of the peasant leadership had either been coopted through the new agrarian reform projects, or its power effectively reduced by the objective shrinking and fragmentation of its constituency. This made the virtual dismantling of the Indian program easier at a time when new accumulation crises began to emerge and the state's legitimacy problems came increasingly from the dominant classes.

That is not to say that once the Indians were on the state's payroll attempts were not made to direct their participation to dominant economic patterns as well as political interests. Such

efforts, were made for example, having the empresas produce extractable income, and making sure their numbers be counted in subsequent elections.

It is not necessary to vilify the founders and executors of the Indian program. The "state" can still be made accountable for whatever problems we may find with these empresas, without having to assume that all pertinent state actors involved in this program participated in some sort of conspiracy to deepen the neo-colonization process (Arvelo-Jimenez, 1984). On the contrary, my own interviews and review of the records show that IAN indigenistas and their advisors made a consistent effort to wrestle control of the Indian program from PRIDA and other partisan agencies that shared the integrationist orientation toward Indian policies.

Some of the critics cited in this dissertation seemed to be suggesting that the unprecedented articulation of an Indian development program represented a new level of consensus within the Venezuelan state regarding the re-direction of "Indian policy." This re-direction was apparently intended to achieve new levels of "peasantization" among the Indian population in order to fulfill the demands of a growing food market. This claim seems hard to reconcile with the economic and political sabotage to which this program was subjected. I therefore offer a different explanation: that the dominant forces within the state had no intention of shifting the parameters of their so-called Indian policy until a vocal group of progressive individuals appeared in the Venezuelan congress. Previous policy amounted to a series of uncoordinated

(re)actions to the "Indian Problem." These reactions inconveniently overlapped with more cohesive and well-funded capital and state accumulation schemes and with geopolitical projects periodically implemented in the mineral-rich Indian territories.

Before the arrival of the progressives, the cornerstone of Indian programs had been to provide basic economic relief and social services for the populations least protected by a secure land base and missionary presence, and mild support for education and small economic programs for the others. The early programs avoided any plan that solidified the presence of Indian communities in the territories they still controlled, and which made it harder to relocate these communities when the exploitation of their resources became cost effective.[3]

In brief, I argue that rather than being vehicles for pursuing dominant aims of Indian policy, the empresas were, at least for some important elements in the state, a potential threat to such aims. The fact that they were not as easy to control as the less autonomous non-Indian clientele meant that the Indian empresas and the accompanying Indian federations could become (at least in some cases) mechanisms for entrenching the territorial roots of Indian communities. This entrenchment effect was an important factor behind the drastic moves made by both administrations to constrain the program's scope and direction shortly after they had moved to strengthen the program significantly.

But the political and economic context did not exhaust the range of factors associated with the problems and few successes experienced by individual empresas. Critics are certainly correct when they point to the poor fit that existed between the "design" of these empresas and at least some of the communities where they were established. Yet, the nuances and variations of that claim must be empirically established. There are key "internal," (structural and contingent) conditions that, in my view, determine the outcomes and particular trajectories of peasant cooperatives, and particularly of the two empresas examined in detail here. Exercising due caution, the lessons abstracted from these cases suggest some fundamental principles for the elaboration of alternative development projects.

There are two fundamental structural factors that set important parameters to the evolution of collective organizations. One is access to communal land and the other is the pre-existing pattern of collective work.

Several works have remarked that pre-existing land tenure patterns affect other organizational features of the collective farm (Galleski, 1973, Zamosc, 1986). However, those works have primarily been interested in considering those land tenure patterns that affect the non-Indian peasantry. Thus their analyses have focused on comparisons of full-time agricultural workers in large estates which are later expropriated to organize a cooperative, and the situation of family-sized farms whose members own land individually and tend to resist collectivization. In the case of

Indian communities where cooperatives are organized in a situation of traditional access to communal land, evidence is inconclusive. The Pume, however, did tend to resemble the peasant category of smallholders (minifundistas) who have very precarious and limited access to small plots of land insufficient for their reproduction. In this case, studies are more explicit in terms of the prospects for cooperatives raised on these pre-existing structures.

Most studies consider minifundista landholders potential candidates for mobilizing to form collective organizations. Judging from my own fieldwork, and secondary information on similar projects[4] I contend that adequate access to traditionally held communal land is another, and very significant, pattern of land tenure that facilitates the organization of cooperatives. However, neither of these structural patterns is a sufficient condition to guarantee the successful mobilization of peasants in collectivization efforts. Such success is contingent upon a number of factors, only some of which are related to land tenure itself. For example, success is contingent upon the specific legal structure that regulates land tenure systems (in Venezuela, in this case) and the degree of rigidity with which such regulations are enforced. In the case of the Pume, we saw that despite their allotted rights to the Santa Cecilia Hato, the guarantee of such rights through a "possessory" (as opposed to a "definitive") title was a constant reminder that those rights were contingent upon the empresa's performance--as mandated by the agrarian reform law.

This created a sentiment of distrust and concomitant disincentives that IAN was never able to dissipate. In the case of the Bari, the juridical figure of the "Indian Reserve" constituted an acknowledgment of their ancestral occupation of these areas. This allowed the Bari the possibility of retaining the same area (however reduced in size) they had occupied for centuries, and, equally important, gave them added symbolic legitimation to continue to fight for the integrity of their territory. The agrarian reform empresa, through its intimate relationship with collective land rights, added an additional "brace" and further reinforced the struggle for the preservation of the Bari's territory.

The second "internal factor" considered central to in the organization of cooperatives and the empresas in particular is the pre-existing organization of the work process and social exchange. This concerns one of the central themes of this dissertation, i.e., pre-existing collective relations of production and other communal arrangements. Two case studies are obviously not sufficient to make the claim that pre-existing collective socio-economic arrangements are indeed a key structural component in the successful evolution of more complex cooperatives, but they are certainly suggestive. Lingering doubts, in my view, remain because we are confronted with (contingent) polymorphous and wide-ranging degrees of manifestations of collective arrangements. I contend, then, that <u>while pre-existing forms of cooperation in production, distribution, and the elaboration of material and non-material</u>

culture are a structurally conditioning factor, they are insufficient to guarantee the successfully transition and long-term survival of newer and expanded forms of cooperation.

Numerous contingencies enter into the policy process, both at the national and local level of individual enterprises. Such contingencies ultimately mold (or mediate in the molding of) the specific trajectories followed by these enterprises. One such factor is skill levels in the particular area of production emphasized by the new enterprises. Another is the adequate balance between biological conditions and technological innovation, i.e., the degree to which factors of production can perform or be improved to perform up to the level required to maintain a viable economic operation. For example, we saw in the case of the Pume, that they not only started with poor soil and the usually poor performance of natural pastures, but were unable, or unwilling, to improve such pastures through technological innovations such as paddock rotation. The Bari, on the other hand, are located in an area known for its comparatively richer soils, and they improved pastures. They also engaged in a process of cross-breeding to improve the quality of their cattle, and they improved market opportunities through a mixed dairy and beef farming system.

Another, very important factor is the form state intervention takes at the level of individual enterprises. This includes a series of sub-issues such as levels of financial support and technical assistance, quality of field personnel, and the degree to

which the objectives of key sets of actors (state agents, different community residents) tend to coincide or conflict with each other. Finally, this factor also impacts the degree to which the cooperative's "design" is adequately adapted to the particular (contingent) circumstances found in each individual community.

Lastly, differences in external social relations also have a significant impact on the performance of cooperative enterprises. Such relations can also adopt a structural or contingent condition. Since Lenin, scholars dealing with the peasant question have theorized that peasant units of production situated in "involuted" areas (where large estates are the dominant agrarian structure) have a lesser chance of achieving a transition to autonomous, capitalized farms, than where independent peasant units predominate. In the more recent versions of this debate, Lehman (1985), among others has made an important contribution by exploring external social relations differences within the Latin American context The argument is rich in theoretical and empirical implications. I will simply point to one or two of those implications which became most obvious in the comparison between the Bari and the Pume.

In areas where a combination of large estates and small holdings (minifundia) predominate, the relationship between these two forms of production is one of conflictive co-existence. Moreover, the historical trend has resulted in the modernization of the large states and the proliferation of latifundia (the Junker road in Lenin's terminology). In these areas, the concomitant

social relations of production are equally conflictive and reflect some version of the landlord-wage laborer formula. On the other hand, capitalized family farms have been able to emerge in areas where such estates do not exhaust productive land and where the dissociation between labor and capital is thus less severe. These polar phenomena fit with amazing precision the situation of Apure vs. Perija. In Apure, the large cattle ranches have reached the limits of the agricultural frontier. These estates require a seasonal and constant supply of wage laborers which is contradictory with the development of peasant holdings. Furthermore, and with respect to the Indian peasants, relations of exploitation maintaining this dual system have by now been incorporated into the structure of social relations. Ethnic discrimination and repression constitute additional guarantees of access to such labor at prices which support a better rate of capital accumulation.[5] This is again particularly crucial in this region, because its significance as a cattle raising area has been increasingly displaced by Zulia. This labor structure is also critical to local producers who are not the main beneficiaries of the capital accumulation process. Rather, intermediaries connected to commercial and agroindustrial capital benefit the most.[6]

As we have seen with the Pume empresa, the social relations which developed before and after the empresa, between this indigenous group and the local criollo were also reinforced by a series of ideological and political mechanisms which included the

frequent use of violence. Naturally, this explosive environment greatly contributed to the Pumé's low level of commitment toward the empresa.

II. Implications for Alternative Development Among Indigenous Groups

Judging from the cases explored here, collectivization cannot be seen as a panacea for resolving the economic and social problems of all Indian communities. Gros (1987) has indicated that those Indian groups which have experienced a situation much like the semi-proletarianized non-Indian peasantry, no longer possess many of the attributes which contribute to more autonomous forms of cooperative development. To paraphrase Gros, once they have lost their communal land and their relative autonomy vis-a-vis the larger society, they fall into a potentially irreversible situation of racism and exploitation. This, indeed, is what happened to the Pume. The question then remains as to what alternatives are available for ameliorating the exploitative conditions under which this category of Indian peasants live,. and most importantly, what opportunities remain for reconstructing the sense of community which was lost in the not-so-distant past. This question can only be, and has been, addressed tangentionally in this dissertation.

Among many others, Deere (1986), Gros (1985), Caballero (1985), and Carter and Alvarez (1986) explore the process of parcelization in which many third world collective projects have culminated. A lesson that can be drawn from such projects, as well as from the more theoretical arguments of authors like Galleski

(1973), is that all forms and levels of indigenous cooperation do not always facilitate the transition to more complex forms of cooperatives. On the other hand, this, as Carter and Alvarez (1985) contend, does not imply the inevitable abandonment of cooperative principles and organizational forms among those whose socio-cultural and economic bonds have been weakened. What is required is an adaptation of the level of cooperation to the realistic conditions found in each community. For example, the mere existence of "mutual help" arrangements is, as Galleski's (1973) useful typology reveals, at the low end of a socialization continuum. These reciprocal arrangements are thus too limited for an effective transition to cooperatives such as the empresas which stand at a higher level of that same continuum, i.e., means of production are owned collectively, production and distribution adopt a collective character, and coherent ideological systems reflect a supporting philosophy of collective effort and offer sanctions against individualist pursuits.

But the adaptation of cooperative principles to difficult settings such as the Pume of Apure requires a significant amount of state effort and material support. Given the concrete scenario painted here, and the overarching limitations imposed by the contradictory process of capital accumulation (recurrent fiscal crisis and potential loss of legitimation among politically stronger classes), the possibilities for the Pume to achieve any kind of reprieve to their misery appear minimal. Such cases make

it seem, as Huizer (1985) and others have argued, that socialist systems offer a more favorable environment for the long-term development of various forms of cooperative organizations. This environment does not translate into absolute structural and historical barriers to the transformation of these group's conditions of exploitation and subordination. But it is likely that their best and only option is to resort to strategies of survival and political mobilization which capitalize on the discussed phenomena of "emergent ethnicity," i.e., the legitimation of their struggles on the basis of the more politically expedient protests against the oppression of the Venezuelan "Indian." Their organizational weakness and low levels of politicization would require them on the other hand to build alliances with the more powerful, and fundamentally non-Indian, peasant organizations.

That leaves us with the consideration of this program's implications for those communities which contain a more favorable combination of structural and contingent internal characteristics. The Bari, in my view, fits this characterization much more closely than the Pume. The question then becomes, can programs such as the one examined here, strengthen "a community by enhancing its ability to identify and work collectively to solve local problems and defend its own interests?" (Clay, 1987:2). And drawing from the peasant literature, can programs assist communities in transcending subordination to all forms of capital and state agents or, conversely, in avoiding the loss of relative autonomy? These two sets of criteria are virtually identical, only they are

articulated at different levels of abstraction and from different disciplinary perspectives. The first set is informed by an applied or action anthropological perspective, the second by a political economic perspective. I will conclude with succint statements that combine these two sets of criteria while being sensitive to the separate points each perspective wish to emphasizes.

The comparison of the Bari and Pume empresas lent credence to the thesis that Indian communities that have retained a certain degree of relative autonomy, self-sufficiency, and internal social cohesiveness, contain special advantages for the development of complex cooperatives. Furthermore, under these circumstances, the egalitarian and democratic principles embedded in a cooperative "design," reinforce pre-existing collective arrangements. Groups which have retained some control over a communal land base are also in a better position to manipulate national laws and mobilize their constituencies for the protection of that land base. The same can be said about other forms of state support such as negotiation of credit terms and control of state agents over their internal organization of production and distribution. The relative geographic isolation of some groups, combined with administrative limitations of the state can also contribute to internal self-management.

The long-term possibilities of cooperative enterprises to supply communities with the economic viability which is imperative for long-term community survival and sustained relative autonomy is

subject to the same forces which face other peasant organizations.

The latest chapter in the peasant literature, and particularly within the Latin American context, has produced at least one valid thesis which is useful in considering the future of Indian collectives. Contrary to those who maintain a functionalist view of peasant production, individual empresas (like that of the Bari) can not only survive, but can even achieve levels of growth and lessen the subordination of their community's reproduction to various capital and state agents. Admittedly, given the present direction of the Venezuelan Indian policy, chances are rather dim for a large number achieving this status.

These possibilities of sustained development (vs. dissolution or increased subordination) are contingent on a set of different factors, including access to land and labor, timely technological improvements, and adequate state support. But the one factor I wish to emphasize, for reasons that will soon become apparent, is the market and related aspects of demand and state support.

Possibilities for sustained capitalization of peasant enterprises are intricately connected with the incapacity or unwillingness of large capital to penetrate certain physical and/or production areas. In this regard it is worth recalling the contrasts between the economic structures of the Apure and Zulia, and especially the Perija region where the Bari live. I will not repeat what was said above regarding the Apure situation. But a more detailed look at the situation in Perija best illuminates the argument about favorable market conditions and possibilities for

long term development.

Perija, as mentioned in chapter 4, is a frontier region which, due largely to harsh environmental conditions has been slowly colonized and only by small farms rather than large capitalist agricultural enterprises. This, together with a surge in domestic demand and a series of state support mechanisms to boost milk production has favored the rise of small capitalized family farms in the area. Until very recently the somewhat contradictory state protectionist measures had led these peasant farms into raising--rather successfully--a dual purpose milk and beef cattle to accommodate changing market conditions. This is the strategy adopted by the Bari. Lately however, market deregulations have made milk production more profitable and the future of any peasant enterprise, including Saimadoyi, will greatly depend on its capacity to adapt to such changes once again (Llanvi, 1980a).

In conclusion, the possibility exists that these and other cooperative experiments taking place among Venezuelan Indian groups will ignite the spark for a more autonomous grass-root movement which would support the spread, and improve the success rates, of a variety of forms of cooperatives (including health and educational services cooperatives). Again, the possibilities for broad coalition building are not great, because of the unfortunate polarization of the peasantry between Indians and non-Indian fractions which (while recognizing the validity of ethnic-based movements) in my view, forestalls the possibility of a new alliance

which could once again redirect the course of Indian policy.

Yet, judging by similar transitions from state-initiated efforts to more autonomous movements in other countries, I suggest that broad-based coalitions demanding alternatives to exploitative forms of community organization are not all that far-fetched. Lessons should be drawn from the experiences of CRIC in Colombia, and from the Shuar in Ecuador. But even in the Venezuelan context, there are certain elements give at least some hope that progressive coalitions will emerge. Serbin (1983), for example, correctly recognizes that despite mediation by state interests and factionalism problems, the Indian movement which emerged as part of IAN's efforts has had a significant grass-root component. I found ample evidence that many attempts to subordinate the movement to dominate party interests and goals were soundly defeated. For example, despite the absence of a coherent Indian movement, and at least partly as a result of the mobilization efforts of the early 1970s, Indian groups have become a permanent voice in the Venezuelan media and make frequent and often embarrassing appearances at government offices where they come to protest the latest afronts to their lives. Just a few months ago, the Bari, together with other groups from the state of Zulia, made the front pages of leading Venezuelan newspapers as they protested new government leases for open pit mining which again raised fears about the stability of their land rights (El Nacional, June 1988.) (Not surprisingly, the treasurer was there representing the Bari delegation).

ENDNOTES

1. Serbin bases his conclusions in highly abstract analyses about the nature and functions of the dependent capitalist state. Although I am partial to a similar theoretical approach, I believe that when conducting historical studies it is necessary to introduce middle range theories which can bridge the distance between such abstract and general notions and the always variegated forms of concrete social phenomena. part of the problem is that his analysis is also based on aggregate rather than dissaggregated field data. Otherwise, it is an excellent effort and one of the best analysis available.

2. For a critique of the long-term consequences of the Venezuelan agrarian reform see Gutman and Van Kesteren (1978).

3. This does not need to be a long wait. Already, in June of this year, the Bari together with the nearby Yukpa protested the government's announcement about a new and intensive cycle of mining operations to be conducted in the area. These mining activities are seen as a serious threat to the environment and Bari and Yukpa land rights. See El Nacional (1988).

4. See Gros (1987) for a discussion of such projects in Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador. See Heinen (1985) and Frechione (1981) for similar projects in Venezuela.

5. This is typical case of a split labor market (see Bonacich, 1985)

6. For an excellent study on the Venezuelan "hato" (cattle ranch) and its underlying class structure, see Carballo, 1985.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

RESEARCH SITE AND METHODOLOGY

I. Overview of research sites and length of study

The data for this dissertation were collected during approximately seven months of field work which included two site visits to Venezuela.

The data collection process included archival research and interviews in Caracas, the capital, and two other cities, Maracaibo in the state of Zulia and San Fernando de Apure in the Apure state. Most of the archival research in these cities was conducted at the national and regional offices of The National Agrarian Institute (IAN), and the national and regional offices of Indian affairs (DAI).

Besides archival research and interviews with public officials and social scientists working in my area of study, I conducted two separate research visits to two empresas Indigenas selected for more in-depth cases studies. These were the Empresa of Saimadoyi, organized by a Bari community in Saimadoyi, Zulia; and the Empresa of Kumani, organized by a group of Pume or Yaruro families within the Santa Cecilia cattle ranch in the state of Apure.

The Santa Cecilia ranch where the empresa Kumani is located is in the Achaguas district of the State, within the Guachara municipal area. It is located within the 7o 10′ northern latitude

and 68º 30" western longitude. Santa Cecilia has 29,8000 has. The ranch had been expropriated by the Venezuelan government during the agrarian reform of the 1960s.

In 1962 the Santa Cecilia ranch was transferred from the Ministry of Agriculture to IAN's agrarian reform land inventory. At that time, the property, including infrastructure was valued at Bs. 3,467,163, about three quarters of a million dollars when calculated at the exchange rate of the time. (IAN Plan Integral Pume, 1985). Access to the ranch during the rainy season is difficult due to the extensive flooding of the savannas. However, the ranch has a small landing strip and small planes can land there all year around.

The empresa community of Saimadoyi is located in the village and valley of the same name, on the southwestern part of the basin of the Maracaibo Lake. The valley itself is to the east of the Sierra de Perija (or Sierra de Motilones) and it lies at the foot of the Sierra of Abusanqui, at the juncture of the Bachichida and Baracay rivers, from which the Aricuaisa river is born. It is populated by the Bari ethnic group, and Saimadoyi is the largest Bari community, within both, Venezuela and Colombia. The Yucpa, and the Waju (Guajiros) constitute the two other major ethnic groups in the area and are located north of Bari territory, with the Indian reserve.

The Bari community is approximately 130 Kms. from Maracaibo. There are no access roads to speak of, although during the dry, summer season, it is possible to travel by jeep on a rocky pathway

cleared by machetes and crossed by small rivers and streams all along the way. During the rainy or winter season, one must travel to an old hacienda (El Rodeo) on the other side of the Abusanqui sierra, and proceed by mule from there, across the sierra in a trip that takes three and a half hours on the average. During the heaviest part of the rainy season, the trip can be very difficult as the trails become extremely muddy and slippery. It was during this season that I went twice to the community of Saimadoyi.

During these visits I conducted unstructured and semi-structured interviews with empresa leaders and other community members. I also had access to their records, although these were rather dismal.

II. Choosing field work as a research strategy.

I wished to approach the study of Indian Empresas in Venezuela, by focusing not only on the formal aspect of the state policy that gave them birth, but on aspects of actual implementation of that policy, including views from the empresa communities. This was particularly important, because, apart from the very helpful applied research conducted by people like Dieter Heinen (1981), the writings on the empresas Indigenas are not based on data collected at the local level. All of this required the use of field research methods.

However, the procedures one chooses to study a problem are also determined by factors such as "the state of the science in relation to the 'presenting properties' of the observational

situation," (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). Although these authors were referring here to the procedures one chooses after deciding to conduct field work, the same principle applies when one is deciding whether the problem can be adequately researched through field or non-field techniques. In my specific case, the "presenting properties" of the research situation, even for the formal aspects of state policy, were such that unless one went to the field an dug out unpublished documents and pursued what were virtually detective strategies of information search, it would have been very difficult to find data that in non-third world settings is commonly available in document libraries. These two criteria, the type of research questions I wanted to investigate, and pragmatic considerations related to the accessibility of bibliographical information, determined my choice for collecting most of my data through field work.

III. Specific Method of Inquiry and Field Work

Well defined problem statements are not considered a prerequisite of field work (Shatzman and Strauss, 1973): the notion being that the researcher should allow the problem to emerge from the data. However, researchers interested mainly in "model-building" do adopt a more conventional conception of sociological research and insist on well delineated problems and hypotheses to be tested in the field. As I suggested above, for my own research, I made a serious attempt to delineate my research problem prior to leaving for the field. Yet, by this I do not mean that I took the

strict "model-builder" approach and carved specific hypotheses to be tested. Rather, I articulated a research problem guided by general propositions that pointed to problematic as well as specific sources and techniques of data collection. Nonetheless, I was completely aware of the fact that relatively little was known as to the actual operation of the empresas other than what was written on a handful of government documents. There was no telling as to what I was really going to find once I went to the field--including whether I would even find a functioning empresa at all, given the traditional instability of these programs. In these circumstances, it is best to allow the richness of the field to nurture the research problem or problems and suggest innovative and realistic ways of collecting the information.

As I conceptualized the research problem, my primary interest was to determine the extent to which different measures of empresas success could be attributed to the level of pre-existing communalism. I argued at this point that pre-existing communal elements were a contributing rather than an inhibiting factor in the successful operations of more complex collective economic organizations. After being in the field for some weeks, the emphasis of my research shifted slightly as it became clear that state policies played a more significant role in the direction of the empresas than previously anticipated. In addition, these economic organizations were at the center of an ensuing debate between critics and opponents of the empresa program who saw these policies as the vehicle to revitalize or disintegrate the

organization of these communities. Equal weight was then given to the issue of the state's impact in the evolution of these organizations. My field work experience seemed to indicate that state policy decisions may potentially activate or negate the forces of collectivism in the operation and future of the empresas. The same may not be true for collective enterprises constituted by Indian communities at the margin of the state program. Aside from state policies and their varied forms of implementation, other factors such as the particular regional political economic context within which these communities were immersed, also revealed themselves as particularly important in determining the relative success with which an actual "space" of democratic economic organizations could exist. For example, empresa communities that were geographically isolated and whose land or resources were not being actively sought by competitive non-Indian elements, seemed to have a better chance of carving a "space" for themselves than those in opposite situations.

In any case, contrary to old notions of field work, a research problem well defined beforehand is critical. Unlike people like Barrett (1976), however, the discovery, in the course of field work, of new and/or more relevant theses to explore does not warrant the abandonment of the broader, conceptual notions which guided one's initial articulation of the research problem. If these general propositions are not mere generalizations inspired be a purely inductive logic, but well founded on theoretical

arguments, they should continue to be valid even if not in the same way. It is not necessary--and probably self-defeating--to restrict the field of inquiry to a rigid set of hypotheses. One must instead become conscious of the metatheoretical notions guiding our inquiry and use them as a sort of looking glass so as not to become lost in an open field of observations. Contrary also to what Barrett believes, part of the problem is that we do not have enough information about the research site, and it is for those reasons that sociologists recommend a more inductive approach in these exploratory type studies. Yet I do not favor a purely inductive approach as my remarks above just made clear. The process must be deductive in principle.

The relevancy of one or another theoretical explanations should emerge from the data. But one must be consciously aware of the general theoretical perspective guiding the particular questions we are raising, and to in turn articulate as many questions as clearly as possible beforehand.

The specific method of inquiry can thus be summarized in the following manner:

1) I started out with a set of general theoretical propositions or "analytical model" concerning the different totalities involved in the object of study (state system, Indian communities).

2) Such a model was inspired by a deductive as opposed to an inductive logic and highlights key definitional criteria for each of these totalities (for example the non-monolithic nature of the state, and the combination of kin based and commodity relations in

Indian communities).

3) The model is, however, a mere starting point which sets fundamental parameters to the research process and identifies key processes and issues to explore within the case studies. Thus, the aim is not to validate the model but to enrich it in the course of its "dialog" with the historical and empirical data produced in the field work process.

4) Finally, and as I have already implied in # 1, to explain the transformations occurring within the two cases considered here, the process of inquiry must go beyond the "micro" level of the Indian communities and their respective empresas. The knowledge attained at this level must be re-inserted and re-interpreted in the light of the more general context, at the "macro" level, within which they are embedded. This last point is particularly crucial for this study and my argument that Indian communities have undergone different forms and levels of transformation. These have been the result of an uneven penetration of capital in their areas and the ensuing variety of relationships with external agents.

The understanding of the forces and resultant transformations these communities have undergone is crucial for evaluating different political and economic strategies (such as the Indian program) as vehicles that reinforce or counter such forces of change.

As with the research problem, so it is with the particular methodologies to use during field work. That is the particular

methodologies should emerge from the field work situation itself; yet an attempt should be made before hand to elaborate some general methodological strategies and even specific questions to ask the respondents. This is the type of approach I pursued in my own research. From the research problem, and my knowledge or lack of knowledge of the field situation I deduced what I saw as the minimum set of questions I needed to ask of different types of respondents. Similarly, I decided on different possible methodological strategies to obtain answers to those questions always guided by the assumption that they could be rejected or modified as dictated by the concrete circumstances of the field and by simultaneously emerging analytical and instrumental considerations.

The field worker is a methodological pragmatist and often not only selects from previously chosen methodologies, but actually invents new ones. My work before entering the field basically consisted of determining as closely as I could, which questions could be researched through interviewing members of the community or government officials, which through observation, and which through archival review. As the field work developed, the idea of using structured interviews even with government officials was dropped all together. Every official revealed different angles of the problem I was interested in research. Most importantly, informal conversations and unstructured interviews tended to generate new relevant information volunteered in the form of reflective statements impossible to tap in an structured interview.

This was true, for example, of issues dealing with internal government politics.

The strategy that proved most useful, especially for a relative short term field work like mine, was that of using key informants. I selected four basic categories of key informants: 1) government employees, the most crucial of which turned out to also be my local sponsors; 2) empresa leaders; 3) empresa members who did not necessarily hold any particular office within the administrative structure; and 4) non-indians who lived within or close to the Indian/Empresa communities. In the case of Saimadoyi, the most important non-Indian informers were the missionary priest and nuns. Unfortunately, due to the rainy season, I was unable to make the trip up the valley to interview the "individuales" or Bari who had decided not to join the empresa. Fortunately, as I discuss in Chapter 7, one of these individuals visited Saimadoyi during my stay there, and actively participated in a large meeting I attended. In the case of Kumani, this included informal interviews with approximately 5 IAN workers charged with the general operation of the promotion of the Santa Cecilia ranch which remained under IAN's control, as well as another four workers hired by Kumani to help in cattle roundups, and one of the "criollos" illegally settled with in Kumani. In the case of Kumani however, because of its small size, it became possible to interview at least one member of each household. In Saimadoyi, I conducted extensive interviews with some 10 major informants. This strategy was not only time

efficient, as it allowed me to obtain the information without having to survey a large number of community opinions, but it offered very unique built in reliability checks. In both cases, additional information was recorded in field notes and actual electronic recordings of formal and informal meetings. Most of the extensive interviews were also electronically recorded. I accumulated over 1,,000 pages of typed interviews and an additional 150 pages of hand-written field notes.

At the government and regional and national level, I conducted informal interviews with over 20 government officials and participatory researchers on Indian issues. I also visited 15 national and regional offices for archival research. During the pre-field work stage, I made an attempt to identify, aided by suggestions from similar types of research, the minimum amount of documents I should try to collect and or review at both the national and local level. At the local level of the communities, this included empresa statutes and constitutions and by-laws, as well as any accounting records and meetings acts that might be available at the local level. Saimadoyi kept slightly better records than Kumani. And this was confined simply to two double-entry accounting books: one with total expenses and income by month, and the other recording the sale of milk and cheese by purchases. There were no personnel records kept in either one of these empresas. At the government level, I was interested in attaining program evaluations or reports as well as budget allocations and important legislations with regards to, for

example, land titles or allocations of resources. This prior identification of documents again proved to be very useful and time-saving as I could request specific materials when visiting government offices or communities, rather than wait to discover them solely in the process--although some of this of course took place.

IV. Sponsors and final selection of research sites.

Unless one has been working in the Indian areas and is familiar with things like access routes and the nuances of the politics of "gate-keepers," it is virtually futile to attempt to enter these communities to do research without some kind of formal or informal sponsorship. I therefore concentrated on securing this kind of sponsorship and obtaining as much background information on the empresas as possible, during my first trip to Venezuela. My initial interest was to ask social scientists who are part of a major research institute in Venezuela, and who have been doing research on Indian issues, to serve as sponsors for my research. However, it soon became clear that given their constant contact with the empresas, IAN staff were a more logical sponsor.

I was familiar with the warnings often given about the dangers of government sponsorships for projects like mine: For example, becoming too closely identified with such sponsors and thus not gaining the necessary trust from community members. I carefully evaluated the status enjoyed by both IAN and the specific individuals who would act as not only my formal sponsors but direct

contacts with the Indian communities. The benefits seemed to outweighed potential problems related to neutrality and IAN's support proved crucial to conduct the field work. First of all, empresa communities as a whole are located in areas of difficult access that require complicated and expensive means of transport. The final selection of my research sites was in fact highly conditioned by where IAN could offer me extensive support in this regard. Other criteria used to select sites had to do with where empresas were even operating, and where IAN had a regional coordinator that could lend his/her support. Some offices located in states with considerable Indian populations, like Apure lost the Indian program coordinator (an indicator of the low level of priority assigned by governments to Indian programs). Most importantly, IAN field staff enjoyed a great deal of "insider's status' within the Indian empresa communities--and which was not necessarily the case with the researchers I had previously contacted. Despite of some difficult moments that I will discuss later, IAN's contact with Indian empresa communities facilitated my entry and even rapport in the majority of the situations.

In summary, like every other aspect of field work, choosing a sponsor can only be partially decided ahead of time. Although it is important to keep known warnings in mind about the cost that comes from choosing different types of sponsors, it is best to make the final decision in the initial stage of field work, after a sufficient amount of background information about the sponsor's

reputation in the field has been obtained. In my case, the often feared government sponsor was a wiser choice than the academic researcher with no insider's status.

To assess the possible liabilities of having a government organism and staff sponsor my research, and thus being seen by Indian people as associated with that particular government agency, is particularly important at this point in time in Venezuela. Not unlike the past, there are some current conflictive situations between the government and Indian communities and their supporters that have produced a new wave of tension, distrust and formal and informal restrictions that affect the possibilities of doing research in these areas. Either because the government may deny or at least make it difficult to obtain a permit to travel to Indian areas, backed by Decree #285, or because Indian leaders, advised (often justifiably) by church or social scientists, are increasingly reluctant to allow researchers into their communities.

Even before I made my first trip to Venezuela, one of the most serious situations today, which got months of national press began to develop. This was what has come to be known as "the Piaroa case," and it involved the illegal occupation of Piaroa lands in the Amazonian territory by a non-Indian cattle rancher with friends in high government. The situation came to a head when it was finally reported in the National media how Piaroas crossing the area where the ranch was located, were brutalized by the rancher's "hired-hands". The case pitted government agencies and members of congress against one another, and a key figure on the pro-Piaroa

side of the debate turned out to be the Director of IAN's Indian program, my sponsor. A month after I had arrived in Venezuela the second time, he was fired from his job after attempting to declare the illegality of the Piaroa land's occupation by the cattle rancher.

A sudden shift in one's network of supporters, like this one, can be deadly for the future of the field work. I was not sure I would even be allowed by the new Director, to visit the Empresa communities. In line with the Venezuelan stand of politics, the new director was recruited from the governing party's files and had no previous experience on Indian affairs. This was not true of the former director who had been there before the new government took over and had a national reputation as an anthropologist and scholar of Indian issues. But although he was not officially connected to the opposition party, was perceived as having been sympathetic to it in the past. Fortunately, individual differences do matter at times, and the person placed in the Director's position behaved in an extremely fair manner and re-assured me of his office's and staff's full support.

Concretely, that support consisted of facilitating transportation to the sites, usually in combination with their own visits; recruiting the support of regional Indian program coordinators to act as my local sponsors and contacts; and giving me access to all relevant empresa program documents.

Seldom researchers make a separate trip to conduct these

preliminary steps of securing sponsorship and background documents. To have been able to do so was highly advantageous in my case. First of all, I made sure there was in fact a program in existence that could be researched. In Latin America such programs are often short lived or they might exist only on paper. Second, the background documents I obtained about the Empresa program, plus the information shared by anthropologists and IAN staff during informal visits and participant observation, gave me a better sense of how to define and redefine my research project and data collection strategies, as well as to learn more about the most appropriate empresa sites to conduct my field work. This in turn allowed me to shorten my stay in the field during the second trip.

V. The main field work phase: data collection during a second trip to Venezuela: general comments.

The bulk of my dissertation data was collected during my second and longer trip to Venezuela. As I mentioned at the beginning, I selected for my research the capital of Apure in Venezuela, three urban or semi-urban sites Caracas, San Fernando De Apure, and Maracaibo, the capita of Zulia, and two rural "sub-sites": Saimadoyi in Zulia and Santa Cecila/Kumani in Apure. In addition, I made one day visits to 3 Yucpa communities (Sirapta, Aroi and Toromo) which were receiving support from IAN for economic development, and which were in the process of dissolving a "pre-empresa" organization, or (in the case of Sirapta) forming one.

The selection of Caracas, and the other capitals as a site was a natural one given that much of the data related to the

government's empresa program as well as documents and research material concerning national Indian policies and political economic issues relevant for my dissertation are centralized in these city's bureaucratic and academic organisms.

As a whole, however, there are no central indexes or locations that house government documents and much of what exists is unpublished or of limited circulation. The reasons for this are not only organizational but most often than not they are political, giving us an insight as to the internal composition of the state apparatus. Different factions or working teams within the government will produce policy papers, for example, that they believe capture the spirit of the latest five year plan or of the government party's platform. Inevitably, individuals higher up will find such concrete elaborations of their more general populist statements, potentially offensive to one or another interest group. The result is a never ending rehashing of those papers and even orders to "drawer them" (engavetarlos), making it extremely difficulty and even dangerous for a researcher to safely state which version represent the current policy or the administration in power, or to make theoretical or analytical arguments based on an implementation of policies that never took place. Being a "native" and having some previous knowledge of the Venezuelan bureaucratic ways and ideonsincratic behavior of state officials proved crucial in terms of time saving. See the Bibliography for the most important documents collected.

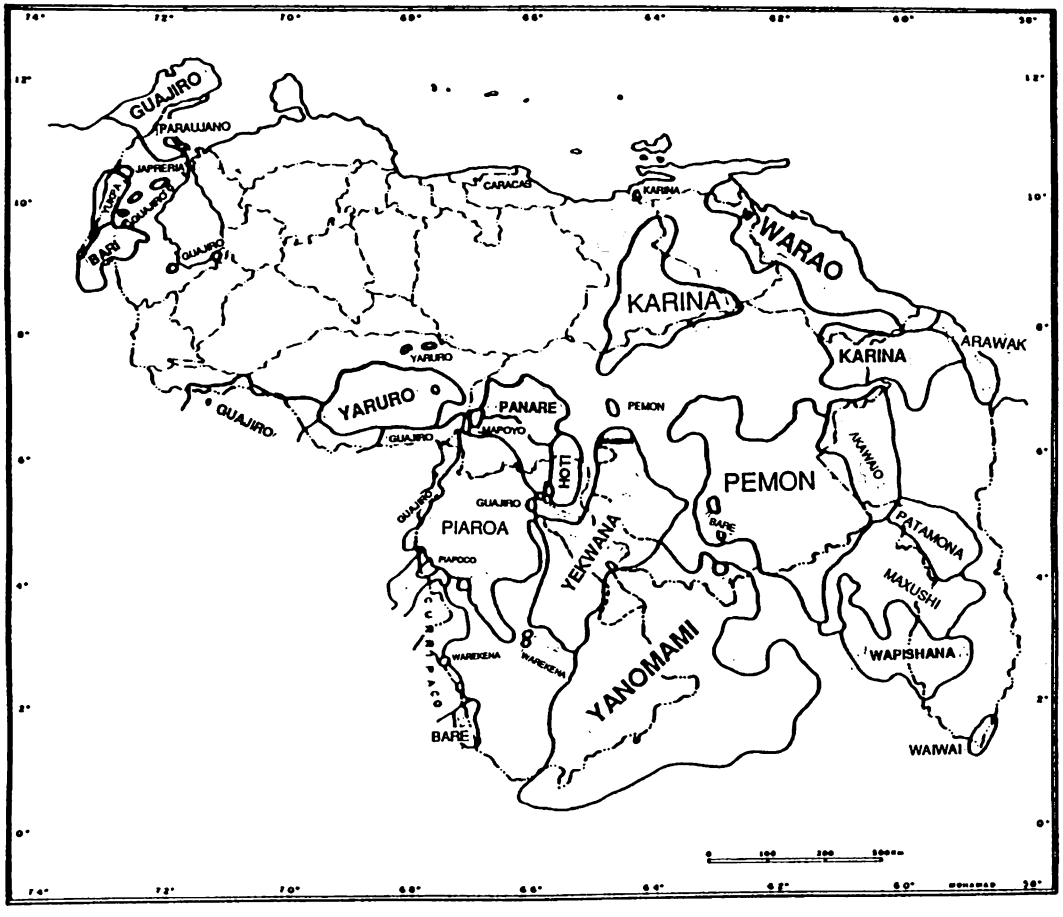
VI. Field Research In Latin America: Demands from the Social Setting

Remaining neutral is advice often given to future field workers. Yet, in politically charged situations this may inhibit rapport with key informants and close some important doors. In Latin America, a major critique of Western, and in particular American social sciences, took place during the sixties. Such critique questioned not only the possibility but the moral implications of remaining neutral when conducting participant observation research, or any kind of social science research for that matter. (See for example, Stavenhagen, 1975; Fals Borda, 1977; Zamosc, 1985). This critique has so permeated the general orientation of social scientists in countries like Venezuela, including the Indian communities themselves.

During my field work process I was immediately thrusted into employing a semi-participatory or "collaborative" research approach. In other words, it is automatically expected in contemporary Latin American settings, and especially Indian communities, that social scientists wanting to obtain information from any of these communities must themselves become "informants" to their members. Much of the data I collected was thus obtained through extensive dialogs with both IAN officials and Indian community members. In the same manner, I expect that the project should end where it started: with a concern for contributing to changes in Indian policy toward greater empowerment and emancipation of these groups. Neutrality and "objectivity" cannot

therefore be defined outside of the context of a class and ethnically-divided society.

APPENDIX B



Venezuelan Indian Groups Source: Censo Indigena

Appendix C

EMPRESAS INDIGENAS
1975-1978

NO. E.I.	COMMUNITY	NO. PARTI-CIPANTS	NO. FAMI-LIES	ETHNIC GROUP	LOCATION DISTRICT/ DEPART.	STATE
1.	LA REFORMA	1	29	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
2.	MUNDUAPO	1	32	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
3.	PATO GUAYABAL	1	37	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
4.	COROMOTO	1	36	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
5.	SABANA RATON	1	23	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
6.	STA.ROSA DE ORINOCO	1	15	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
7.	MORGANTIO	1	30	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
8.	PTE. SAMARIAPO	1	17	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
9.	PLATANILLAL	1	36	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
10.	PARHUENA	1	30	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
11.	MORROCOY (Terecay)	2	60	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
12.	SAN JUAN VIEJO	1	26	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
13.	SAN PEDRO-ORINOCO	1	18	PIAROA	Atabapo	Amazonas
14.	MARANO	1	19	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
15.	CAMPO FLORIDO	1	17	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
16.	PINTADO	1	40	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
17.	EL PORVENIR	1	13	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
18.	CANO GRULLA	1	22	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
19.	S.JUAN TU'-HUARICHA.	2	29	PIAROA	Atabapo	Amazonas
20.	PARIA GRANDE	1	67	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
21	GUACHAPANA	1	20	PIAROA	Atabapo	Amazonas
22.	LIMON PARHUENA	2	54	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
23.	CANO PIOJO	1	49	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
24.	CHURUATA D. RAMON	1	31	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
25.	GUARA	1	46	PIAROA-YABARANA	Atures	Amazonas
26.	GAVILAN	1	16	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
27.	BABILLA PINTAO	1	16	PAIROA	Atures	Amazonas
28.	LAS PAVAS	1	26	PAIROA	Atures	Amazonas
29.	LA VENTUROSA	1	12	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
30.	CULEBRA	1	21	YEKUANA	Atabapo	Amazonas

Appendix C (CONTINUED)

NO. E.I.	COMMUNITY	NO. PARTI-CIPANTS	NO. FAMI-LIES	ETHNIC GROUP	LOCATION DISTRICT/ DEPART.	STATE
31.	ACANANA	1	27	YEKUANA	Atabapo	Amazonas
32.	LA ESMERALDA	1	16	YEKUANA	Atabapo	Amazonas
33.	TOKY	1	25	YEKUANA	Atabapo	Amazonas
34.	CHIGUIRE	1	11	YUKUANA	Rio Negro	Amazonas
35.	CANO NEGRO	1	20	YUKUANA	Atabapo	Amazonas
36.	TENCUA	1	9	YUKUANA	Atures	Amazonas
37.	CACURI (UMAV)	6	120	YUKUANA-SANEMA	Atabapo	Amazonas
38.	GUACHAMACARE	1	17	YEKUANA	Atabapo	Amazonas
39.	STA MARIA EREBATO	8	180	YEKUANA-SANEMA	Cedeno	Bolivar
40.	TONINA	1	10	CURRIPACO	Casiquiare	Amazonas
41	PAVONE	1	16	CURRIPACO	Atures	Amazonas
42.	VICTORINO	1	22	CURRIPACO	Casiquiare	Amazonas
43.	PANAVEN	1	15	PIAROA	Atabapo	Amazonaas
44.	LAU LAU	1	12	BANIVA	Atabapo	Amazonas
45.	GUZMAN BLANCO	1	30	GUAREQUENA BANIVA	Casiquiare	Amazonas
46.	CANO MARIO	1	13	PIAROA	Atures	Amazonas
47.	MORROCOY DEL PALMAR	1	8	GUAHIBA	Atures	Amazonas
48.	AGUA BLANCA	1	52	PIAPOCO	Atures	Amazonasa
49.	PROVINCIAL	1	8	GUAHIBO	Atures	Amazonas
50.	CANO CUPAVEN	1	10	PIAROA	Atabapo	Amazonas
51.	KUMANI	3	42	YARURO	Achaguas	Apure
	TOTAL	69	1.550			

Source: IAN Informe Integral, 1984

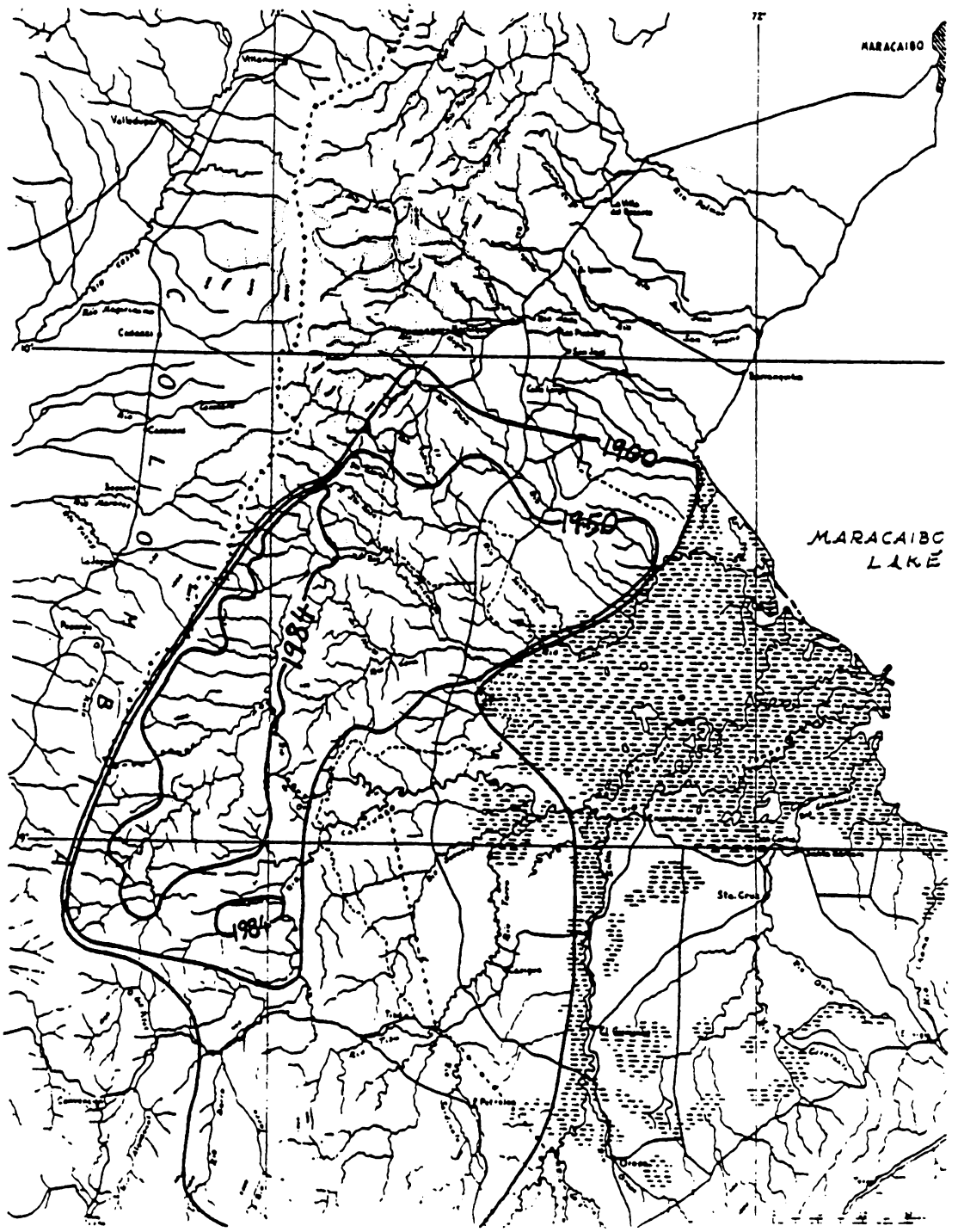
Appendix C (continued)

INDIAN ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION (EMPRESAS INDIGENAS)
1979-1983

NO. E.I.	COMMUNITY	NO. PARTI-CIPANTS	NO. FAMI-LIES	ETHNIC GROUP	LOCATION DISTRICT/ DEPART.	STATE
1.	ALALAQUIMANA	1	10	GUAJIRO	Paez	Zulia
2.	JOLUJAMAN	1	30	GUAJIRO	Paez	Zulia
3.	JAUMAN	1	30	GUAJIRO	Paez	Zulia
4.	YOULUNA	1	15	GUAJIRO	Paez	Zulia
5.	SAIMADOYI	1	45	BARI	Perija	Zulia
6.	GUAYABOROINA	4	96	WARAO	A.Diaz	T.F.DAmacuro
7.	BARRANQUILLA	5	87	WARAO	A.Diaz	" "
8.	BOCA ARAWABISI	5	50	WARAO	"	" "
9.	YORINANOKI	4	50	WARAO	"	" "
10.	HUBASUBURO	4	75	WARAO	"	" "
11.	MURAKO	3	180	WARAO	"	" "
12.	BOCA MARIUSA	1	10	WARAO	"	" "
13.	BETANIA	5	225	PEMON	Roscio	Bolivar
14.	SAN FCO. YURUANI	10	278	PEMON	Roscio	Bolivar
15.	LAS CLARITAS	8	243	PEMON	Roscio	Bolivar
16.	PENDARE (Sipapo)	17	163	PIAROA	Atures	T.F.Amazonas
17.	PUENTE TOPOCHO	1	15	GUAHIBA	Atures	" "
	TOTAL	72	1.602			

Source: IAN Informe Integral, 1984

APPENDIX D



REDUCTION OF BARI TERRITORY AFTER 1900

Source: Lizarralde

Appendix E

LAND GRANTS TO INDIAN COMMUNITIES MADE

THROUGH IAN'S INDIAN PROGRAM

1972-1978

REGION/STATE	# OF COMMUNITIES RECEIVING GRANTS	# OF BENEFICIARY FAMILIES	# OF HECTARES
GUAYANA	68	1,660	911,460
Bolivar	12	435	97,400
T.F. Amazonas	54	1,057	689,750
T.F. Delta Amacuro	2	168	124,310
NORTH EASTERN	6	494	14,132.45
Anzoategui	5	472	11,132.45
Monagas	1	22	3,000.00
LOS LLANOS	2	140	37,096.00
ZULIANA	13	297	36,735.00
TOTAL	89	2,591	999,423.45

Appendix E (continued)

LAND GRANTS TO INDIAN COMMUNITIES MADE

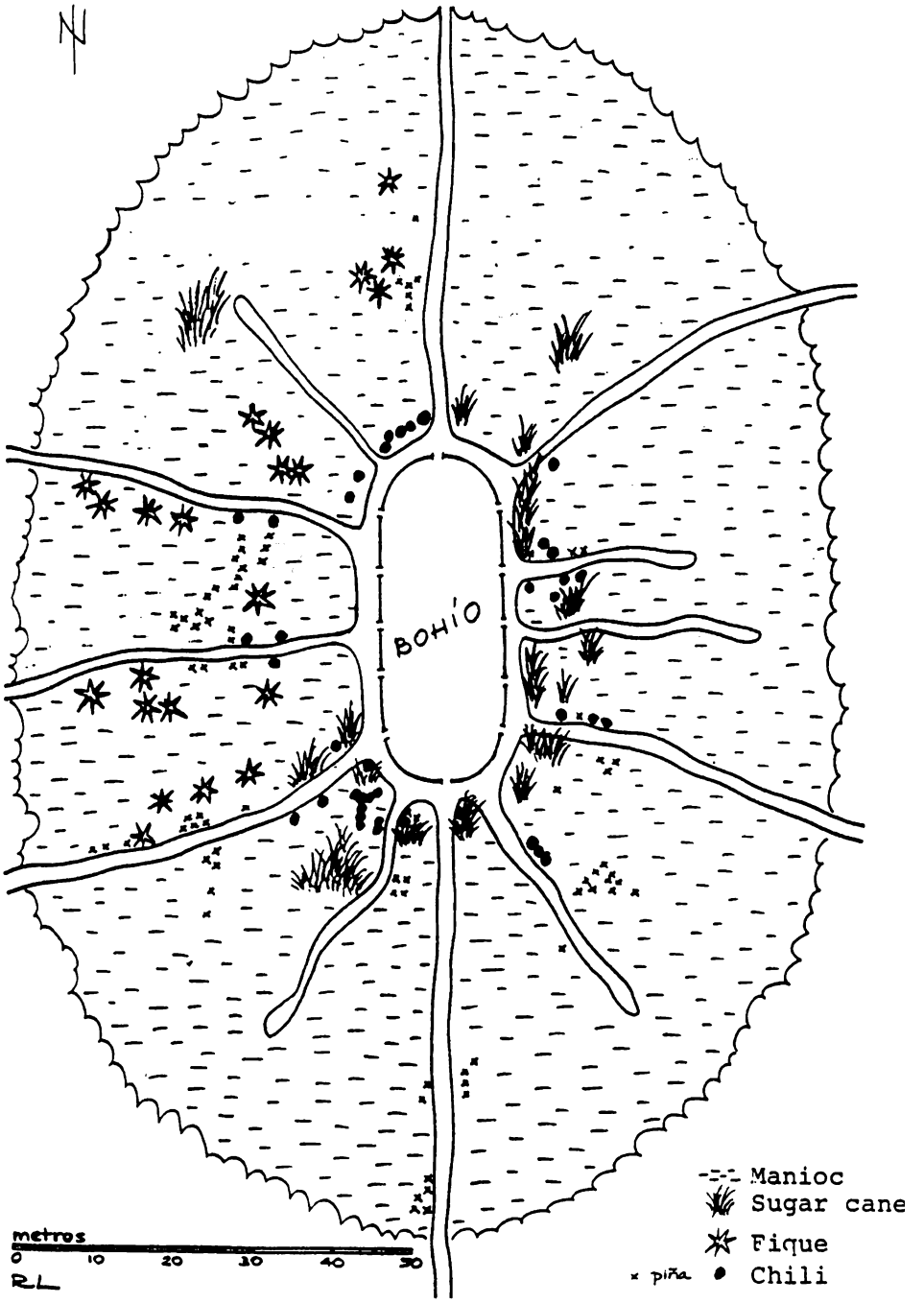
THROUGH IAN'S INDIAN PROGRAM

1979-1983

REGION/STATE	# OF COMMUNITIES RECEIVING GRANTS	# OF BENEFICIARY FAMILIES	# OF HECTARES
GUAYANA	56	1,165	365,622
Bolivar	13	399	176,154
T.F. Amazonas	41	704	186,567
T.F. Delta Amacuro	2	62	2,990
NORTH EASTERN	10	373	14,311
Anzoategui	8	302	13,861
Monagas	2	71	450
LOS LLANOS	-	-	-
ZULIANA	1	5	137.50
TOTAL NACIONAL	67	1,543	380,069.50

*1 Ha. = 2.37 acres
Source: IAN, Informe Integral, 1984

APPENDIX F



Source; Lizarralde

TRADITIONAL BARI LONGHOUSE
(BOHIO)